



Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: The Nihon Ryoiki of the Monk Kyokai

Kyoko Motomuchi Nakamura

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This is the first collection of Buddhist legends in Japan, and these stories form the repertoire of miraculous events and moral examples that later Buddhist priests used for preaching to the people. As Kyokai describes his own intentions, "By editing these stories of miraculous events I want to pull the people forward by the ears, offer my hand to lead them to good, and show them how to cleanse their feet of evil" (p.222).

Nakamura's book is actually two works in one: first an introduction to the Nihon ryoiki, and then an annotated translation. The introduction analyzes the life of the author and the influence of earlier writings, and provides a valuable synthesis of the world view reflected in the work.

The annotated translation renders the more than one hundred stories into English narrative, with copious notes. Difficult terms are identified in the text with the original Chinese characters, while historical matters and Buddhist technical terms are explained in the footnotes.

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