

defeats Lengkuos. They stop fighting and prepare for a reconciliation, but Lengkuos weakens and dies. Seangkaian fans him to imbue his body with life; when he revives he has become very handsome.

Lengkuos decides to plant rice in a forest. He visits the *lundaan* to get a diamond ring with which to make fire, grow rice, and make a gong to call together the people who wish to leave for the other world. When the gong is beaten the people ascend to the other world, where thousands of Lengkuos's followers arrive at their final abode and have no more worries. They become spiritual beings (*meginaleu* or *berinareu*) and no longer grow old or die.

Compared with the attention that literary traditions have received, oral traditions of Southeast Asia have long tended to be neglected. SWEENEY emphasizes the importance of studying the oral traditions of this area (1987). Needless to say, the region has many preliterate societies for which oral tradition is the richest source for study of the culture. For example, the Tadyawan, one of the ethno-linguistic groups living in the mountainous areas of Mindoro, sing hunting songs called *pamudburum*. Despite the close association of the songs with hunting activities, they also provide the key to understanding this people's worldview, their concept of the relation between the spirits and human beings, and their view of the meaning of rituals (OBATA 1990a, 1990b).

Studies of oral traditions are an important contribution to the analysis of traditional cultures in Southeast Asia. By making this epic accessible Wein succeeds not only in revealing the worldview of the Tirurais, but also in informing us about taboos, about the role of shamans, about the various kinds of spiritual beings and their powers, and about the relation between shamans and spirits.

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1990b Shika — mondōka — shuryōshika: Philippine Mindoro-tō yakihata nōkōmin no jireikenkyū 詩歌・問答歌・狩猟詩歌 — フィリピン・ミンドロ島焼畑農耕民の事例研究. *Minzokugaku kenkyū* 55/3: 320–31.

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OBATA Sō  
Rikkyō University  
Tokyo

#### INDONESIA

TERADA, ALICE M. *The Magic Crocodile and Other Folktales from Indonesia*. A Kolowalu Book. Illustrations by Charlene K. Smoyer. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994. xii + 148 pages. Map, list of sources. Cloth US\$16.95; ISBN 0-8248-1654-4.

This is a book of twenty-nine Indonesian folktales selected from areas as widely separated as Aceh in northern Sumatra in the west to Irian Jaya in the east. They were gathered together to give young people "an understanding of the Indonesian people through their myths, legends, and folktales" (x). Many are indeed myths familiar to students of Indonesian religions, retold in a simplified way to entertain the younger reader without the scholarly apparatus usually present to clarify their meaning to the outsider.

These stories, like the myths they are based on, tell how the world came to be and

describe the heroes, the villains, the strong, the weak, the foolish, and the wise. They convey basic standards like the requirements to honor one's parents, to follow custom, and to obey the gods (or God, Indonesia being a pluralistic society, especially in religion). As myths these stories are not literally true, of course, but there is truth in their underlying messages; they are metaphors for the Indonesian societies they came from, encapsulating and presenting basic principles to the listeners. The main point of the stories is often not the most obvious one (e.g., the origin of rice), but rather the human and supernatural relations that are presented, the cooperation that is shown, the truths that are illustrated about the relation of life and death, and the examples that are given of the folly of going against society's accumulated wisdom. Metaphors, however, are culture specific, which makes it difficult to present these tales outside of their local context.

The stories were, of course, originally told orally; collecting them in books is a recent pastime, with roots in modern European scholarship. Remembering their originally oral nature is another key to understanding them; the context of the telling, with flickering oil lamps casting abrupt shadows and strange noises sounding in the night, becomes one with the tale itself in the listener's imagination. It is, indeed, much easier to visualize Nyai Roro Kidul and her kingdom of spirits in the Indian Ocean off the south coast of Java (32–39, 143–44) after one has seen the high sea at Parang Tritis and heard the roar of the ocean there along the southern coast.

Such things are, of course, impossible for an editor to convey to the modern Western reader. Alice Terada has, however, attempted to draw the reader into the world in which these stories originated, an effort often lacking in such collections. She has added background notes at the end of each tale as well as three pages of additional notes at the end of the book. Outline maps printed on the end papers locate the areas in the Indonesian archipelago from which the tales come. The batik-style illustrations by Charlene K. Smoyer also convey to the reader some of the atmosphere on which so much depends in these tales. Being able to see the characters moving in a mystic landscape helps make up for the lack of noises and flickering lights.

The endnotes vary in quality. Some give genuine additional information about the people and customs concerned, while others appear to have been included merely for the sake of increasing the number of entries. Some are of doubtful value, like one in which *dewi* is translated as "princess" instead of "goddess," its real meaning (79), or another in which the highlands of West Java are called Periangnan rather than Parahiyangan or Priyangan, the two accepted spellings of the word (60). Greater care should also have been taken with the rendering of certain other Indonesian words, as well as with place-names rendered in English (Bali Island [87] may be a literal translation of Pulau Bali, but the Island of Bali is more usual).

These imperfections, however, do not detract from the stories themselves, which will give those new to Indonesian mythology a good introduction to the range of tales in the archipelago, and which, together with the beautiful artwork, may stimulate readers to look further into the world of Indonesian religious thought.

Robert WESSING  
The Hague