spectives and a major contributor to the nationalist ideology emanating from the center. Finally, by focusing on a range of influential theorists, the book provides a more well-rounded account of the development of folk studies in Japan, transcending the notion that the discipline was invented by Yanagita alone.

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CHINA

REED, CARRIE E., transl. *Chinese Chronicles of the Strange: The "Nuogao ji."* New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2001. 232 pages. Bibliography, index. Hardcover US$54.95; ISBN 0-8204-5116-0. (Asian Thought and Culture, vol. 44)

Chinese Chronicles of the Strange is a translation of the "Nuogao ji" (Records of Nuogao), a text featuring accounts and anecdotes on the supernatural and/or the strange. The stories are presented in five volumes, which are part of a large collection of the ninth-century Chinese miscellany entitled *Youyang zazu* written by Duan Chengshi (c. 800–863). Volumes fourteen and fifteen of *Youyang zazu* are entitled "Nuogao ji" and are included in their entirety, a total of seventy accounts. In addition, 78 stories come from the other three volumes entitled "Zhi Nuogao." Some of the "Records of Nuogao" stories have previously been translated into English, notably, for example, the Entry *Xu* 3 (111–13), which Arthur Waley rendered as "Chinese Cindellera."[1] But the present work is the first complete translation of "Nuogao ji" in English, making the entire work accessible to English readers for the first time.

The author writes that "['Records of Nuogao'] is a highly worthwhile subject of study for students of folklore and literature who are interested in early informal Chinese narrative. 'Records of Nuogao'... happens to be written in a variety of styles that may prove thought-provoking to teachers and students of Chinese fiction. ... [I]t is useful for students considering issues of change and continuity in the development of early Chinese *xiaoshuo* styles."[2] Indeed, "Records of Nuogao" is a very intriguing resource of folklore and literature for not only those who are interested in early informal Chinese narrative but also for those interested in the supernatural in general. For example, entry number 596 recounts a merchant with a sore that resembled a person's face:

> This merchant had fun by dripping drops of wine into the mouth of the sore whereupon its face would become red. He fed it, and it would eat anything. When it ate a lot, he would feel that the muscles on his shoulder were swollen, and he wondered if that was where its stomach was.(95)

After the merchant put some medicine into the sore, it became a scab and was healed. Such an episode reveals the relationship of supernatural to natural. Through "Records of Nuogao" the reader sees the beliefs of Tang people, customs, folk-belief, and their wary nature as "a realm where the usual limitations of the physical world do not apply, where the grounds of identity and reality constantly shift, where boundaries are real but immaterial at the same time" (14).

The view of the supernatural or supermundane by the Chinese of the ninth century has many similarities to those of other cultures, making this collection a rich source for compar-

ative studies. In fact, the reader will notice many similar stories in other cultures as well. The famous "Chinese Cindellera" is one. Another example is Entry *Xu* 1 (109–110), which recounts a story of two brothers: the good elder brother becomes rich with the help of a supernatural awl; and the mean younger one, who acts exactly as the elder brother does in order to obtain the supernatural awl, is punished by goblins for his misdeeds. This story, reported as a folktale of Shilla, is very much like a Japanese folktale known as "Kobutori."[3] Likewise, Entry *Xu* 8 (115) in which a son is eaten by a mysterious girl-demon has a remarkable resemblance to a Japanese story entitled "On a Woman Devoured by an Evil Fiend," which appears in *Nihon ryōiki* (ca. 823).[4] Although as the title explains, a woman, not a man as in "Records of Nuogao," is devoured by a demon on a wedding night, the similarity in the plot and the role of the demon of both tales is noteworthy.

    Chinese Chronicles of the Strange: The "Nuogao ji" is enjoyable reading and recommended not only to Chinese literature and folklore teachers and students but also to anyone who is interested in things uncanny. In this interdisciplinary vein, it would assist other scholars if the work in later editions would embrace several suggestions. First, the work would be more helpful to non-native Chinese and/or those not familiar with Chinese culture if the notes were more narrative in style. Rhetorical questions, even when they seemingly state the obvious, are not reliable indicators. For example, notes 2 and 3 on page 124 read "A very small cow?" and "How can silkworms fly?" respectively. While the author's rhetorical questions may point to a specific textual problem, it would be more informative, at least to this reader, if the author would provide comments and some related cultural information in a narrative form to help situate the problem in broader terms. Second, the Chinese characters in the text are very helpful, but when the Chinese characters were not available (e.g., software limitations) the author used an asterisk in the text to indicate that the Chinese character is delineated in the notes. For example, entry number 542 (34) has Long Shen *牛. Then, in the note, the description states, "The character for *long* is the top part of 聲 over 龍" (62). The asterisks encumber the reading flow of the text, and many asterisks on a page, as in the entry 542, impede the harmony of the translation. Replacing the asterisk with the appropriate Chinese character(s), either scanned or handwritten, by using complementary software would seem to suffice. Third, the format for writing the Chinese characters in the main text should be consistent. For example, in many cases the author adds the Chinese character(s) after the Chinese rendering of the names. Yet, on occasion, the author puts only the rendering in the main text, adding the Chinese character(s) separately in the footnote as in the entry number 584 (88). At other times, there are no Chinese characters when it would be appropriate—leaving the reader wondering what the Chinese character would be. Finally, some careful editing could eliminate a number of minor typographical errors. But these are minor suggestions. The important point is that the *Chinese Chronicles of the Strange: The "Nuogao ji"* opens the resonating amphorae of supernatural and super-ordinary literature to non-Chinese-reading folklore teachers, students, and anyone with an interest in writings of the uncanny.

NOTES

    1. Maria Tartar's wonderful work on various versions of Cinderella stories includes Arthur Waley's translation of "Chinese Cindellera." See TARTAR 1999, 101–107.

    2. For Japanese, as the author notes in her book, there is an excellent translation of the entire *Youyang zazu* by IMAMURA Yoshio 1980–81 with solid annotations and comments.

    3. Available in English in MILLS 1970, 137–40 and TYLER 1987, 239–41.

    4. Available in English in NAKAMURA 1997, 205–206.

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SIBERIA

MAKHAROV, E. M. Editor. *Olonkho—duhovnoe nasledije naroda sakha*
    [*Olongkho*—the cultural heritage of the Sakha (Yakut) people]. Yakutsk:
    IGI AN RS (Ya), 2000. 199 pages. ISBN 5-8176-0013-7.

On the occasion of the meeting on the oral epic creativity that took place in Yakutsk in
September 2000 (for a report on this meeting, see *Asian Folklore Studies* [*AFS*] 60: 147), a slim
volume of papers on the Sakha (Yakut) epic tradition of *olongkho* works was published, under
E. M. Makharov's editorship. The volume contains 16 papers; of the authors, the late N. V.
Emeljanov, himself a Sakha (Yakut), is the best known expert on the *olongkho* tradition. N. V.
Emeljanov (6–23) gives a good overview of previous research on *olongkho* plots and the prob-
lems encountered, specifically his own methods of classifying *olongkho* plots. (For a review of
a book by Emeljanov, see *AFS* 60: 172–75.) Here, he describes several eighteenth- and nine-
teenth-century versions of the Er Sogotokh epic and compares it to *olongkho* stories about
Erbekhchin Mergen and Mas Batvja.

    V. V. Trepavlov (24–56) is a historian and tries to tie in the oral work with Sakha (Yakut)
history. E. M. Makharov (57–65), K. D. Ushkin (66–76), L. L. Gabisheva (101–111), E. I.
Izbekova (112–17) and L. I. Egorova (118–24) explore the mythic and philosophic aspects of
olongkho poetry. Makharov gives an overview of the scholars' views on *olongkho* works.
Ushkin traces elements of ancient Sakha (Yakut) mythology and system of divinities in con-
temporary *olongkho*. Gabisheva describes some folk beliefs and practices of Sakha and other
geographically near people, which can serve as background for *olongkho* scenes (but she does
not connect the beliefs and practices with these scenes). Izbekova traces sacral formula num-
bers relating to ritual objects in *olongkho* texts. Egorova describes three totem images of the
wolf among the Sakha: *boeroe boetuengner,* a tribe of *boetueng* people in Amginsk, Viluej, and
Ham provinces (*ulus*); the wolf who is born from Erien Kyyl (a serpent); and *boeprtoeloeoekh
boeroe,* the wolf with three black lines on his forepaws. The discussion of the terms is lin-
guistic and extends to other elements of the culture with linguistic connections.

    V. M. Nikiforov (77–100), S. D. Muhopleva (125–33), A. S. Larionova (134–43), N. N.
Toburokov (144–49), N. N. Efremov (150–59) address literary-aesthetic problems. Nikiforov
discusses several key words in the *olongkho* tradition, explaining their linguistic origin and