

wonder. The conclusion returns to a concern with the capacity of ritual creativity to perform the “moral work of resistance, acceptance, rupture, and capture in a fraught time” (208). Srinivas notes again that creativity is part of ritual, and she observes that Malleshwaramites perform ritual “not only to engage modernity but to disrupt it in productive ways and create new ways of worlding” (212). The conclusion attempts to bring together the various threads of inquiry that Srinivas has woven throughout the book, and the final pages offer a brief but moving afterward concerning Dandu Shastri’s death in a traffic accident.

The author notes in the introduction that she wrote the book as “fragments within this folio, a series of notes collected over sixteen years … brought together by a commitment to ‘thickness’” meant to invite the “unfurling of wonder” rather than presume “endings and completeness” (31). This is perhaps the book’s greatest strength and its greatest weakness. The chapters are replete with marvelously rendered, often enchanting descriptions of ritual and modern life, but it is sometimes difficult to see the forest through the trees, delightful as the trees may be. The focus on wonder seemed to this reader to be somewhat forced in the last two chapters and especially the final chapter on time, which I found to be incongruous with the rest of the work. The book might have benefited also from deeper engagement with theories of ritual, especially in religious studies, beyond the classic but somewhat dated handful mentioned in the book. Nevertheless, “The Cow in the Elevator” is a deeply insightful work that offers us a glimpse of the creativity and wonder that sustain Hindu ritual life in the concrete jungles of modern, neoliberal India.

Tracy Pintchman (tpintch@luc.edu)

Sugihara, Yumi, and Willem van der Molen (eds.): Transformation of Religions as Reflected in Javanese Texts. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 2018. 179 pp. ISBN 978-4-86337-258-0. (Javanese Studies, 5) Price:

This book is the fruition of a major three-year research project titled “Transformations of Religions as Reflected in the Javanese Texts.” It is a collection of some of the papers presented at an international symposium held in Tokyo in 2015. The aim of the project was to examine how external religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam were interpreted and transformed in Java from the 9th to the 19th century through methodological and comparative examinations of prominent pre-Islamic and premodern texts. Some of the very early epic texts are called *kakawin* texts. These texts were a literary form structured along specific rules, which gave the text its shape. Stuart Robson’s chapter provides a methodology of how to work with *kakawin* texts. The methodological approach he uses to study such texts he calls a “terminological approach.” This approach is based on the assumption that terms ap-

pearing in the text would have had corresponding concepts that were important in the external world in which these texts were written. Through a literary analysis he tells us that we can reveal how the text functioned and the messages it tried to convey. One important theme that emerges in the *kakawin* text Robson analyzes is that the text was conceived of being filled with the divine. The texts were used as a channel of divine messages instructing rulers on how to maintain the world. He further points out that these texts have much mystical thought in them that can be found in later Javanese mysticism. One *kakawin* text is the “Ramayana,” which is thought to have been composed between 856 and 930 C. E. Toru Aoyama presents a discussion on the importance of *mokṣa* (freeing from the cycle of rebirth) in the “Ramayana” reliefs in the light of corresponding scenes in the literary texts. He argues that depicting *mokṣa* in the reliefs was important and that the producers of religious culture had a deep understanding of the concepts of Indian religious culture, which was adopted in early Java. Nevertheless, the Indian culture did not supplant indigenous Javanese concepts, which were also employed during the 9th and 10th centuries, a point that Miho Yamasaki, whose article presents a study of imprecations from old Javanese inscriptions, concurs with. Koji Miyazaki’s article focuses on the interrelationship between the *pawukon* (Javanese fortune-telling-calendar) and the story of Watu Gunung. *Wuku* is a thirty-seven-day week calendar. The *pawukon* is an explanation of what a person must do on each day of *wuku* and the combination of each cycle. The names of *wuku* appear in many of the early and even later Javanese manuscripts although today the *pawukon* is not known anymore. Miyazaki explores the meaning of *wuku* in the Watu Gunung story which recounts the origin of the 30-week calendar and points out that the narrative is colored with an Oedipus motif.

With Ben Arps contribution we are taken to the late 19th-century *wayang* play which had a central role in Javanese court life. Arps focuses on a specific scenario in the Bima Purified tale. In this tale, Bima goes on a perilous search for the purifying water following the instructions of his guru. During his quest large Bima meets a tiny person called Dewa Ruci in the Ocean and enters his body through his ear and receives enlightenment there. Arps sees the tale as providing an index of the dynamics of world-making that existed in the court environment. The narrative suggests a desire for mystical unity with God. Edwin Paul Wieringa focuses on the *Serat Jjiljalaha*, a late 19th-century text, whose author claims to be Satan. It is a book written in a way that purports to be imparting immoral conduct and devilish behavior. But this is a reversible technique, which critically ridicules Javanese nobleman’s behavior in court. Although the text utilizes playful wit, it was not meant to be taken lightheartedly and be laughed at. The text’s ulterior purpose is to teach a righteous and noble morality through mirroring the immoral behavior of the nobility of the period when it was written. George Quinn

brings the past and the present together in his article on the legend of nine saints and Gus Dur. The nine saints are believed to have been the original Islamic teachers who brought the faith to the Island of Java in the 15th and 16th century. They are believed to have performed miracles. In 2009, the ex-President Gus Dur died. Subsequently some people have been attributing miracles to him and venerating him as the 10th successor to the original nine saints. In their narratives about him, people who believe him to be a saint, use symbolic tropes similar to those found in earlier texts which extol the wonders of the saints. Quinn explores some of these intertextual tropes. The final chapter by Ronit Ricci focuses on the writing of certain texts among the Javanese diaspora in colonial Ceylon. These texts range from poems, talismanic texts to hadith narratives of Java's conversion to Islam. Taken together they provide an image of how Javanese religious and magical culture played an important role in the lives of people of Javanese descent in colonial Ceylon.

Although this book purports to be about the transformations of religions as reflected in Javanese texts, the book takes this central theme of its title for granted as none of the articles presented theoretically explore it. Instead, as each article focuses on a different period of Javanese history, one only gains a feeling of religious transformation occurring by reading the book as a whole. "Transformation of Religions" is a specialist book of Javanese textual analysis. As such it continues a classical disciplinary tradition of Javanese textual studies (Javanese studies) originally started by Dutch colonial researches and which was prominently taught at Leiden University. The book is important for Javanese studies, classical textual studies, religions of Java, Indonesian studies.

Nathan Porath (nathanporath@yahoo.co.uk)

Turner, Terence S.: *The Fire of the Jaguar*. (Ed. by Jane Fajans.) Chicago: HAU Books, 2017. 254 pp.
ISBN 978-0-9973675-4-6. Price: \$ 35.00

The book was edited by the author's widow, Jane Fajans, and includes a forward by David Graeber in which he details the intellectual influences that shaped Terence Turner's work. The essay, from which the book takes its title (i. e., two thirds of the text), concerns the Kayapo (Mebengokre) myth of the origin of cooking fire, previously known to many readers from Levi-Strauss' classic study "The Raw and the Cooked." Turner propounds a theory for analyzing the structure of a single myth, exemplified by the theft of fire from the jaguar, an intellectual exercise that merits a place among classic studies of mythology. The essay is an ambitious experiment, theoretically complex and stylistically sophisticated, though the prose style is not for the faint-hearted. It is a pity that it took over four decades to be published, as it is essentially a challenge to Levi-Strauss' analysis of myth; it may well have provoked a challenging response from the latter had he had the opportunity to do so.

Turner proposes a cybernetic-selfregulating feedback system as a model for the replication of social organization. He states that he is not concerned with static aspects of the social and cultural world, such as moiety systems, but the processes through which they are produced or maintained. His emphasis is on transformative processes focusing on the developmental cycle of domestic groups as exemplified by the trajectory of the protagonist of the myth. His argument is extremely compelling because the evidence is tailor-made to reinforce his model.

One of the offshoots of criticisms levelled at Lévi-Strauss' work has been a gradual dismantling of the notion of nature as a universal concept. Despite rejecting the contrast between nature and society (or culture) as a binary opposition, Turner fails to challenge the validity of these concepts, making his approach anachronistic. He emphasizes that he is dealing with the Kayapo's own understanding of these terms, hence the abundant use of inverted commas, but he fails to take the necessary step to reject them all together. Accordingly, the painstaking effort to demonstrate the permeability of the border between "nature" and "culture" is not convincing.

Given the limits of space available and due to the fact of being a fellow specialist on the Kayapo, a Gê-speaking people in Central Brazil, this review focuses on Turner's attempt to elucidate the replication of Kayapo social organization that the myth is purported to expound upon via the drama of the protagonist. He claims it to be the Kayapo counterpart of the Oedipal crisis in Western psychology, affirming that: "Kayapo boys and youths, having listened to this myth throughout their lives, may use this model to ease their own transitions from childhood to adulthood" (127). The drama concerns the fact that boys once used to leave their maternal home at around the age of eight, going off to live in the men's house in the center of the village until they fathered a child, whereupon they moved into their wife's house, due to the norm of matrixorilocality. Married men continue to live in the house of their mother-in-law, but the practice of leaving their maternal home as young boys was abandoned many decades ago (before I knew them in 1978), so the myth, that continues to be told, does not serve to reflect upon the trajectory of boys to adulthood.

Turner refers enigmatically to a patrilateral bias in Kayapo society; what he in fact produces is an unwarranted patriarchal model that approximates Lévi-Strauss' characterization of concentric dualism among the Bororo. Kayapo women are portrayed as inherently less social than the men. The women, together with the children, are dispelled to the "periphery" of the village – the circle of houses that constitute it, providing the infrastructure that enables men to get on with the business of society in the men's house and the central plaza. Intra(nuclear)family relations are characterized as infrasocial, producing what Turner describes as a hierarchically stratified model – "the higher [level] associated with males and the lower with females" (103). The notion of