

PROLEGOMENA TO ANALYSES OF CHANGES IN ASPECTS OF BALINESE LIFE ON LOMBOK

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Importance resides not in things but in people;
something is important because someone makes it important.

Hocart

I

IN the first place, the present study considers what Western academics have suggested animates Balinese social life. This consideration is followed by accounts

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of what each of four Balinese people might respond to the question, 'How do you construe the vitality and dynamism of your form of life?' The final section assesses what these people's views have to say about an evolutionary or processual model of Balinese life on Lombok. Unless specified or otherwise clear in what follows, 'Balinese' refers to that form of life.

II

Nearly thirty years ago, to go back no further, it was asserted that 'rivalry for prestige (in its purest sense, without economic perquisites) is an exceedingly important element in the Balinese social climate' (H. Geertz 1963: 53). Almost fifteen years later this assertion, it seems, had become: 'it is the guaranteed lag in the hoped-for congruence of prestige and power that animates [Balinese] social life' (Boon 1977: 184). Not quite the same period elapses and this 'very important point' is rendered into other words as: 'the vitality and dynamism of Balinese social life is dependent on the gap between "pragmatically earned versus divinely endowed status"' (Howe 1989: 67).

The scenario envisaged is, for example, as follows. Groups of people, or individuals, compete for prestige, status and power. Those who come out on top may be of a less fine estate (*bangsa*) or, within one estate, of a less fine rank than those who do not. It is this disjuncture that is said to animate and to be the driving-force of Balinese social life; and not only the disjuncture, but also the processes that lead to it, accompanied as they are by changing alliances as others hitch themselves to those perceived to be on the way up or detach themselves from those seen to be going down (see, for example, Schulte Nordholt 1980; C. Geertz 1980).

An important way of dealing with that disjuncture is to claim a finer title, and its trappings, as defined by the system of the four estates (*catur bangsa*: Brahmana, Ksatria, Wesia, Sudra, from finest to least fine). Thus Howe suggests (1989: 67) that

the central aspect of the status hierarchy is not that it unequivocally fixes everyone's position, but rather the opposite: simultaneously it provides both a framework within which the divergence between ritual status and political power can be understood, and also a set of cultural rules by which attempts can be made to reduce the incongruence.

Howe is the latest in a line of writers (e.g. Geertz and Geertz 1975: 122; Boon 1977, ch. 8; C. Geertz 1980; Schulte Nordholt 1986) who want it that within and among the Ksatria, Wesia and Sudra estates there has always existed title mobility, that the estates have never constituted closed groups, but that the view that they

do and did is a result of Dutch administrators projecting a view of Indian caste on to Bali.¹

In a recent study (Duff-Cooper 1991a) I argue against the contention that people's positions are not unequivocally fixed within one of the four estates—which is not to argue that the four main categories are closed groups—on a number of theoretical and empirical grounds. Prime among these are that if they were not, the divergence (incongruence, disjuncture) referred to could not be perceived as such and the second-order functions pinpointed by Howe could not operate; and that I was taught on Lombok that one's position or place (*linggih/tegak*)² was decided by birth.

However, I do not suggest there, but do now, that Howe and Boon, to concentrate on these two theorists, build a theory of change into their opinions about present-day Balinese social life. In the former, change is reliant upon the motivation of individuals (e.g. Howe 1989: 64, 67-9). This reliance is odd, and might be judged disastrous, in explaining aspects of a form of life where 'a notion of individualism of the western kind' (ibid.: 50) is generally not evinced (see Duff-Cooper 1985a). In the latter, it was noted, the vitality and driving-force of Balinese social life is dependent on the disjuncture (lag) referred to. It is not clear whether the relationship referred to is supposed to be causal. If it is, it is then unlikely in the extreme that the lag should play the role in Balinese life ascribed to it: 'the idea of a single efficient cause does not appear to have been fruitful, or even thought likely to be so, in any discipline at all' (Needham 1962: 122); and furthermore it might be thought inapplicable, again, to Balinese ideology (ideas and values in social action), which is seemingly not causal in character (Duff-Cooper 1986a; Guermonprez 1987: 110). If the relationship is not supposed to be causal, Boon does not say what he considers it to be. We could guess—but neither way is satisfactory.

These writers, and others, also evince the familiar functional bias of sociologistic approaches and the generally concomitant prejudice that accords priority to politico-economic processes and places cosmology at an explanatory remove—or else, which is as unhelpful, extracts cosmology from the rest of Balinese life and places it apart from other aspects of it. Such procedures are again not consonant with Balinese ideology, which—its students often repeat in line with what the Balinese constantly aver one way or another, but which seems not to have been heard by those students (cf. e.g. Schaareman 1986: 142-3)—is pervaded by 'religious' ideas.

Our theorists, then, repeatedly refer to Balinese social life, or to aspects of it, as though this were a substantial unit. Apart from reference almost never being

1. See, for example, Guermonprez 1987: 159 n. 34. Guermonprez is inexact in stating that Boon was the first to draw attention to these matters, as the Geertz and Geertz reference shows.

2. The first word given in this way here and below is the fine (*alus*) Balinese, the second, the coarse (*kasar*) Balinese.

made to the Balinese of Lombok or of Sulawesi, say, who are, of course, as much Balinese as the Balinese of Bali, if their wholly justified claims are taken seriously; and apart from us not knowing what Balinese social life is like in many places, such an approach ignores what they say—‘different village, different *adat*’—amply borne out by Korn (1932; see also e.g. C. Geertz 1959: 991, 1964: 32). Or if difference is recognized, then for the sake of theoretical novelty, as it seems to be, the data are deformed by glossing over difference and concocting three types that are supposed to be evinced on Bali along geographical lines (e.g. Howe 1989: *passim*; Korn 1932: 77, 179; cf. Schaareman 1986: 2). Such a procedure does not work (Duff-Cooper 1990a), and again it takes no real heed of the differences between what different Balinese people at different times and in different places say and do.

Moreover, the fixation with those Balinese who, like the Gianyar dynasty, appear to have improved their social position, or who, like the Karangasem dynasty and the Pandé Tusan, seem to have lost ground, leaves out of account the very large number of Balinese people who (the ones I know at any rate) deprecate such self-regarding manipulations of the system (in the former case) and whose own lives are spent simply trying their utmost to secure them within the constraints imposed by the institutions that frame their existences on earth. My view is that these people would see those opinions and the limited view upon which they are based for what they are: the narrow constructions of a certain far-from-disinterested class of people that reflect the mentality of the places where they arose and the time when they did so; and that they would respond to them with the healthy disregard and scepticism that in general they evince for ‘officials’ and for the expertise they claim to possess (see Duff-Cooper 1985b), agreeing with Feyerabend (1987: 217; cf. Hocart 1939: 201) that ‘one cannot trust received opinions...even if they should happen to be supported by outstanding scholars in the relevant fields’.³ The questions to be addressed here are then: ‘How do Balinese people construe the vitality and dynamism of their form of life?’ and, ‘What do their views say to us about evolutionary models and Balinese life?’

At the turn of this century, Shimazaki, a Japanese novelist, made the point (see Shimazaki 1974: 107) (subsequently made independently by Hocart (1939) and much later by such social anthropologists as Hefner (1985: 13-22) and Guermonprez (1987: 52 n.2))—a point implicit in the familiar emic/etic distinction—that different classes of people and/or individuals respond differently to the same thing. As Hefner (1985: 19-20) puts it, people have ‘minds, feelings, and biographies that

3. Officialdom, in its turn, ‘for the most part holds modern (Western-influenced) ideas, together with an urban antipathy and contempt towards the (“poorer”, “uneducated”) village population’ (Schaareman 1986: 14). It is not the case, incidentally, that the Balinese are ‘fashionably up to date in denying anyone, except conceivably Divinity, a privileged access to reality’ (M. Hobart 1985: 112, 1987: 44). As Angela Hobart (1983) writes, ‘It is only the common man who cannot establish the truth-value of beliefs. An enlightened man may transcend his senses and gain comprehension of a higher order of reality.’

are never as stereotyped as our analytic ideal types might suggest...hence different actors bring different attitudes, feelings, and knowledge to the same social dramas. Once there, moreover, they frequently occupy different positions in the performance'; and position has implications for access to, and likely interest in, it.

'Free-floating abstraction' is not always the most desirable analytical strategy to adopt (Rich 1986: 218), but it can never be entirely circumvented, especially in a study like the much abbreviated present one. To an extent though, it can be brought down to earth again, so to say, by the consideration of people's attitudes, feelings and knowledge. What I judge might be the responses of four Balinese people—three men and one woman—to our first question are thus presented next.

This approach could be challenged on a number of both general and specific grounds. First, it purports to speak for other people, but it is not obvious that one can properly speak for another—no one truly knows another, nor indeed him- or herself—or *a fortiori* for others, especially when, as in the present circumstances, they thereby become (unwitting) exemplars. My responses to these objections are that I lived closely with the people I try to speak for and that (others who know Balinese forms of life would agree) they are spread socially fairly widely by the important criteria of relative age, sex and status. More particularly, I have to say that responses to questions put in the field are not reported. What follow in the next four sections are, rather, educated guesses, to a greater or lesser extent, which can, however, be checked by anyone who doubts what is written there. I justify the recourse, against which Hocart inveighs (1937: 351), not only on pragmatic but also on other grounds already explicated at length (Duff-Cooper 1987a: 63-4); as well as with reference to Rich's authoritative advocacy (1986: 136-55, esp. 148-9) of different forms of 'educated guesses', in particular '(auto)biomythography', as essential to classes of people (Rich's main concern is 'woman of color and/or lesbians') who have been silenced in various ways; and by the fact that 'in science faint heart never won fair lady' (Hocart 1970: 13).⁴

III

Bi' Pon, a Sudra of minimal formal education living in Asak, one of the Balinese villages that comprise the *désa* Pagutan, was probably in her mid-forties when we

4. As I have shown elsewhere (e.g. Duff-Cooper 1990b), I incline to the view (Needham 1978: 75-6; Hobart 1987) that social anthropology is more akin to novel- and poetry-writing than to 'science' as generally understood (but see Duff-Cooper 1984: 36; see also Feyerabend 1987: 294).

were first introduced.⁵ The compound where she lived with her husband and others of his local descent group (*turunan*) was small but exceedingly well appointed and cared for, with brick-and-glass living quarters, fine open pavilions (*balé*), and a small but elaborate compound temple (*mrajan/sanggah*).

Whenever Pedanda Gdé (see below, sec. VI) and I visited, usually after dinner, we were cordially received and handsomely entertained with coffee and cigarettes, betel and sweetmeats, and often a proprietary brand of arak or brandy; and if I felt like it, a masseuse would be summoned to give me an invigorating massage for which Bi' Pon insisted on paying. All of this demonstrates that Bi' Pon was of a local descent group of means; but she was also wealthy in her own right, as it were, through holding rights in what I gathered was an extensive hectareage of rice-fields and in disposal of produce from dry gardens, as well as through money-lending.

Bi' Pon often visited the Gria (see below, sec. VI), and was always well-received both by Pedanda Gdé and his wife, the Pedanda Istri, and by others resident there. Whenever she came she had gifts (coconuts, fruit, coffee-beans, or tobacco) with her; and on days when the ancestors and gods in the Pedanda's compound temple were especially honoured, she ate some of the left-over offerings—for Bi' Pon and her marital descent group were *sisia* to Pedanda Gdé's Surya (lit., sun), with whom she had 'constantly' 'a giving-receiving relationship' (Hooykaas 1964: 235; see also Duff-Cooper 1985b, 1991b).

Bi' Pon, though rather short, walked tall and straight, a striking woman though not perhaps beautiful and without the fine features that can be seen among the three Balinese finest estates (*triwangsa*). Her ready smile was particularly charming, and a fine trait in Balinese eyes, as was a steady flow of banter and repartee, directed at the Pedanda and his wife and others, usually about me and about her willingness to be a foil for the Pedanda's humour. Jokes generally revolved around money and sex.

Particularly striking were Bi' Pon's large, almond-shaped, black eyes that flashed with a bright gleam. They seemed to say that here was a woman who had seen life, as indeed I later learnt from the Pedanda she had. Rather than 'marry' in her late teens or early twenties, she had entered various relationships that are seen as a man borrowing (*selang/ngilih*) a woman from her natal descent group. Almost none of the conventions that apply to 'marriage' apply here, where any children are 'illegitimate' (*astra*) and where the relationship, which is understood as being based mainly on sexual attraction, can be ended at any time by one or other partner simply dropping out of it. Bi' Pon had thus been what men at least call 'naughty' (*nakal/kual*; Ind. *tunasusila*). Only much later had she agreed to marry a widower as his second wife. All 'naughtiness' then stopped.

5. Bi' is short for Bibi, 'aunt'; Pon is the third day of the five-day week (*panca wara*)—see Goris 1960 on the Balinese calendar—and also means 'pound'. I do not know why Bi' Pon has this personal name.

As a married woman, though without children, Bi' Pon's main concerns (as they seemed to me) were essentially those of most married women: to support her husband and relatives, and more particularly their ancestors and gods in the compound temple and in the other temples—village, *désa*, 'national' (see e.g. Duff-Cooper 1986b)—to which he and they were connected by descent, residence and otherwise. She was also a business woman, concerned to secure profit (*aget*) from what she and her husband had (but see below, sec. V). She was a generous *sisia* to Pedanda Gdé and his wife, and they bestowed their favour on her in return.

Naturally, it did the Pedanda and his relatives no harm to have such a wealthy, generous and entertaining *sisia*; and concomitantly the standing of Bi' Pon and her marital descent group was probably enhanced by the attentions of the Pedanda, a man of the very finest Balinese status and in his morning meditation a vehicle for the very high god Siwa and maker of holy water (*tirtha*) of the finest kind. Yet Bi' Pon never gave the slightest hint that for her the vitality and dynamism of that part of Balinese social life that she lived was dependent upon a gap in her divinely endowed status (Sudra) and her achieved status; nor that she ever conceived of herself as of any estate other than Sudra, which I am sure the Brahmana at the Gria Taman also saw her as, and only as. For Bi' Pon, the driving-force and vitality of Balinese social life were doing what was required ritually of her as a married woman, and what her material circumstances appeared to her to require her to do, namely augment them and employ them as a right-minded Balinese should and does, for her own and others' benefits. (It should here be noted that a money-lender 'is deemed to do the borrower a favour by granting a loan' and that 'the borrower is placed in a debt of gratitude even if the loan is paid back with interest' (Gerdin 1982: 212).)

It might seem as though Bi' Pon confirms the view (e.g. M. Hobart 1980a: 2-3) that a prime Balinese concern is to order life 'advantageously' through action, as though all Balinese subscribed to an incipient market rationality. A person's good fortune or ill fortune (*aget lacur*), however, is ultimately dependent upon the will and humour of his or her ancestors and gods (e.g. M. Hobart 1978: 75). This suggests that to conceive of Balinese people as continuously trying to order their lives so as to place themselves in social situations that will result in them obtaining maximum advantage is to misconstrue what is going on here. The question, 'What is "thought" in Balinese ideology?', anyway remains.

'Thought' is *idep*, one of the three powers or ways (*tri paramana*) of knowing, of which the others are 'energy' (*bayu*) and 'sound' (*sabda*) (e.g. M. Hobart 1985: 125, 1986a: 148-9; see also Duff-Cooper 1990c). In line with the attribution of these three ways to aspects of the Balinese chain of being, *idep* is the finest, highest and most abstract of the three and is thus an aspect of the 'Great God Unimaginable', Sang Hyang Acintya or Vidhi, the Balinese high or highest god (see e.g. Sugriwa 1963: 23, Hooykaas 1973: 44).

These three powers are connected with such other aspects of Vidhi as the three qualities (*guna*), the three 'paths' (*warga*), the four estates and the three heavens (*loka*). Analysis of the relationships that hold among these sets and of their

relationships to the Balinese conception of the person (Duff-Cooper 1985a) suggests that in Balinese ideology a Balinese is far less free to think him- or herself into an advantageous position, as it were, than romantic individualism might wish. The kinds of thoughts to which people are disposed, in the senses both of what the thoughts are about and their nature, are determined to an extent by birth (one's estate and the other people to whom one is related through birth) and by what they have done, said and thought (and also what their relatives have done, said and thought) in previous lives; and by the days of their birth, and the personal names they are given. All these matters produce a person's thoughts, words and deeds.

If all this were not some way from some Balinese people, let alone all of them, trying to order their lives 'advantageously', two further grounds suggest that Balinese ideology does not posit a direct relationship of any kind between reasons and ends. First, Balinese ideology seems not to posit 'cause' as a distinct mode of relation but to elide what 'we' generally distinguish as causes and reasons, and then to correlate these with their 'effects' (Duff-Cooper 1986a; M. Hobart 1985: 118). Second, to the Balinese

talk about rational means and ends without referring to the situation and to the actor is...gabeng, ill-formed and incomplete.... In place of a dichotomy of means and ends, the Balinese commonly recognize a triad, by adding the agent with his, or her, tastes, perceptions, emotions, and interests. (M. Hobart 1985: 124-5)

In Balinese terms, then, accounting for the behaviour of, say, Bi' Pon is very complex and evinces markedly different ideas from the psychological, philosophical and politico-economic ideas that 'we' might employ to account for similar behaviour. But there is no reason why those ideas should not be taken just as seriously as, it is to be expected, are Balinese ideas about other such aspects of their forms of life as 'black' magic, say, where difference from what 'we' think is more readily conceded—if, that is, Balinese ideology is to be taken seriously.

IV

Wayan Cara was about eighteen years old when he first introduced himself to me, showing me how to make *saté* during cremation rites held at the Gria Taman. He turned out to be from the Sudra-only village of Baturujung, headed by I Nengah Semer (see below, sec. V). Like Bi' Pon he had had only minimal formal education, but his economic situation differed hugely from hers. His father and mother and some of their many children (Pak Cara was their fifth-born) lived out in the rice fields in a nominally temporary settlement (*pondok*) that had become permanent for them since they had lost their compound in the village through the father's gambling. (He had been expelled from the village council (*banjar*) for not

repaying loans, and henceforth lived from hand to mouth, selling palmwine (rather too much of which he drank himself), or doing a little day-labouring from time to time.) Pak Cara's father's brother and his wife and two children lived in a very small, ill-kept compound in the village, while in another very small run-down and often dirty compound (Duff-Cooper 1985c: 35, fig. 3) lived his mother's brother, wife and family, his mother's divorced sister and sons, and his mother's mother, a lady who looked very old indeed and who was blind, and an elder, also blind brother.

Cara, as everyone used to call him, divided his time between these three places, the village spring where people gathered to talk and bathe, and the compound of a very wealthy village local descent group for which he worked, earning perhaps Rp. 30.000 (then c. £17) and his meals for three months' work. 'Work' consisted mainly of labouring in the descent group's rice fields and doing odd jobs, running errands, and so on.

Pak Cara was slight, but generally taken to be very handsome. He was known too as a very hard and reliable worker, and as being very generous, when he had anything to be generous with—which was not often because like other hard-working, generous young men he was also an inveterate gambler on cock-fighting. Whatever he had went mainly as stakes or on paying off debts incurred through gambling. Indeed, I was warned to be careful with what I had: when a cock-fight was in the offing, money and things, even one's sandals, were apt to disappear (usually sold or pawned), because Wayan, like others, would become 'hot' (*kebus*).

Wayan was particularly prone to getting 'hot'. 'Cara' applied to a child means one who sulks or cries because he or she is angry, and his mother told me that that was why he was given the name. Wayan was not on speaking terms for various reasons with three of his elder brothers, and when he made what 'we' might call emotional attachments, e.g. to his father's brother's daughter, to hard-working Muslims with whom with other Balinese he made an on-going rice harvesting team (*kelompok*) (see Duff-Cooper 1989), or to me, they were fierce and passionate and consuming. These strengths of emotion he also displayed when conflicts arose between Balinese and local Muslims, when Wayan was in the vanguard of the young men lined up in the rice fields to fight, or between him and others, me included, when he adopted a principled but essentially self-denying position. His attachments to the ancestors and gods, especially the Bhatara in the *jaba*, the temple in the outside court of the village temple (*pamaksan*), could not be faulted: again he was very hard-working, not only at such tasks as preparing meals (offerings) for them and others present at such events as temple festivals, but in dancing and sitting up with them, entertaining them perhaps for two or three nights, as well.

Wayan married his father's brother's daughter, his *misan*, a marriage that is too 'hot' for some (Korn 1932: 472), and they now have two children, named, as I'll be forgiven for recalling, after my sister and me. Sadly, though, he could not provide for his family in the village, so he and his wife and children took a government-paid passage to southern Sulawesi and a hectare-and-a-half of land

there. (Government plans to construct a petroleum works where he and his family and others have built houses and cleared ground means that shortly they will have to move again.) He compared his situation to mine, living away from where we were born out of necessity, but looked forward to us being together again, in the house we built together in his father's brother's compound, 'as before' if only briefly,⁶ and ultimately to being cremated in Baturujung so that he can be with his ancestor-gods (*lelangitan*, from *langit*, sky) there.

Clearly any talk here about a disjuncture between divinely endowed and pragmatically earned status would be absurd. And, in the light of the struggle that Pak Cara has had not to sink under the weight of the problems life has dealt him, it would be at the least insensitive and impertinent to attempt to translate his concerns into such terms.

Pak Cara, like Bi' Pon, is Sudra, and I think he knows that as things are among the Balinese that means that, given the circumstances of his relatives, his life will consist of hard, dirty, physical labour. Moreover, he has had neither the education, nor the inclination to get one—nor has he the connections that might change his life. This, though, he can to an extent do through the cock-fight and at such other times as temple festivals, when the beings of the essential, timeless (*niskala*) realm are sacrificed to, materially and/or with labour. These sacrifices may be rewarded by a gift (*pica*, *anugrah*) from the gods, in the form of a win on the fight, good health, a congenial family life, or such like. Pak Cara has good health and a more or less agreeable life with his wife and children, I gather, but little else and little to look forward to. In as much as life is vital and dynamic for him, it consists of work, mainly in the fields but also for the essential beings just mentioned, in the attempt to make his life 'complete' and 'happy' (see Bosch 1960: 63). I have not the heart to ask Pak Cara whether he thinks he has ever had, has, or will attain such a life.⁷

V

I Nengah Semer, the Head (Klian) of Baturujung must have been in his early sixties when we first met, on the week-long rain-ensuring rite *Pekelem* held annually at the crater lake (Segara Anak) on Mount Rinjani, the Mahameru, under one aspect, of the Balinese on Lombok. He later told me that I then commended myself to him by asking, as we sat around a spluttering fire in the rain of a cold

6. For a reunion in the village in April 1989, which finally could not take place, Pak Cara had permission to be away from Sulawesi for only one calendar month including travelling time from there to Lombok and back by boat.

7. For some of the reasons/causes why such a life may or may not be achieved, see M. Hobart 1980b: 63-5.

night halfway up to the summit, 'Why are we here?' This question he interpreted as intimating a properly inquisitive attitude to the hidden things of existence.

Upon our return from Rinjani, Pak Semer invited me to lunch, and our relationship developed until I moved out of the Gria Taman into the village where he helped Pak Cara and me renovate a dilapidated house in the latter's mother's brother's compound—though I generally took coffee and meals with Pak Semer in his compound (Duff-Cooper 1985c: 35, fig. 2), a large one by the standards of the village, and extremely well appointed and well kept. Pak Semer turned out to be a wealthy man. He was also extremely intelligent and kind, and always prepared to discuss with me whatever might be on my mind, be it a dream to be interpreted, a rite to be better appreciated, or an emotional response to be guided into. Such attentions to me merely added to his duties as Head of Baturujung, as a member of a number of irrigation associations (*subak*), as a full-time grower of rice, and as a man much in demand by others. He was generally greatly respected, not only in the village but far more widely, by Balinese of all estates and also by Islamic Sasak.

In his youth, Pak Semer had been a womanizer, a strong drinker, and an inveterate and heavy gambler both on cock-fights and on cards (*cuki*), but he said that, as he got older, he felt less inclined to behave in such ways, though he could still drink with the best when I moved into the village. A serious illness, however, put a stop to even that. When he came out of hospital he gave up drinking and worked harder than ever, both in the fields and around the compound, at his administrative duties, and making visits of homage (*maturan*) to temples, where he presented our offerings. Finally, he began to officiate in the village temple. His life had, indeed, taken on that 'renunciatory quality' that characterizes the role of the very old in Tengger (Hefner 1985: 82), as it does, or should do, for any 'old' Balinese people—'old' either through marriage, but more especially through years or through consecration as a 'priest'.

Pak Semer told me that he had worked for the Japanese when they had occupied the island during the Second World War. I was shocked by this, both because of the stories told about Japanese brutality and arrogance towards the people, especially the young women, and their property and (I suppose) because of received ideas I had about collaboration with an enemy. But Pak Semer was a pragmatist. Encouraging and assisting the Japanese war effort seemed likely to get rid of the Dutch, for although he admired Liefrinck and Goris—as a child (as I gathered from someone else he had known) he had seen Liefrinck—he realized that they were in his country for what they could get out of it, and the same went for all imperialists. Nor could he abide officials from town, especially those who came to 'advise' about things the villagers knew far more about.

Pak Semer could be characterized as a conservative radical. For him, Balinese ideology framed the world in which he and others lived, of course, but he was prepared to question aspects of it by, for instance, maintaining that knowledge that is 'officially' reserved to Pedanda, which is *aje were*, could be divulged to and/or employed by such people as himself who were aged and in the necessary calm,

still state of mind. He was intensely critical of anyone who he felt did not behave properly, i.e. modestly, kindly, and generously, with others (see Howe 1989: 50), such as the person who in other circumstances would now have been king (Anak Agung) in Pagutan as well as the Pedanda Istri (see above, sec. III). And he rebuked the young who were overkeen to attribute to old and ugly women especially such unbecoming traits as a propensity for black magic, which he none the less knew as a real aspect of Balinese life, regaling us with such tales as one about a very beautiful woman from another Balinese village in Pagutan who on a date with him had turned into a vicious monkey. He also knew that Balinese ideology did not have all the answers in the modern world (which ideology does?), and was eager to investigate innovations. He bought a powered plough, scoffing at traditionalists who had it that such machines ruined the soil in the fields, and was making sure that his son had a good formal education.

As for the vitality and dynamism of Balinese life, Pak Semer would say (I think) that these consisted in people living it as fully and as hard and properly as they could. They would *not* include being dissatisfied with one's lot, be it acquired or divinely endowed status, either behaving in the self-regarding ways adopted by a Sudra Kubayan in Pujung (Howe 1989: 67-9) or adopting 'the cold reasoning of the business man, banker, or capitalist' (Mauss 1954: 73), in an attempt to close the perceived gap between the two (see Duff-Cooper 1990e: 21-3).

On the other hand, as trustee for the time being of one's local descent group's real and other property one has a duty to make the most of it by hard work informed by intelligence and knowledge, but also a duty to use the proceeds of that work not only for the benefit of oneself and one's own but also for the common weal. And, of course, one is as good as, no better or worse *qua* human being than, the next man or woman, who are as good as oneself and one's relatives as human beings (*jadma, manusa*), in principle at least. Naturally, differences obtain among classes of people: there are men and women, old and young, essential and material, 'us' of greater and lesser extension and the rest, rich and poor, *triwangsa* and Sudra. It is not the differences as such that matter, for they are in the nature of things; what counts (I think Pak Semer would maintain) is what is made of them.⁸ Given these views, it becomes readily intelligible how the Sudra Pak Semer and Pedanda Gdé, Brahmana, to whom we now turn, were, before the latter's consecration (see e.g. Korn 1928), the closest and most constant of companions.

8. Pak Semer, and Padanda Gdé, would, I know, agree that Balinese life is an ordered whole (*un tout ordonné*); but I am also sure that they would take issue with the contention (as I have repeatedly taken issue with it) that 'ordered' is equivalent to 'hierarchical' (*hiérarchisé*) without qualification, if 'hierarchical' and other forms of this word are counterposed with 'equality', 'egalitarian', and such like (Guermontprez 1987: 199, see also e.g. 54, 62-5; see also Howe 1989: 54, 50). The order that Balinese life as a whole evinces consists partly of relations (symmetrical and asymmetrical) represented vertically and/or horizontally. 'Symmetry' does not equal 'equality', nor 'asymmetry' 'inequality' or 'hierarchy' (Duff-Cooper 1991b). For a fuller description of the principles that order Balinese life on Lombok, see Duff-Cooper 1991c, 1991d.

VI

Ida Pedanda Gdé Madé Karang invited me to live at the Gria Taman (Duff-Cooper 1985c: 34, fig. 1) about a week after I arrived on Lombok, a gracious gesture I am extremely grateful for. I stayed there for nearly a year, and was a regular visitor for the rest of my time on the island. Pedanda Gdé would not accept money for rent and food, but left me to discover that one has a duty to support such statuses through the giving of gifts (*mapunia*) (see e.g. Duff-Cooper 1991b).

The Pedanda instructed me in 'divine cosmic order and harmony, and...life and actions [including written and spoken language] in agreement with this order' (Schärer 1963: 75). But he warned me, after a few weeks, against being too serious: study, he maintained, should be leavened with what seem like more frivolous pursuits—listening to music and *derama*, playing cards, attending cock-fights, just sitting chatting, drinking and laughing, and womanizing. Not all these could be followed with the Pedanda. He could not properly attend cock-fights, blood offerings to demons (*bhuta*), nor womanize, nor go out to have fun (*macanda-canda*; Ind. *main-main*) (note the 'renunciatory quality' mentioned above); but he could and did advise me about these aspects of Balinese life, for before he was consecrated he had been a great gambler and womanizer, and had a number of illegitimate children to prove the latter at least.

The Pedanda had not long been consecrated when I was living at the Gria, but the mystical services that he could provide—meditating (*maweda*) at marriage and cremation rites, for instance, dealing with illnesses as a medicine-person (*balian*)—seemed to be greatly in demand. This was in part at least undoubtedly because he was the son of his father, now the Pedanda Bhatara (*bhatara*, god, protector) who used often to fly to Europe to visit Queen Wilhemina, though he seemed still to be in the Gria at such times, and who was freed (i.e. died) when he was over 110 years (i.e. extremely) old.

Although the Gria is very extensive, and in some ways rather grand with its moated temple, Pedanda Gdé was far from wealthy; and I sensed that when he and his relatives held rites it was a trying time for him making clear to his *sisia* (see above, sec. III) that he wanted to 'work' (*makarya*, i.e. hold a rite) and leaving it up to them to provide him with the wherewithal to do so on a scale commensurate with his status, as a Pedanda, the very finest of all the statuses defined by the system of the four estates. Rites were held satisfactorily at the Gria; but the Pedanda made clear when he reminisced about when his father was alive that he and his relatives could no longer hold such rites as then, when the Gria was festooned with white cloth and wave after wave of guests would be fed formally for weeks, perhaps months on end. The impossibility was grounded both in the descent group no longer having the huge resources required and in it no longer being becoming to behave so gorgeously. The climate of the times did not allow it.

None the less, the Pedanda was strict in other ways. A niece of his who allowed herself to be taken in marriage by a young Wesia was with little ado

'thrown away' (*kutang*) (Duff-Cooper 1991a); and the old observances as to language and other ways of keeping the purity and fineness of such a status were strictly adhered to, though menstruating women were no longer sequestered in a special hut in the western gardens of the Gria, they just did not address nor speak of the Pedanda; and seating arrangements dispensed with the vertical markers of relative status formerly employed, at least on non-formal occasions.

He was marvellous company though, and was always laughing and making jokes either about me, and my suitability as a consort for the male transvestite (see Duff-Cooper 1986c) who lived in Sukedana in Pagutan, about Bi' Pon and others like her, and in particular about Pedanda Gdé Ketut Rai, the Head of the Organization of Pedanda of Lombok (Ketua Majelis Paruman Para Pandita Lombok) who was very old and decrepit and meditated in a hardly audible and very slow voice that Pedanda Gdé thought inappropriate. Although Hooykaas (1966: 10) authoritatively describes this aspect of the rite as 'murmuring', Pedanda Gdé thought that the mantra should be sung forthrightly and firmly, as befitted the goddess Sarasvati. If the Pedanda was keeping rain at bay (*ngerang*) for people holding a rite, he would try to make it rain on Pedanda Ketut Rai, and often succeeded.

But Pedanda Madé Karang was in the end deadly serious about his role in Balinese life. There was no question of one taping his yogas, not (I think) because he was worried that my research might be subtly intended to encourage conversion to Christianity or Islam (cf. Hefner 1985: 161) but because it was simply not done; nor was there any question of him not meditating daily, as soon as possible after sunrise, for the good of the realm, and not considering that the holy water that Siwa then makes through Pedanda was the key to many of the ways in which the Balinese differed from, and were superior to, Muslims. When I required support for permission for a second year of research in Indonesia, Pedanda Gdé wrote a letter of support to the Indonesian Academy of Sciences in Balinese script; and when the Pedanda accepted an invitation from the Bupati to attend a meeting of the Muspida at the Jaman Mataram, the provincial capital, we went together dressed, as he insisted, in formal Balinese style.

Clearly, in these latter cases Pedanda Gdé was saying something about himself and more generally about the Balinese and me; and in the others he was affirming a lived commitment to a moral universe. It is at once impertinent and inhumane to try to translate such deep commitments to such fundamental and far-reaching matters into terms of prestige and status. It is to trivialize those concerns, moreover, to suggest that the Pedanda could ever concur with the view that it is upon the gap between divinely endowed and acquired status that Balinese life is dependent for its vitality and dynamism.

I am quite sure that were he asked Pedanda Gdé would aver that what animates Balinese life is *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi*, the high or the highest god of the Balinese, 'the Supreme Being, or Intelligence', 'Order, what orders' (M. Hobart 1986a: 150; 1986b: 11, 25 n. 8; see also 1987: 30), which is pervasive in *all* aspects of that life. And that this form of life is in every significant regard

opposed and superior to Islam, which none the less has usurped the proper place of the Balinese on Lombok, who after all used to rule Karangasem in Bali too (Lieftrinck 1921: 371). Such reversal of proper order naturally means that the country is 'ruined' (*usak*) (see e.g. Weck 1937: 39).

These are the proper and prime concerns of Pedanda Gdé, who fights in the vanguard against further encroachments from the values and institutions of Islam. In comparison with the importance of these concerns, those of the sociologist are as nothing, and vulgar too.

VII

To answer our second question—What do the concerns expressed by our four exemplars have to say about an evolutionary model of their form of life?—abstraction is again necessary. Through abstraction it becomes apparent that those concerns, as expected, tend to accord with the 'sacred duty' (dharma) of the estates of the people expressing them. The Sudra Bi' Pon, Wayan Cara and Pak Semer, whose dharma includes the traditional duty to labour in the fields, are mainly concerned with the material; the Brahmana Pedanda, whose dharma is to deal with the highest and finest mystical aspects of the powers to which, Balinese ideology has it, the Balinese are subject, is mainly concerned with the essential. But not exclusively of course: the former are also concerned with the essential, the more so the older they have got, while the Pedanda is also concerned with the material.

In other circumstances, this approach by way of structure, form or patterns could be developed to include ultimately all aspects of Balinese life (see n. 8 above); but the present study aims to consider what our exemplars' concerns (which would be found to be widely expressed by other Balinese) can tell us about the constitution of an evolutionary scheme that is processual. None the less, our starting-point must here be Vidhi, I think, as it has been in earlier work in the structural or formal mode: Vidhi is the basis of Balinese life, everything derives from Vidhi, and Vidhi pervades everything.

Vidhi may be construed as perfect bilateral symmetry, in the guise of Sunya, the Void, of which the asymmetries of the essential and the material realms are finer and coarser transformations (see e.g. Duff-Cooper 1988). There are at least two ways in which this basic model, greatly elaborated with a blueprint to render it processual elsewhere (Duff-Cooper 1990b: fig. 3, appendix), can also be rendered processual. One way is by the use of computer graphics (Duff-Cooper 1987c), the other is to consider Vidhi as the simplest aspect of Balinese life of which all other aspects are more and more complex transformations. Both these approaches, though, have drawbacks: the first, from the computer being alien to Balinese ideology, at least as it is in Pagutan; and the second, from the arbitrariness of saying that Vidhi is the simplest aspect of Balinese ideology—

whether this is so depends upon the definitions of 'simple' and 'complex' adopted (Duff-Cooper 1990d). More germane here, perhaps, neither approach takes lessons from the concerns of our exemplars.

Another route to a processual model, more acceptable here, is given by Vidhi being construable, in the guises of the bisexual icon Ardhanārīśvara and as the famous couple Jayaprana and Layon Sari, as the united female and male principles, *pradhanapurusa*, which are together life (Duff-Cooper 1985a: 72, 1987b: 65-6). This social fact can be expressed dynamically: the union, separation, and (re)union of the female and the male principles (more abstractly, of two opposed entities) make life. Hence, perhaps, the very frequent sexual intercourse that a newly married couple has (Duff-Cooper 1985c: 415) and the theory that repeated intercourse is necessary to ensure the union of semen and blood that produces life.

This dynamic view of Vidhi appears to inform what Schaareman (1986: 69) refers to as 'the Javanese religious-philosophical conception of history' in the fourteenth-century *Negarakrtagama*: 'the empire is conceived of as dividing and reuniting in a continuous repeating cycle'. When the empire is united, Sang Hyang Hana, 'Being', obtains; when it is divided, Sang Hyang Tana, 'Not-Being', obtains. Apart from these ideas being discernible in ideas about the married couple, their significance here is that all the concerns expressed above (secs. III-VI) involve unions, separations, and (re)unions. In these unions and (re)unions people make exchanges (*masilur*), in the broadest sense to include exchanges of language. All of these transactions could probably be shown to replicate and to reaffirm Vidhi, Life, in various ways.

It has repeatedly been said (e.g. Hocart 1970: 35; Weiner 1980: 71; de Coppet 1981: 200; Howell 1989: 419) that exchange is what animates any form of life and allows it to continue—a view that appears to be subscribed to by Balinese ideology, in which union, which is life and life-promoting, is superior to separation (e.g. Swellengrebel 1960: 41). A processual, evolutionary model of Balinese society might then be arrived at by considering changes that have occurred in exchanges made by Balinese people with other people, both Balinese, essential and material, and non-Balinese. Such a consideration would not constitute mere empiricism if, first, it employed the insights that Mauss and others have brought to the topic and if, second, it employed indigenous categories (e.g., in the present case, material/ essential, coarse/refined, female/male, Sudra/*triwangsa*, not Balinese/Balinese, low/high, outside/inside) in the analysis of those exchanges. Such an approach, furthermore, recognizes the importance of structure, form or patterns in such ideologies as that of the Balinese and would be free both of the reliance upon an untenable view of social anthropology as a kind of natural science of society and of the notion of progress which 'leads in anthropology...to procrustean stages, the presumed inevitability of which gives them a normative character' (Evans-Pritchard 1962: 17) and which vitiates early attempts at such models.

A full appraisal of this suggestion, by analyses, must for reasons of space wait upon other occasions; but at least the ground has been prepared for that work. Before concluding, though, two points should be made. While considering

exchanges pinpoints specific aspects of (Balinese) life where changes are occurring, explanations of why they are doing so will in all likelihood be less readily, if ever, achieved (see Needham 1971: lv)—but it is even less likely that they will ever be arrived at unless serious notice is taken of the concerns of those whom they most affect.

That leads to the second point: *all* aspects of Balinese life are candidates for analysis, for three main reasons: first, that we know that even ‘animal’ activities such as hunting, fighting, eating and sex are never merely animal in human society but are conventionalized, and as such they are disregarded in favour of kinship or marriage or ‘status’ only because of some prejudicial theoretical concerns. Secondly, these concerns, we have seen, do not at all run in tandem with those of the people whose form(s) of life are the object of study and many of whom (it has been shown above and elsewhere) attribute greatest importance to precisely these aspects of their lives, in the main disregarded by theorists. Thirdly, Balinese metaphysics (*sarva-surya*) teaches (what analysis confirms) that all aspects of Balinese life, in deriving from Vidhi, are pervaded by Vidhi; ‘officially’ some aspects are finer than others, it is true, and analyses will take account of such relative evaluations.

But these evaluations do not justify the analyst ignoring what ‘we’ might consider the more mundane or the supposedly less manifest and immediately observable aspects of Balinese life, for the analyst must survey all facets of social life (Needham 1962: 75); nor do they justify promoting some of its finer aspects (e.g. ancestors and gods and the temples where they are periodically located) above other aspects of that life (see e.g. Guernonprez 1987: 199, 200): ‘How can we make any progress in the understanding of cultures...if we persist in dividing what the people join and in joining what they keep apart?’ (Hocart 1935: 16).

I was constantly told by Pedanda Gdé, Pak Semer and others that the complete person should be conversant with as many aspects of Balinese life as he or she could be within the limits imposed by the dharma of the estate into which he or she was born. We have no such limits imposed upon us. Analysis will do well to reflect these facts: they will then demonstrate that we have listened with serious interest to the Balinese, that we have profited from what they have tried to teach us, and that we are trying to appreciate as they do how Balinese forms of life are ordered, though changing, wholes. They may also lead to theoretical advance, for the real key to this (Needham 1971: cvi) is ‘the *comprehension*’, by the most intense imaginative effort to think in terms of their classifications, ‘of singular modes of social life’.⁹

9. Substantial weight is lent to the suggestions of the present study, and especially those in sec. VII, by Robert Jay’s claims (1969: 246) both that ‘it is possible and...profitable to treat all social relations as embodied in sequences of exchange’ and that Lévi-Strauss (see e.g. 1953: 536), Douglas Oliver (see e.g. 1955: 277; 1958) and Firth (see e.g. 1959: 340-42) have indeed done so; see also Parsons (1975: 44), who claims that ‘exchanges in major part elicit and direct change’. These particular references were discovered too late to be incorporated into the body of the text.

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CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF CULTURAL VALUES

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**DE-TRADITIONALIZATION:
AUTHORITY AND SELF IN AN AGE OF
CULTURAL UNCERTAINTY**

**Lancaster University
8th - 10th July 1993**

De-traditionalization (Enttraditionalisierung) involves a shift of authority: from 'without' to 'within'. It entails the decline of the pre-given or natural order of things. Individual subjects are themselves called upon to exercise authority in the face of the disorder and contingency which is thereby generated. 'Voice' is displaced from established sources, coming to rest with the self.

The process of de-traditionalization provides a useful way of reflecting on the nature of, and the relationships between, the pre-modern, the modern, and the post-modern. The conference is organized in four 'streams', exploring different aspects of the process:

- * Discourse, Hermeneutics and Identity
- * Aesthetic, Memory, Meaning
 - * Cultures of Nature
 - * Self, Ethics and Religion

Speakers include:

Robert Adam, Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck, Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, Steve Bruce, Colin Campbell, Mary Douglas, Terry Eagleton, Mike Featherstone, Anthony Giddens, Phil Hammond, David Harvey, Charles Jencks, Thomas Luckmann, Niklas Luhmann, Richard MacCormac, Michael Phillipson, Paul Rabinow, Roland Robertson, Nikolas Rose, Michael Sandle, Richard Sennett, Ninian Smart, Bryan Turner, Glyn Williams

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