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that “by” and “de” mean the same thing. Nevertheless, the publication of *Johnny Breadless* poignantly adds to our understanding of the international, pacifist currents of the 1920s and 1930s.

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Mountain Witches: Yamauba. By Noriko Tsunoda Reider. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2021. Pp. xiv + 238, acknowledgments, introduction, notes, illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. \$25.95 paper.)

In recent years, Japanese folkloric monsters and spirits, collectively labeled *yōkai*, have garnered more and more general interest, especially among people who grew up with anime, manga, and games. There is rich scholarship on *yōkai* in Japanese, but until recently there has been a comparative dearth of English-language academic work on the subject. Noriko Tsunoda Reider’s new publication is therefore an extremely welcome new contribution to a slowly growing corpus.

As the title indicates, the monograph focuses on the “mountain witch”—variously called *yamauba*, *yamamba*, or *yamanba*—one of Japan’s best known *yōkai*. Reider notes that “to many contemporary Japanese, the word *yamauba* conjures up images of an unsightly old woman who lives in the mountains and devours humans” (3). One feature of her own analysis, however, is to amplify simple characterizations by presenting differences over time and unpacking the *yamauba*’s common attributes. Because a consistent characteristic of the *yamauba* is that she is female, questions of gender undergird the book; the generally male demon figure of the *oni*, subject of an earlier monograph by Reider, serves as a point of contrast and comparison throughout.

Reider makes clear from the beginning that *yamauba* and other demonic women have a long history in Japan. Drawing on a dizzying assortment of texts, from the eighth-century mytho-historical *Kojiki* to late twentieth-century narrative poetry, she seeks out commonalities and contrasts. Although she hints at the possibility of an “archetypal” figure, she also problematizes broad generalizations, highlighting differences and changes over time. Indeed, if the *yamauba* has one overarching quality, it is her ambiguous and contradictory nature—something that, ironically, remains consistent through time.

Although Reider is attentive to historical specificity, she does not structure her analysis chronologically; rather each chapter focuses on different *yamauba* characteristics. Chapter 1, for example, discusses her “duality,” exploring how her negative traits—particularly her habit of eating humans—can be reconciled with positive behaviors such as gift-giving and helping others. Reider references numerous texts, including several well-known folktales and two *noh* plays, in search of links and contrasts.

Chapter 2 addresses *yamauba* as a symbol of motherhood, most famously as the mother of Kintarō, a boy who would grow up to become a legendary warrior. Here Reider introduces relevant folktales, legends, kabuki plays, and *ukiyo-e* images. She also discusses the *yamauba*’s association with weaving and, by extension, spiders. Chapter 3 explores the *yamauba*’s connection with mind-reading and prophecy, talents that appear in folktales, *setsuwa* (a premodern narrative genre), twentieth-century fiction, and even Kurosawa’s *Throne of Blood*, a 1957 film based on *Macbeth*. The theme of Chapter 4 is the *yamauba*’s ability to fly, and Chapter 5 focuses on her association with aging, particularly in relation to the famous tales of “mountains of abandoned old women” (*obasute-yama*).

Chapter 6 is the only chapter that is explicitly historical, bringing us into contemporary urban Japan with a discussion of the so-called *yamamba-gyaru* (“yamamba gal”) phenomenon of the 1990s, in which teenagers would bleach their hair,

darken their skin, and hang out in busy commercial neighborhoods such as Shibuya in Tokyo. In terms of youth culture, gender, fashion, and other sociocultural factors, this complex phenomenon celebrates the folkloric *yamauba*'s outsider and confrontational nature. In this chapter, Reider also discusses manga, anime, poetry, and other recent depictions of *yamauba*.

Mountain Witches: Yamauba accesses many texts from different genres. Reider also cites an impressive array of secondary literature in both Japanese and English. At times, her wide purview and erudition are challenging; as she unpacks one text after another, the reader can feel tangled in a web of influences. This is not necessarily a bad thing, however, because it reminds us that all these different forms of expression—legend, folktale, noh, kabuki, manga, anime, and film—are complexly interwoven and therefore cannot be analyzed in isolation. By not fixating on questions of “authenticity” but by appreciating a wide variety of media, Reider illustrates the *yamauba*'s mutability, showing how she is constructed as much by local narratives and beliefs as by elite or commercial influences.

Because Reider accesses so many texts across different historical periods, her book may be difficult for readers unfamiliar with Japanese history and literary or folkloric genres. She also uses a certain amount of Japanese terminology; although she provides explanations, this may be challenging for anybody not versed in the language. She does provide a list of “Japanese and Chinese Names and Terms,” but a glossary and perhaps a timeline might also have been helpful.

Overall, this is a significant contribution to folklore studies. Scholars interested in the monstrous in cultures outside Japan will find the book useful for seeking points of overlap as well as difference. For scholars of Japanese folklore, Reider pulls together many valuable texts and commentaries. I can see it serving as a sourcebook for graduate students—each *yamauba*-related story she introduces might become the basis of a seminar paper or a master's thesis. In fact, despite its inclusiveness, the book encourages further engagement with provocative and

persistent issues—especially gender, motherhood, and patriarchy. Ultimately, the figure of the *yamauba* is “multifaceted” and “truly full of contradictions,” with “each creator or viewer” (164) looking for something different. By taking a deep dive into the world of this Japanese mountain witch, Reider reminds us of the dynamism and adaptability of all folkloric beings—and, for that matter, all folklore.

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When Dream Bear Sings: Native Literatures of the Southern Plains. Edited by Gus Palmer, Jr. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2018. Pp. xli+358, list of figures, list of illustrations, foreword, acknowledgment, introduction, contributors, index. \$75 hardbound.)

When Dream Bear Sings is a compilation of stories, poems, letters, and various other written and oral works native to the first peoples of the Southern Plains, translated by “tribal speakers and linguists” who have an understanding of the source cultures (xxix). Filling a unique niche in Native American literature with this work, Gus Palmer addresses the problem of translating tales from Native American languages into English, especially with regard to translations previously done by non-native speakers who lacked a deep understanding of the cultures and narrative norms from which those stories arose. This collection thus strives to more closely capture the spirit of the original works, translating anew all of the entries, even if they have been recorded or published in other places. By including varied literary genres and large time periods, this work provides a historical, deep look into how these nations have interacted with the world and colonizers from first contact into the modern era. It also serves an important secondary

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