

study, however, is marred by a clumsy introduction that tries to do too much, giving an overview of Western theories of the grotesque, on the one hand, while giving an expansive literary critical history of *setsuwa* studies on the other. Another problem is that by being too faithful to the originals, her translations are too literal—detracting from the pleasure these tales certainly afforded medieval readers and listeners. Nonetheless, much can be learned by this interesting contribution to medieval religious literary studies.

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THE KĀLACAKRA TANTRA: THE CHAPTER ON SĀDHANĀ TOGETHER WITH THE VIMALAPRABHĀ COMMENTARY. Translated by Vesna A. Wallace. Treasury of the Buddhist Sciences. New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies, Columbia University, 2010. Pp. xv + 379. \$49.00.

This volume contains a complete translation of the fourth chapter of this important late Vajrayāna Buddhist *tantra* together with its indispensable Indic commentary. The translation is augmented by a very brief survey of the chapter's contents, an edition of the Mongolian translation of this chapter of the *tantra* (without the commentary), and two appendices listing Sanskrit names and terms appearing in the Mongolian edition. The translation is necessarily provisional because it is based upon the existing printed editions of the Sanskrit texts (which do not adequately utilize available manuscripts) and because the study of the technical terminology of Vajrayāna Buddhism is still in its infancy. That said, the translation provides a good representation of the diverse range of ritual, yogic, and meditative practices found in this tradition of Buddhist mysticism. This volume is recommended for specialists in Vajrayāna Buddhism.

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Inner Asia

NOT QUITE SHAMANS: SPIRIT WORLDS AND POLITICAL LIVES IN NORTHERN MONGOLIA. By Morten Axel Petersen. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Pp. xii + 272. Cloth, \$69.95; paper, \$28.95.

Pedersen's book addresses the paradox of "shamanism without shamans," which he observed as an anthropologist working in postsocialist Mongolia. The sudden and dramatic collapse of socialism in Mongolia in 1990 resulted in a true "ontological meltdown" among its populations, as once seemingly immutable institutions of the socialist welfare state were gradually becoming erased. Similar to other socialist contexts, where religious experts became victims of political purges of the 1930s, the collapse of the state led to a revival of occult, and especially shamanic, sensibilities. Yet Pedersen was consistently informed of a deficit of shamans by the Darhad Mongols, a community in northern Mongolia, known in both popular and scholarly imaginaries as a legendary land of powerful shamans, perhaps due to its sheer remoteness. Although Darhad shamans seem to have all but disappeared, the spirits—and the ideas, practices, and artifacts surrounding them—have come back. There also appeared a new category of persons who were "like shamans"—restless, labile, and sometimes violent men, who appeared to be permanently stuck in the process of becoming shamans in that they attracted a variety of occult forces, such as spirits of dead shamans or animals, without fully being able to control them. The figures of these "incomplete" or "potential" shamans constitute the overarching theme of Pedersen's book and a platform from where to launch his sophisticated and theoretically informed investigation of the relationship between the advent of the market in a formerly socialist society and the occult forces unleashed by these socioeconomic transformations.

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