

Lái 陈来 (b. 1952) in light of Max Weber's "thesis" and "critique." Next, Daniel A. Bell outlines various attempts to reappropriate the notion of *tiānxià* 天下 for contemporary political theory. Tongdong Bai (白彤東) in his chapter (65–78), which is programmatically entitled "Confucianism to Save the World," proposes a new Confucian model of governance for China and the world. In Chapter 5, Ming-huei Lee (李明輝) informs the readers about early New Confucians'—and especially Mǒu Zōngsān's 牟宗三 (1909–1995)—penchant for democracy. Stephen C. Angle continues with reflections on Mǒu's thought developing what he calls "progressive Confucianism" qua new governance spirit. In Chapter 7, An-wu Lin (林安梧) discusses the key characteristics of what he styles "Post-New Confucianism" (*hòu xīn rúxué* 後新儒學). Ke Sheng takes a critical look at the "mission impossible" of Mǒu Zōngsān and his fellow New Confucians to "rebuild morality." In Chapter 9, Thomas Fröhlich engages with Táng Jūnyì's 唐君毅 (1909–1978) views toward totalitarianism. Hok Yin Chan (陳學然) sketches Táng's concept of humanism in the context of the latter's critique vis-à-vis colonialism and capitalism. In Chapter 11, Marc Andre Matten explores the "formation history" of two carriers of Chinese national identity, namely the Yellow Emperor and Confucius. Chapter 12, penned by Junhao Hong, Miao Liu, and Wen Huang, surveys the promotion (vehicles) of Confucianism in the PRC. Finally, in the epilogue, John H. Berthrong looks back at various "highlights" of the New Confucian current and concludes the book by stressing contemporary Confucianism's malleability.

Lukas Pokorny
University of Vienna

SEVEN DEMON STORIES FROM MEDIEVAL JAPAN. By Noriko T. Reider. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2016. Pp. xiii + 292. Paperback, \$33.95.

Reider's compelling study furnishes us with a deep understanding of the cultural meaning, sociopolitical, and religious background of seven *oni* (demon, ogre) legends. Each of the four sections (Samurai, Scholar, Women, It) starts by familiarizing the reader with detailed background information, etymology of names, relation to historical personalities or to other legends, and so on before arriving at the stories themselves, with each story taking up approximately a third of a chapter, the exception being the translation of "Blossom Princess," which is twice as long as the preceding interpretation. *Oni* are not always simply "demons"; sometimes they have complex characters and origins—such as a former Japanese scholar-bureaucrat starved to death by the Chinese, a gambler who creates the perfect woman out of dead bodies, or a strict father-in-law giving difficult tasks to a young bride. Reider's translation is a delight to read, retelling these texts from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries in vivid language. We encounter a giant spider disguised as an attractive woman

whose eyes shine "brightly like a reflection of fire on black lacquer" ("A Tale of An Earth Spider"). In the Cinderella-like story "Blossom Princess," a girl, abandoned by her wicked step-mother, receives an incense box from a *yamauba* (a witch-like supernatural forest-dweller) whose "delicate scent was indeed superb, as if it erased human sins." In the story "The Record of Tool Specters," in which tools come to life and trick people, the club Aratarō is translated as Rough John, and the scroll Kobun sensei becomes Professor Classics. These stories were written in part as entertainment, but they also served as didactic moral or religious instructions whose multilayered intents conveyed politically motivated portrayals of a certain family or contrasting the Japanese with the Chinese or one religious sect against another. Furthermore, the illustrations from the original picture-scrolls and woodblock-prints channel the imaginary in medieval Japan, bearing witness to a time when *oni* were considered as real potential threats in everyday life.

Isabelle Prochaska-Meyer
University of Vienna

TÍN NGƯỠNG THỜ MẪU TỨ PHỦ CHỖN THIÊNG NƠI CÔI THỰC [BELIEFS AND WORSHIP OF MOTHER GODDESS IN THE FOUR PALACES SHRINE—THE THIS-WORLDFLY SACRED PLACE]. Edited by Trần Quang Dũng. Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh: Nhà Xuất Bản Thế Giới, 2017. Pp. 185. VND 125000.

This well-edited book, with numerous images accompanying the text, offers an insight into various aspects of the Mother Goddess worship known as *lên đồng*, a religious tradition in Vietnam. It is important to note, however, that this religious practice mostly takes place in northern Vietnam. The book can be divided into two parts. The first presents a short and clear overview of the basic order of deities, immortals, and other "holy agents" being present in the rituals. The description also includes narratives of the origin and role of these supernatural beings in both daily life and in the course of Vietnamese history. These aspects are particularly emphasized by including in the Mother Goddess rituals the worship of Female Lords (*các vị Chúa Bà*) who endow mediums as well as the heroes who fought for Vietnamese independence, like Tứ Vĩ Hồng Nương and Trần Hưng Đạo. The second part introduces the rituals related to everyday life and the ones performed on specific occasions. Nevertheless, an emphasis is put on the rites for those who want to become either the official followers of this devotional practice (*Tôn nhang bản mệnh*) or mediums (*Từ phủ trình đồng*). This part also contains the description of costumes and objects being used in the rituals, as well as the offerings that are made during the ceremonies. It also includes texts that are recited and sung, as well as a list of holy beings with their names assigned to the given year of the Chinese zodiac system, whose mission is to protect the followers that