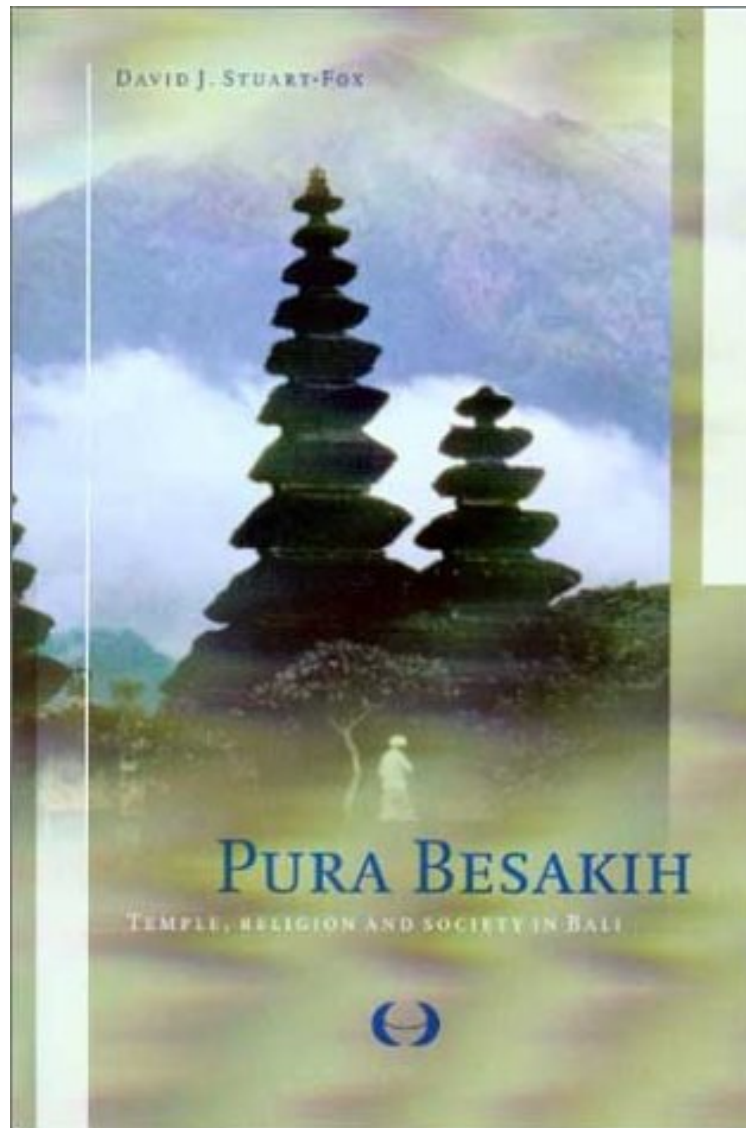


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Pura Besakih: Temple, Religion and Society in Bali (Verhandelingen Van Het Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde)

David J. Stuart-Fox

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David J. Stuart-Fox : Pura Besakih: Temple, Religion and Society in Bali (Verhandelingen Van Het Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pura Besakih: Temple, Religion and Society in Bali (Verhandelingen Van Het

Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very interesting and academically rigorous text
By CAThis is a wonderfully detailed - and exhaustive - text on Pura Besakih. The only reason I did not give it 5 stars is because there are so few photos. Otherwise, the piece gives readers a rich sense of the history of the site and the rituals held there. Many thanks to David Stuart-Fox for this authoritative work.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.
Excellent, Detailed Scholarly Book about the Mother Temple of Bali
By Johannes BakkerThe temple called Besakih is very important for the island of Bali. It is now called the Mother Temple. It is now a kind of unifying temple for all of the various parts of the island. The pre-modern "Patrimonial" princedoms (often incorrectly called "feudal kingdoms") are all represented by various kinds of buildings. In one sense it was once the "state" temple of Klung Kung, a principality that claimed to be sovereign but often was not fully sovereign. The original source of funding for the temple was the prebendal allotments of land and labor to the temple. Various levels of traditional officials administered the system, but we do not know enough about the history of the temple hundreds of years ago. Some of the history is clouded in myth. The "Kingdom" of Majapahit, which existed in Java, was a kind of exemplary political economic system. Stuart-Fox mentions the padmasana system that originated in Indic Civilization and was brought to Java and eventually to Bali. Stuart-Fox discusses the structures of the various classification systems used on Bali. There are dualistic classifications (above-below etc.) and triadic classification systems (Brahma, Vishnu, Siva [spelled Brahma, Wisnu, Siwa for Bali]). The dualistic system (with only Brahma and Siva) may be the older one and the triadic system (which also includes Vishnu in the middle) may be the newer one. There is also a conceptualization of going toward the volcanic mountain (Gunung Agung) versus going away from the volcano, toward the sea. An Indic system was introduced later so the classifications and the rituals get complicated. I am mainly interested in the Eka Dasa Rudra ritual that is allegedly held only every one hundred Balinese years. This is an informative, scholarly book. I am writing this review only because I feel it deserves five stars and not just four! (It may not have enough pictures to be a good coffee table book, but it is a solid scholarly work.) Some readers may find the extensive detail a bit daunting, particularly if they are reading about Bali for the first time and do not know very much about Indonesia generally. Terms like purah puseh, pura dalem [= pura bale agung] and pura dalem (temples belonging to Brahma, Visnu and Siva respectively) are explained. (I had never been quite clear on the terms before.) Some academics might want to quarrel with some of the structuralist linguistic arguments. This is more than just an introductory book, but in some ways it only touches on some important topics, like the structuring of time by the wuku (pawukon) calendar system. This book came out in 2002 but it is not dated.

This study of Pura Besakih--the paramount Hindu temple on Bali, which has developed over more than a thousand years into a great complex of 22 separate temples--combines an analysis of textual and historical sources with the fieldwork methods of anthropology to create a unified interpretation of this great temple.

About the AuthorDavid J. Stuart-Fox was educated at the University of Sydney and the Australian National University in Canberra. He is currently librarian at the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden.