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# Living with the Structure of a Balinese Form of Life in Western Lombok<sup>1</sup>

Andrew Duff-Cooper\*

“In science, as in politics  
. . . , he who risks nothing  
achieves nothing”.

A. M. Hocart

## I

### Preliminaries

In her useful study of the Indonesian (Minangkabau) novel as a source of anthropological data, Els Postel-Coster suggests (1977: 147) that for various reasons “it is important, besides collecting empirical data and building structural models, to examine what it means for human beings to live with these structures, how and how far they conform to them, and how they rebel against them”.

Postel-Coster draws the reasons for these suggestions rather narrowly, limiting herself to the interests of social science, and not situating those interests in *their* social context;<sup>2</sup> nor is it clear (to me at least) what she intends by “structures” and “structural”. Yet these considerations, important though they are, do not much detract from the force of the suggestions, nor from their relevance to the study of the Balinese form of life. This is because, since 1983, a series of studies has appeared reporting and analysing em-

\* Visiting Lecturer and a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Research Fellow, Faculty of Letters, Keio University (Mita).

pirical data collected in Pagutan (see n.1). The last essay accepted for publication in this series, "Some Ways of Delineating the Structure of a Balinese Form of Life on Lombok" (D-C 1986b), is directly concerned with "building [three-dimensional] structural models". It is therefore timely to investigate the matters alluded to by Postel-Coster in relation to the structure of the Balinese form of life. Apart from the intrinsic interest of these matters and their importance for the study of what Postel-Coster calls "social dynamics",<sup>3</sup> their consideration increases understanding of the Balinese form of life in Pagutan and, perhaps, of the Balinese form of life generally, which is a part of the central core of social anthropology. It will also show that while "structure" may arguably "have faded in favour of 'text' . . ." (Hobart 1985: 35), the former has lost none of its potency as a heuristic, indeed may only recently have begun to have its full potential exploited.

What follows consists of five sections: section II considers the structure of the Balinese form of life; section III, how people live with it; section IV, how people conform with it; section V, how people rebel against it; while section VI concludes the present study. In line with Hocart's injunction (1970: 184), we will not conjecture what might be going on in the minds of the people whose form of life is the object of study;<sup>4</sup> rather, we will address what we know, i.e. social facts which are in principle and in various ways verifiable (e.g. Needham 1985: 74-75). Section III, however, is more speculative: the matters there addressed are to be treated as hypotheses requiring investigation in the field.<sup>5</sup>

## II

### **The Structure of the Balinese Form of life**

In the present study, as in earlier essays, "structure" and other forms of this word refer to the principles of order which discernibly

frame the various indigenously defined aspects which the myriad social facts constitutive of this form of life compose.<sup>6</sup> These principles of order are: modes of partition; the relations which obtain among the various numbers of entities which constitute a unity; the operations of reversal and modes of periodicity of different numerical complexity; and proportional analogy and homology.

The modes of partition referred to are duality (bipartition) and division into three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and eleven. Each of these modes more or less directly replicates Ida Sang Hyang Vidhi, the high god of the Balinese, as a dualistic unity. Everything in the Balinese universe derives from, is pervaded by, and is contained in Vidhi. These teachings of Balinese metaphysics suggest [what analysis supports (D-C 1985b)] that the modes of partition which are numerically more complex than simple bipartition are elaborations of this latter mode.

The relations that obtain among the entities (two, three, four, five, etc.) which constitute a unity may either be symmetrical or asymmetrical to one of four increasing degrees. Vidhi as a dualistic unity evinces perfect symmetry by the criterion of interchangeability or substitutability: the two constituent aspects of this god are in the abstract interchangeable or substitutable one for the other in any context whatsoever. In the middle world (*madyapada*), the world of material living human beings (*mertyapada*), the relations that obtain between two or more entities are the more symmetrical, the more the standing of each of the entities implicated in a particular context approximates that of the other (or others), relative to a particular centre of reference. Correlatively, the greater the disparity of the standing of entities one to another relative to such a centre, the greater the asymmetry of the relations that obtain among the entities implicated in a social context. The greater the symmetry of the relations that obtain between entities, the greater the number of the same objective statements which can be made

about each, and the more contexts in which each may be substituted for the other. Conversely, the greater the asymmetry of the relations that obtain between two or more entities, the fewer the same objective statements which can be made about each, and the fewer the contexts in which they are interchangeable or substitutable one for another.

Reversal in the Balinese form of life is characteristically enantiomorphic. It has been said (D-C 1985c: 245) that such reversal indicates a change of level in Louis Dumont's sense (see, e.g., *Contexts and Levels: passim*). But Dumont's use of "level" (*niveau*) is far from clear, so that in spite of his strictures (1982: 225) on the analytical use of "context" and in spite of the opacity of this term (e.g. Hobart 1985: *passim*), it is preferable to say that such reversal indicates a change of the context in which the same two entities are implicated. For example, in the exercise of their roles in the mystical/jural diarchy which pervades Balinese social life, a Brahmana Pedanda and a Ksatria king [Anak Agung in Pagutan (e.g. D-C 1986d),<sup>7</sup> sometimes the former, sometimes the latter is pre-eminent. Which is pre-eminent depends upon the context in which the two [or other examples of such complementary statuses as Pemangku (village temple, *pemaksan*, priest) and Kliang (village, *kakliangan*, head)] are contingent or juxtaposed (D-C: unpublished typescript). But the status associated with the mystical is ultimately pre-eminent (cp., e.g. Howe 1985: 140). Such a reversal of proper order, also, as the form of a person's body when standing normally—i.e. with head in the air and feet on the ground to feet in the air, hands on the ground—indicates that the context has changed from the goodness which is associated by the Balinese with themselves (e.g. D-C 1984a: *passim*; forthcoming-c) to one which has to do with evil and wickedness.

As for modes of periodicity, alternation and periodicity of three, four, five, and nine are discernible in (are evinced by) Balinese life

(D-C 1986 f; *post*).

These principles of order more or less severally frame the various contexts which comprise an indigenously defined aspect of Balinese life. The five most significant modes of partition—two, three, four/five, eight/nine, and eleven<sup>8</sup>—, the five kinds of symmetrical and asymmetrical relations, and the operations (as it were) of reversal and the modes of periodicity are, formally, made unitary by proportional analogy and homology. All of which is to say, that two, three, four, five, eight, nine, and eleven entities may be related symmetrically or asymmetrically to one of four increasing degrees depending upon the context (*post*, sec. III). Fundamentally, no matter how many entities constitute a unity, they can be shown to be related dyadically, as the four estates, for instance, are. We are therefore concerned with five sets of analogously related dyads of one of six increasing forms of elaborateness.<sup>9</sup> The constitutive terms—which may, of course, be either singular or consist of a number of entities (D-C 1986 f)—of each dyad within each of the five sets comprise two sets of homologues, which *may* constitute polythetic classes (Needham 1980: 46-47). It will, though, be recalled that each of these sets of analogously related dyads and of homologues is, so to say, present within each of the modes of partition. It is probable that this ubiquity makes all the abstractions mentioned in this section unitary. This system can be articulated graphically (D-C 1986b: Figs.). Reversal and the modes of periodicity, however, cannot be delineated *per se*, although they can of course be represented in various ways (Needham 1983: chaps. 5, 6). They are delineable, though, by the use of moving three-dimensional models and computer graphics.

This, then, is the structure of the Balinese form of life. We can now, with some relief, turn to less abstract matters.

### III

#### How do People Live with this Structure?

III. i The structure which is verbally described in section II can also be articulated graphically—advantageously—as a cone.<sup>10</sup> This cone consists of three sections which can be represented as contingent or tangential in either the horizontal or the vertical plane (see III. ii, *post*). Although these delineations of the structure of Balinese life articulate abstractions and are not concrete replicas of social facts, the form adopted for the delineations derives from the observation of social facts. Thus the Balinese live with this structure in the following: The Balinese Mahameru, “a triangle made up of three horizontal segments” (D-C 1985d: 159 n.5). They also live with it in the form of constructions which are “mountain-like” (*gunungan*), such as the end trusses of houses (D-C 1985e: 41, 39 fig. 4), and the mound of earth which is sometimes constructed in Balinese compound gardens (D-C 1984a: 33). Finally, conically-shaped offerings of rice [*tumpéng* (e.g. Simpen 1983: *s.v.*; D-C 1985 f: 127-129)] and “flowers” (*puspe*), offerings used in rites of cremation, take the same form as the structure of Balinese life when it is delineated as a cone.

III. ii The Balinese also live with aspects of this structure in ways which are more or less immediate.<sup>11</sup> It is expected, for instance, that a Balinese male will take a woman in marriage.<sup>12</sup> Such a union renders a male (and the female he takes) socially complete; the resulting couple constitutes a unity which replicates Vidhi as a dichotomy. In such a unity, the male is ultimately pre-eminent, though the female may be so in certain contexts (III. iv, *post*). The relational terms elder/younger similarly constitute a unity, which is also represented in the Brahmana Pedanda and Ksatria king, who are related as elder to younger (*supra*, n.6). This form of comple-

mentary governance, dual sovereignty, or diarchy pervaded the Balinese form of life until kingship was abolished by the Dutch, and now does so in another guise (D-C 1985c: 242): all the powers to which the Balinese are subject are partitioned among such complementary statuses. Such statuses are analogues of various other such dualistic unities.<sup>13</sup>

Partition into three enters Balinese people's lives in various ways. "In villagers' thought, three contiguous areas are discriminated: the village composed of three blocks (*banjar* or *témpék*) of contiguous compounds; the gardens, both wet and dry; and the (wet) ricefields, where secondary crops are also grown in the drained fields in a series [see III. iv, *post*] with rice..." (D-C 1984a: 30). Different kinds of being are associated with each of these areas, and different modes of relation are expectable in one's dealings with these other beings and with other people in each of these areas.<sup>14</sup>

A house also consists of three sections: *stereobate*, walls etc., and beams, rafters, and roof. These elements are discernible no matter how elaborate the house in question. These sections are analogues of the sections into which a seat of *Surya* (*padmasana*) is divided, of a compound (no matter the estate of the local descent group resident within its boundaries), of a temple of two or three courts, of the proper way of sitting (*masila*, from *\*sila*, a stone or base), of a person's physical body (*sthula sarira*) (D-C 1985h; forthcoming-e), and the clothes by which it is covered.

Clothes are an aspect of the *triboga*, what any person's life is said to need: the other two aspects are shelter and food. A person has three "teachers" (*triguru*): parents, school-, and perhaps college, teacher, and the government. The instruction of these three should incline a person to live in accordance with the *tri kaya parisudha*, thinking what is clean and pure, saying what is true, honest, fair, and sincere, and behaving in the same ways (D-C 1984a: 38 n.12).<sup>15</sup> These ways of behaving come easier, theoretically, to the three



purest estates (*triwangsa*), Brahmana, Ksatria, and Wesia than to Sudra who are associated through their “sacred” duty with what is literally unclean (D-C 1985h: 77, Table 2). Finally, all live most directly with the gods Brahma, Visnu, and Isvara (Siva), the *trimurti*, located in the shrine (*mrajan penegtegan*; *sanggah kemulan* in coarse Balinese) which every temple contains. Offerings should be given to these gods every day, and certainly on the day Kliwon of the five-day week.<sup>16</sup> These three gods are represented in their respective syllables—*AM*, *UM*, *MAM*—which form *OM* (*ongkara*), totality. This, of course, is Vidhi, from whom no person is free (*luput*), especially as, in various forms, Vidhi constitutes the three bodies (*tri sarira*) of which every person is composed.

Any person is born into one of the four estates (*catur varna*), even if he or she is “illegitimate” (*astra*), i.e. born outside the rites of “marriage” (*ngantén*). These estates constitute a unity, the aspects of which are complementary, as are their respective “sacred” duties (e.g. Hobart 1979: 114).<sup>17</sup>

A person is also born with a set of (mystical) siblings of the same sex as his or her own, the *kanda m'pat*. “The four are helpful as long as one gives them the (material) food and reverential thoughts they are entitled to, in which case they from their side behave as true elder brother [sister]. If, however, one neglects or ignores them, they punish their younger brother [sister] . . .”; the four “emerge time and again” in the thought of Balian, local medicine men and women, to whom most Balinese have recourse when they think that they or their dependants are suffering from physical and/or mental disorder (Hooykaas 1974: 1, 3).

These disorders may affect, for instance, one's five sensations (*panca budhi indriya*) or one's five movements (*panca karma indriya*).<sup>18</sup> When one visits a Balian, one generally presents him or her with, among other things, what I was told are the *panca aksara*, the five ingredients used for chewing betel.<sup>19</sup> Generally, “*panca aksara*”

refers to the five letters (*aksara*) *I, A, Ta, Ba, Sa* of the five gods of the *panca dévata*, Siva (centre), Isvara (east), Brahma (south), Mahadéva (west), and Visnu (north), which, through their directions which pervade all aspects of Balinese life, enter most immediately into people's daily existence.

By contrast, in Pagutan at least, partition into eight only indirectly enters most people's lives. They tend not to use the eight books (*asta kosali*) concerned with the construction of houses and other buildings; the eight-day week (*asta wara*) seems to be of no direct significance to villagers; while the *asta sakti*, eight characteristics of the god Siva, were not mentioned to me. Thus, only the *asta dala*, the eight-petalled lotus, which represents the eight peripheral gods of the *nawa sanga* (*post*), is implicated in people's lives, and then only by analogy.

Partition into nine is represented by the *nawa sanga*, the nine gods—Isvara, Mahesvara, Brahma, Rudra, Mahadéva, Sangkara, Visnu, Sambhu, and Siva—at east, southeast, south, southwest, west, northwest, north, northeast, and centre. These gods, their colours [white, reddish-brown or gravel, red, orange, yellow, dark-blue, black, light blue, and all colours or “nine-fold” (*nava-rūpam*) (cf., e.g. Goudriaan and Hooykaas 1971: 67/69, 103)], the directions at which they sit, the metals which are associated with some of them,<sup>20</sup> and their emblems (e.g. Goslings 1926: Plates 1, 2) enter so many facets of people's lives—though not, in Pagutan, through the paths of their souls (Hobart 1978a) from birth through death and rebirth—that it is impossible to list even a representative number of examples here. Most important, perhaps, are the facts that offerings make constant reference to these gods, and to less elaborate versions of them [such as the *panca dévata* and the *tri murti* (*supra*)]; that rice-growing rites such as *nuasén* (e.g. Hobart 1978b: 69; D-C: forthcoming-b, -f) implicate these gods and their directions; and that beings which the Balinese are keen to avoid, such as witches (*léak*), who wish only

to harm other people, and *bhuta-kala*, “a distinctly unpleasant class of greedy, destructive spirits who must be propitiated to leave humans in peace” (Hobart 1984: 171) exist of each direction and colour (cf., e.g. Hooykaas 1977: 73).

“Each direction”, however, properly includes not just the nine directions of the *nava sanga*: it includes also the zenith (*keluanan*) and the nadir (*ketébenan*). Here, Siva is of three aspects: Siva or Sivatma, nadir; Sada-Siva, centre (*puséh*); Parama-Siva, zenith.<sup>21</sup>

These eleven points (*ékadasa Rudra*) are the absolute spatial coordinates within which all Balinese life takes place, by which the standing of all aspects of that life, the contexts of which they are composed and within which constituent entities are contingent or juxtaposed (sec. V. iii, *post*) relative one to another, are fixed. The totality of these points is expressed in the rites of *Éka Dasa Rudra*, which should be held at the temple Besakih on Gunung Agung (Bali) once every one hundred Balinese years of 210 days. The rites include a reflector (*wimarsa*) of every thing that is taken by the Balinese to exist in their universe. Equally, the rites performed at Besakih, the most inclusive (so to say) of all the Balinese national temples, implicate all Balinese people.

III. iii Reversal enters people's lives in the ways mentioned in section II in the cases of mystical/jural diarchy and of the world of evil and wickedness. The Balinese witch, to amplify that latter phrase a little, does everything in reverse or else backwards: he, or more likely she, “turns the true order of things upside down”—“the cosmic order maintains life, and this reversal cannot lead to anything but death” (Swellengrebel 1960: 51), or at least serious mental and/or physical disorder. Two of the main differences between the mystical/jural reversal mentioned earlier, which renders the Ksatria king temporarily pre-eminent, and of the witch (and *bhuta-kala*, whose role in Balinese life is signalled by the fact that they go about upside-down) is the intention of the reversals, and

the facts that the first reversal is in accordance with the proper order of things, while the second (although in line with the proper order of witches and *bhuta-kala*) is not. These contrasts between the two situations in which reversal is discernible is matched by the contrasts between Pedanda and, to a lesser extent kings, on one hand and witches, on the other, which, on Lombok at least, render each the opposite of the other (D-C 1984a: 10-13).

III. iv The ways in which the Balinese live with alternation and other modes of periodicity have been discussed at some length elsewhere (D-C 1986f). Here, we can only list the ways in which the various modes are of consequence to villagers' lives. Alternation is evinced in the movements of the sun and moon, in the series of odd and even numbers (associated with life and death respectively), in generational terms (e.g. D-C 1984b: 486-489), textile designs, mystical ideas, techniques, and paraphernalia, subsistence activities, food, and seasonal variations and some of their concomitants. Periodicity of three is discernible in protective medicine, in a sacrificial rite, and in the holding of markets. Periodicity of four is evinced by Balinese birth-order names (e.g. Hobart 1979: 658; D-C 1985c: 233-234); periodicity of five, by the cycle of human existence and, under a different aspect, subsistence activities; while periodicity of nine appears to be evinced only by the days of the nine-day week (*navawara*), which, though, appears to be of only slight importance in villagers' lives.

III. v When two or more entities are juxtaposed or contingent in the various contexts which constitute aspects of Balinese life, five modes of relation are discernible: symmetrical relations and asymmetrical relations to one of four increasing degrees. These modes may be represented respectively as:  $[a/b]$ ,  $[a>b]$ ,  $[a\gg b]$ ,  $a\gg\gg b]$ ,  $[a\mathcal{L}>b]$ . These formulas depict two entities  $a$  and  $b$  which are juxtaposed or contingent (represented by the oblique and by the guillemots) in a particular context (the brackets). Context is of

over-riding importance.

In the case of symmetrical relations, *a* and *b* are ideologically and generally physically equidistant from a centre of reference; in the other cases, *a* is the pre-eminent entity, *b* the less eminent entity: *a* stands ideologically and generally physically closer to the centre of reference than *b*. The five modes of relation are relative: symmetrical relations obtain at centres; the four degrees of asymmetry depict *b* as proportionally once, twice, three, and infinitely distant from the centre relative to *a*. These modes of asymmetrical relations are tabulated in Tables 1-4 (*post*).<sup>22</sup>

Perfect symmetry is expressed in Balinese ideology by *Ida Sang Hyang Sunya*, the Void, where "Void" means that none of the phenomenal characteristics of the world are present (e.g. Hooykaas 1966: 84/85; 1974: 10/11; Goudriaan and Hooykaas 1971: 364/365). Less abstractly, symmetry may be represented by the icon *Ardhanārīśvara*, half female (*pradhana*), half male (*purusa*). Both are expressions of *Vidhi*. Through *Vidhi*'s concentration (*tapa*), *pradhana purusa* were separated and reunited; this joining (*samyoga*) of *pradhana* and *purusa* is replicated in everything that exists, and is, for example, represented by two crossed lines (*tampak dara*, dove's or pigeon's footprint) running, as it were, north/south and east/west.<sup>23</sup>

While "*samyoga*" refers to this mystical union, in the middle world "*papanggihan*" (coarsely, "*patemuan*") means "meeting" in the sense of two or more entities becoming or being juxtaposed or contingent. Such a meeting may replicate *Vidhi* as bilateral symmetry: for instance, a meeting between two *Brahmana Pedanda* may, under the aspect of purity [what is *suci* (D-C 1985a: *passim*)], be viewed as a situation where symmetrical relations are evinced. *Pedanda* rely to a large extent on their "pupils" (*sisia*) for material support, but it is a contingent (not necessary) matter of history and locality that a particular *Pedanda* is *Surya* to a group of *sisia*.<sup>24</sup> These latter may shift their allegiance from one *Surya* to another

(with the incumbent's agreement). Under this aspect, the relations that obtain between two contingent Pedanda are symmetrical. Their relative social standing is also symmetrical: both are equidistant ideologically and physically from the same centre of reference, i.e. the gods which each honours in his (or her) morning meditation (*surya-sevana*). This standing is reflected in the language which each uses to address the other, and others, their height relative one to another when seated together, the clothes and adornments which each wears, and in the ways in which others approach and deal with them: all these matters are of the finest.

Symmetrical relations are also discernible in the social facts that, in some contexts, a father and his sons are interchangeable, as are a father's brother(s) and the father's brother's (or brothers') sons for the father and his sons (e.g. in duties connected with the village temple); and *mutatis mutandis* a mother and her daughters and a father's brother's wife and her daughters, i.e., for instance, in connection with the material and spiritual welfare of their children or, generally younger, siblings. Father's sons and daughters term both the father and the father's brother(s) *aji/bapa* (e.g. D-C 1984b: 486), and the authoritative and sentimental relations which obtain between the father and the father's brother(s) and their sons and daughters are for many intents and purposes the same. That is, father and father's brother(s) are in many contexts interchangeable. The relations, also, that obtain between a father's son and a father's daughter, i.e. Ego's sister, when they are twins (*buncing*), are symmetrical, and their marriage, the finest possible in Balinese life (e.g. D-C: forthcoming-d), most closely replicates the primal union of the female and the male principles. The relations that obtain between an Ego's cremated male forebears and between his (or her) cremated female forebears, which are not distinguished and are indiscernible, are similarly symmetrical: each set, as it were, is treated identically by Ego.

In “economic” relations, those which support a form of Balinese life (*dharma*) in a particular place (*désa*) at a particular time (*kala*) as it is supposed to be (*patra*), the relations of the four estates, relative to *dharma*, are symmetrical: the tasks allotted to each estate are taken all to be equally essential to the continued existence of that form of Balinese life. Under this aspect, the tasks are indiscernible. Hence, also (perhaps), one of the reasons that villagers maintain that *sisia* who contribute labour to the rites of their Surya and those who contribute cash or goods are behaving equally well. Similarly, in the village at least, the relations that obtain between most employers and their employees, who are usually also villagers but not necessarily agnates of their employers, in relation to the gods in the rice fields—the water, the earth, the rice, and the sun—are under many aspects symmetrical; and so are the exchanges between an employer, who gives work and payment in cash, in kind, and in other ways for labour, and an employee, who labours for and otherwise supports his employer. Such relations best obtain, also, between two people from the same compound or who are very closely related, one of whom has the power to dispose of goods and/or cash which the other does not have but which he or she needs. The former and the latter stand in a symmetrical relation to their forebears in their compound temple or in their original local descent group temple (*sanggah gdé*). This relation should be exemplified by the fortunate person<sup>25</sup> giving to the less fortunate person readily and generously (*dharma alus dana goya*). Giving the opportunity to give in this way and giving in response to the opportunity presented is an exchange which is symmetrical (see n. 24).

Symmetry is discernible, finally, in the relations that obtain between the spirits of the low regions (e.g. Howe 1984: *passim*) and such human beings as non-Indonesian, non-Hindu Indians, including Chinese and Japanese, relative to the Balinese at the centre of the world. Both these spirits and such people, mostly of course Cauca-

Table 1: Entities standing in the relations of the first degree of asymmetry, contexts, and centre of reference

a	b	Contexts	Centres
1 Pedanda	King	Exercise of authority, one realm	Gria and Puri and <i>désa</i> temples
2 Pedanda	Kings	Exercise of authority, all realms	Gria and Puri and national temples
3 Brahmana	Ksatria	"Twice-born"	As in 1 & 2
4 Brahmana & Ksatria	Vesia	Authority; goods	As in 1, 2, & 3
5 Brahmana, Ksatria, and Vesia	Sudra	Insiders: outsiders	Vidhi as Brahma, Visnu, & Isvara red, black, and white respectively
6 Husband	Wife	Relations of compound with other compounds	Village temple ( <i>pemaksan</i> )
7 Wife	Husband	Duties inside compound	Compound temple
8 Elder brother or sister	Younger brother or sister	General, e.g., fighting, giving offerings at <i>pemaksan</i>	Various temples
9 Younger brother or sister	Elder brother or sister	e.g., animal husbandry/childrearing	As in 8
10 Father, father's brothers (mother; father's brothers' wives)	Sons, father's brother's sons & daughters	Exercise of authority & sentimental relations	As in 8
11 Seller of goods and/or services	Buyer, same <i>kakliangan</i>	Exchange of goods and/or services	Seller's compound temple
12 "Gods"	Pedanda and Kings	Ultimate control of events	Rinjani
13 Top of Mt. Rinjani	Six nation temples and other temples	Closeness to "gods"	As in 12
14 Sudra	Low spirits ( <i>bhata-kala</i> &c)	Right-living	Various temples
15 All Balinese and Hindu Indians	Indonesians	Living in <i>dharma</i>	Ultimately Rinjani
16 Low spirits	Sudra	Wrong-living	As in 14



Table 2: Entities standing in relations of the second degree of asymmetry, contexts, and centres of reference

a	b	Contexts	Centres
1 All Balinese (one realm) & Hindu Indians	Balinese (other realms)	Various	<i>Désa</i> temples
2 Vesia (one realm)	Sudra (one realm)	Various	Brahmana & Kstatrya
3 Top of Rinjani	<i>Désa</i> temples	Gods present	Rinjani
4 High gods	Vesia	Purity	Closeness to Vidhi
5 Vesia	Low spirits	Right-living	Brahmana & Kstatrya
6 Old	Young	Exercise of authority	Various temples
7 Father's father, father's father's brother	Father's son and daughter, father's brother's son and daughter	Exercise of authority	Closeness to father's father's father and father's father's mother ( <i>kawitan</i> ).
8 Compound	Gardens	Potential danger from mystical beings	Compound temple
9 Seller	Buyer from different village	Exchanges of good and/or services	Seller's compound and village temples
10 Husband	Menstruating wife	e.g., sleep	Compound temple

Table 3: Entities standing in relations of the third degree of asymmetry, and centres of reference

a	b	Contexts	Centres
1 Brahmana & Ksatrya (all)	Sudra (all)	Purity	The high gods on Rinjani; gods in Brahmana & Ksatrya compound temples
2 Balinese (all)	Chinese and Japanese	Life in <i>dharma</i>	Rinjani and other temples
3 Balinese (one relam)	All non-Balinese, non-Hindu Indians, Chinese and Japanese	Life in <i>dharma</i>	As in 2
4 Guru (Surya)	Pedanda (pupil)	Training to be Pedanda	Vidhi
5 Pedanda	Illegitimate (astra) Balinese female	All except contributions to <i>dharma</i> , exchanges of goods & services	Various temples
6 Pedanda	Menstruating Balinese woman	Purity	As in 1, plus Vesia & Sudra compound gods
7 Brahmana gods	Sudra gods	<i>Padmasana</i>	Vidhi
8 Top of Rinjani	Sea shore	Right-living	Rinjani
9 Compound	Rice fields and sea shore	Potential mystical dangers	Compound and village temples
10 Gods	Low spirits	Right-living	Rinjani
11 Brahmana and Ksatrya	Low spirits	Purity	Rinjani
12 Gods	Sudra	Purity	Rinjani
13 Balinese (one village)	Moslem Sasak	Living in <i>dharma</i>	Rinjani
14 Seller of goods and/or services	Buyer of goods and/or services (different realm)	Exchanges	Seller's <i>désa</i> temples

Table 4: Entities standing in relations of the fourth degree of asymmetry, contexts, and centres of reference

a	b	Contexts	Centres
1 All Balinese	Caucasians	All	Bali and Lombok (Gunung Agung and Mount Rinjani)
2 Balinese males and Indian Hindu Males	All non-Balinese, non-Indonesian, non-Indian Hindu, non-Chinese and Japanese males and females	All	As in 1
3 Balinese and Indian Hindu females	As in 2	All	As in 1
4 High gods	As in 2	All	As in 1
5 Balinese seller of goods and/or services	A purchaser as in 2	Exchanges	As in 1

sians, possess characteristics which are among the most distant ideologically and physically from the fineness personified by Balinese gods and people. Under this aspect, low spirits and such people are related symmetrically one set to the other.

Both the remarks about symmetry and the dyads mentioned in the Tables have a number of drawbacks. They do not accommodate a number of dyads such as high/low, day/night, north/south, right/left, front/back, upstream/downstream, and others; they require methodical and other kinds of decision of the analyst, though it could be said that so does any method, even pure description; nor do they inform a complete study, but, then, arguably no study can ever be complete.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, we are presented with five sets of analogous dyads, the *a* and the *b* terms of which, formally speaking, are all homologues. These modes of relation, as noted earlier, appear to make the system unitary.

#### IV

#### How Do People Conform with this Structure?

It is not obvious that the question posed by the present sub-title is meaningful, understanding "structure" in the sense in which that word is used in the present piece. The structure of the Balinese form of life consists of abstractions which, although discernible in it, do not necessarily constitute an explicit aspect of its ideology.<sup>26</sup> Further, although some Balinese people of an (unusual) analytical turn of mind may have some awareness of one or more of the notions which are employed here and in earlier pieces, there is no evidence for the fact. Rather, conformity is to be judged against ideas and values in social action.

In the case of Baturujung, people generally conform to what is required of them by *désa kala patra* (D-C 1985d: 156 n. 2). If, more-

over, appearances in court are taken to be some indication of conformity both to national and to local current conventions, then the assertion just made (and noted earlier) is confirmed: no cases were, as far as I am aware, brought to a Balinese court while I was living in Pagutan; and one man who was sentenced to one year in prison, commuted by the length of time he had spent in custody before sentencing, by a national court for the offence of contributing to another's death (*tulut menghilangkan ngawa orang*) was something of a hero in the village because he had committed the offence with other Balinese men, both from his own village and others, supporting them in an armed conflict with local Islamic Sasak. In *Balinese* terms, he could hardly have behaved better.

As for inter-personal disputes, these cannot be assumed to arise because people do not conform to prevailing ideology. It may be that they arise because such ideology is interpreted differently, and that the parties' interpretations are not reconcilable or that the parties are not prepared to reconcile them. In any case, these matters require discussion of each particular case.

## V

### **How Do People Rebel against this Structure ?**

As in section IV, the question posed by this sub-title is not obviously intelligible. This circumstance does not arise because people are probably generally unaware of the structure of their form of life, for even in such circumstances it could be said that people were rebelling against it unbeknownst to themselves. It arises because if people rebel, they do so against ideas and values, not against a structure, especially as "structure" is defined in this essay.

Such rebellion, further, does not necessarily involve changes in the structure. Rather, existing ideas and/or values can be rearranged, so to say, or in some way replaced by others. For instance, tradi-

tional authority can be flouted: a male from one of the three estates below may take a Brahmana female in marriage. Nearly all the people I asked about this, though, declared that they were not prepared to risk the social and mystical consequences of such actions; and two cases of such marriages, which run counter to current conventions (though not Indonesian law), appear to have had no effect on the structure of Balinese life. Some young men let their hair grow long, some women have their hair cut short, against prevailing conventions. If this counts as rebellion, it is very tame (in village terms) and creates hardly any social impact: it serves merely to single out the people adopting such styles, which most people (old and young men and women) deprecate. In the village, finally, the allotted tasks of each estate could not as matters stand be changed unilaterally, and there are no group moves either afoot or inclined to such changes.

In towns such as Cakranegara and Mataram, matters are slightly different: Brahmana own and run hotels, but their employees are generally Sudra or Islamic Sasak (as should be). Ksatria may be merchants, and Sudra, teachers or petty officials. But these breaches of *dharma*, small though they are, simply confirm villagers' view that townspeople are decadent and that their mores are to be resisted. Moreover, when such people return to villages from town, they most often fall back into "correct" ways of behaving and (if their words are anything to go by) thinking.

Balinese people could, of course, rebel against the ideas and conventions involved in sexual activity (e.g. D-C 1985g): pornographic video-tapes can be viewed in town (although they are illegal by Indonesian law) and two young male villagers told me that they wished that their wives would do some of the things which the men had seen in the tapes. Even were the wives (or friends) to agree to do so—and the complaint was that the men could not even suggest such practices which ran counter to proper order—it is not

clear that such rebellion would affect anyone apart from the parties involved, at least at all foreseeably.

One way in which people may consciously rebel against conventional ideology is by adopting a form of market rationality, by explicitly looking for and maximising profit. Gerdin discusses (1982: chap. 6) the case of Pak Carik who became one of the wealthiest villagers in Karang Sari (close to Pagutan) by acting "rationally" in the face of market conditions. "He is, however, criticised for his attitudes to profit-making and to the disposal of those profits by fellow villagers: . . . he is demit, mean and stingy. (Gerdin is too polite in calling him thrifty). He is loath to help others (unless he stands to gain himself) and he is miserly in his use of wealth he has amassed in honouring the gods and the other mystical beings as he should. . . . The 'rational' behaviour of Pak Carik [though] . . . is neither admired by the Balinese nor is it common among the Balinese on Lombok" (D-C 1983b: 371; cf. 1984a: 9-10).

It is probably too early to say whether and how far "rebellious" attitudes such as Pak Carik's will spread among Balinese landowners and others; and whether, if they do and widely, what effects they will have on the Balinese form of life as it is. Clearly if the trend (if it can be called such) continues, it would seem as though it will be accompanied by more and more people suffering hardship and by a gradual increasing neglect of the duties (as they presently are) of adult Balinese to use their wealth as they should, even though making profits and holding rites etc. are not contradictory.<sup>27</sup>

Even this dejecting picture, however, does not necessarily involve structural change, especially as "economic" relations are generally dyadic (Hobart 1980: 139; D-C 1986a, forthcoming-b). Bipartition, as the essays in *Right & Left* (Needham 1973) demonstrate, is discernible world-wide;<sup>28</sup> yet it does not appear to be correlated with any particular form of society. Thus "economic" relations might alter empirically; they may be accompanied by changes in the ideas

which are intimately connected with Balinese economics (e.g. Hobart 1980: *passim*), and values attaching to the making and disposal of profits may become more self-seeking and less communally directed; but structural change may not occur.

If such change does occur, however, it is likely that the moves will be in the direction of "increasing latitude and individuation": "the normal development of social forms is in the direction of increasing intricacy"; that is, "wherever we have good testimony to structural change . . . the outcome has been a greater complexity . . ." (Needham 1984: 229). It is, of course, the case that "a transformation in the direction of economy of means and simplicity of structure . . . is not formally self-contradictory or otherwise invalid", but such a transformation is "empirically improbable" (*ibid.*).

Needham's remarks suggest (at least) that either the modes of asymmetry which are evinced by Balinese life will be amplified by being even more finely graded; or that entities which are related to one of the four degrees of asymmetry will be multiplied by the regular employment of modes of partition of greater numerical complexity than now; or that symmetrical relations will change into one or another mode of asymmetrical relation.<sup>29</sup>

In so far as these processes are already apparent on Lombok, they have been accompanied by increased hardship for many people: the number of landless day-labourers, who must compete for the diminishing amount of work to be had in the rice fields after being dispossessed of rights they once held in land, is increasing, and more and more wealth is being accumulated by such individuals as Pak Carik.<sup>30</sup> Extrapolating from what is described in Gerdin's book (which is all we have available to us unfortunately), the situation on Lombok can apparently only worsen.



## VI

### Concluding Remarks

Mauss's work, which of any social anthropologists' can most profitably be taken as a model for one's own,<sup>31</sup> often suggests (e.g. 1969: 629-639) that we do well not only to describe what is the case (but see nn. 4, 6 *supra*), but where appropriate also to suggest what could or should be the case.

As far as Indonesia is concerned, and especially such parts of it as Lombok, such suggestions cannot of course take the place of practical schemes for aiding the betterment of people's lives, in spite of the many drawbacks which appear to mar and sometimes to vitiate such schemes generally (e.g. McNeil 1981) and on Lombok in particular (Kay: personal communications).<sup>32</sup>

Yet such practical schemes are (presumably) contrived at least partially on the basis of ideas about the kind of society of which they hope to stimulate and otherwise to encourage the development. The trends mentioned at the close of section IV may continue and spread, either through the workings of tendencies within culture itself (van Wouden 1968: 89) and/or through particular people or groups of people influencing the flow of life towards what they perceive as their own best interests.

As noted, it is not clear that those trends will expand nor that, if they do, the changes which they describe will be widespread. Yet they are discernible, germinally. How can social anthropologists respond to this circumstance?

Some would say that it is nothing to do with them: such political matters are not questions which a social anthropologist should address. On the other hand we have Mauss's example. Taking this as our model, we might note that studies of Balinese life suggest that the greatest lack of conflict, the most peace, well-being, and beauty are to be found where symmetrical relations obtain among

the constituent entities of any unity. An attempt to arrest the proliferation of asymmetrical forms which appears to be in the cards might therefore seem to be in order. That is, either through intensive planning and programmes of action or by fiat, a society based on the beautiful, symmetrical structure of Vidhi might well be aimed for.

Fiat, of course, is not alien to either the Balinese form of life [where once the kings "owned" the people (*mapanjak*)] nor to the present Indonesian administration; and Indonesia is full of people planning programmes of social action ("development projects"). Such planning and action or such a fiat would establish institutions within which any person would be interchangeable for another in any context whatsoever; and although each person would have his own part to play (once he or she had decided what that part was to be), no person would be more highly valued for the part that he played than any other. This would be signalled by each person being equally rewarded for his or her labour, no matter at what he or she laboured, though additional rewards might be made for carrying out a task better than average, or such like.

To make such a suggestion, in such a broad form, is to court instant dismissal for being so naive as not to merit attention or as hopelessly idealist, i.e. not realistic. To resist such dismissal I should add that (i) to put it mildly, the suggestions require honing and detailed explanation; (ii) such a form of life has empirical expression in the Chewong (Howell 1984) and to some degree perhaps in present-day Sweden and China (though things are of course changing there); (iii) I recognise that Indonesia's "soldier-politicians" (Anon. 1986a: 16; cf. Victoria 1973: 116; D-C 1985c: 242), who have benefitted so greatly personally from their ultimate control of the resources of the Indonesian nation to the detriment of most Indonesians (Jenkins 1986), are unlikely to find such suggestions in the best interests of Indonesians, including the Balinese both on Bali and on Lombok;

(iv) such suggestions are unlikely to be supported internationally: Indonesia, for instance, is now regarded as “one of the key areas in Southeast Asia for British trade and investment” (Carey 1986: 19), as it is by the United States, for which Indonesia also has strategic importance. Were such suggestions encouraged and the changes they involve implemented, the chances of them being sabotaged by these and other outside interests are, on past experience, high.

But still, as even the *Economist* (Anon. 1986b: 16) is prepared to acknowledge that “the impossibly radical idea can sometimes be the politically realistic one as well”, perhaps the suggestions made in very bare outline above should be considered further—especially as they would (I judge) most likely appeal to most Balinese (and other Indonesians), whose ideology, which has its beginnings in symmetry, is egalitarian,<sup>33</sup> but whose way of life is under potential threat. In the face of such a situation, which does not bode well for the Balinese and their form of life, “let us,” as Leach somewhere remarks, “be cautious and sceptical, but not defeatist”.

#### NOTES

- 1 “Balinese form of life” refers to the myriad social facts which constitute the lives of the Balinese inhabitants of Pagutan, western Lombok, where I lived for about 21 months in 1979/81. Unless it is clear from the context or otherwise specified, “Balinese” refers to these people in the present study. Awards from the Social Science Research Council of Great Britain and the Emslie Horniman Anthropological Scholarship Fund financed this work, and I am indebted to these bodies for their support. “Form of life” is used in preference to “way of life” (e.g. Leach 1961: 1) at the suggestion of Dr Mark Hobart, the external examiner of my doctoral thesis [Duff-Cooper (henceforth D-C) 1983a]. For the important role of the SSRC in furthering research on Southeast Asia in the 1960s and '70s, before its recent untimely demise, see Carey (1986: 7). Professors Takao Suzuki (Dean of the Graduate School of Human Relations, Keio University, Tokyo) and Teigo Yoshida (Visiting Professor of Social [Cultural] Anthropology at Keio) read this essay in

- draft; as often before I am obliged to them for their comments and advice. Any errors remain my responsibility.
- 2 The replacement of the SSRC by the Economic and Social Research Council is one very clear example of the way in which outside interests, in this case the political designs of the Thatcher administration, have a direct bearing upon the interests of disciplines, through the funding of work which accords with those interests as perceived by the committees, and not funding work which does not. Of course, such committees are only one way in which such political interests control the production (and reproduction) of knowledge.
  - 3 According to Postel-Coster (1977: 147), this importance derives from sources for change being found "in the realm of the participants' views of their culture, or in specific participants' deviant convictions (Wertheim 1970: 154). Dynamic social processes arise from the discrepancies between society's ideal pattern and people's conscious model of social reality" [compare D-C (1985a: 239) and (1986c)].
  - 4 It is not implied, what would be false, that in some non-trivial sense, the observer is not part of what he studies; or else that in some such sense, this is not a participatory world (e.g. Wheeler 1977: 817; Barnes 1984: 234-235).
  - 5 Regrettably the terms of my employment in Japan as a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Research Fellow and a Visiting Lecturer at Keio University do not presently permit me to carry out such work: although my brief does not allow me to work on Japan, my stipend stops if I leave.
  - 6 Naturally these principles of order derive (at least) from the point-of-view adopted, as well as the definitions employed. The order discerned is not *the* order, but one among a number of possible such orders (cf. D-C 1986b). For some uses of "aspect" as a quasi-technical term in social anthropology since the end of the nineteenth century see D-C (forthcoming-b).
  - 7 The duty [*dharma* (e.g. Hobart 1984)] of Brahmana is to deal with the mystical, that of Ksatria, with the jural. The four Balinese estates (*varna*) from finest to less fine are Brahmana, Ksatria, Vesia, Sudra. The relations that obtain among the four estates are dyadic (D-C 1985d: 163; *post*).
  - 8 This judgement, which cannot be justified here, leaves out of account as relatively unimportant partitions into six and seven, the ways in which a Balinese day and "week" can be divided, and the question of the constitution of such groups as local descent groups, villages, agglomerations of villages, realms, and the Balinese people all of which can be divided in various ways depending upon the point-of-view adopted.

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- 9 Increasing, that is, from bipartition, the simplest form of classification, what Hocart most suggestively calls a "first step" (1970: 289).
- 10 It could, of course, also be delineated in other ways.
- 11 The ways mentioned are not of course exhaustive. It is not obvious that such an account is possible, for various reasons. One reason, rarely even hinted at by ethnographers, is nicely put in the (Japanese) *senryū*: The picture that/The guide can't read—/He doesn't show them that.
- 12 For Balinese courtship and marriage, see, e.g., D-C (1984b: 492-502; 1985g: 409-413; forthcoming-d).
- 13 D-C (1985c: Tables 1-4), however, can now (secs. II, III. v, *post*) be seen not to discriminate finely enough among the dyads there listed.
- 14 Viewed from a different point, the gardens and rice-fields are together opposed to the compound and to the village temple (D-C 1985e: 48).
- 15 These are not always the same everywhere, but depend upon *désa kala patra*, "roughly that which is proper in time and place, often understood in daily contexts to mean the rules of the ward and desa adat" (Hobart 1979: 114; cf. D-C 1984a: 7, 12-13).
- 16 The forebears of the residents for the time-being of a compound are also located (in one guise) in this shrine. If offerings are not given to these beings, i.e. they are not adequately attended to, the residents may be sent suffering (*mintelin*) by their ancestors: "This takes two principal forms: first, they may bring illness or cause quarrels; second the household economy becomes bu(w)ut, disordered and ruined" (Hobart 1980: 63).
- 17 Cederroth suggests that this view "has an ominous ring of the corporativism that was fashionable in Europe not so long ago" (1985: 137). That is as may be; it is still the view of Balinese people of each of the four estates about this aspect of their form of life. This and other such views are to be taken *serious* account of, and not dismissed as merely (élitist) "folk models" or something of the kind (D-C 1985 i).
- 18 The five sensations are hearing, taste, sight, speech, and smell. The five movements are the movements of the mouth, the arms, the legs, the anus, and the genitals.
- 19 Gambir (*uncaria gambir*), red; *kapur* (lime), white; *basé* (piper betel), yellow; *sedah* (*sirih* leaves), green; *seseban* (tobacco), black.
- 20 That is, Isvara with silver, Brahma with bronze, Mahadéva with gold, Visnu with iron (e.g. Hooykaas 1977: 46/47).
- 21 In the conical figures, Siva or Sivatma is at the centre of partition into nine, Sada-Siva at the "collapsed" centres of partition into five and three, and Parama-Siva at the top of the cone as the point or dot (Sang Bindu) or as dichotomy.

- 22 A study of monograph length should be devoted to this topic to do it justice; here we will simply present a résumé of a brief study (D-C [1986c]) devoted to it. The empirical details of the relations shown in Tables 1-4 have been lengthily described in earlier studies and will not, for reasons of space, be repeated here. It is essential that each of the tables be read bearing the remarks about symmetry and the other tables in mind for the true relativity of the relations to be appreciated.
- 23 This form is used by Balian in healing, like the *swastika*. This latter design is also used as a motif in jewellery, in men's tattoos, and in "antidotes" such as *ulap-ulap* placed on the front of a building just under the eaves and facing east or north once it has been made ready for occupation in a *plaspas* rite (e.g. D-C 1985e: 38-39).
- 24 This relation, which involves a Surya receiving gifts from his or her *sisia* in exchange for mystical services, brings out the "double-edged quality of the gift" among the Balinese: Pedanda and other statuses concerned with the mystical are patrons because their services are of "superior value" to what they are given; yet, "by receiving payment, they are commensurately dependant upon the congregation [*sisia*]", whose clients they therefore are (Hobart 1980: 58). Both these views are perhaps true, yet the very facts convert the exchanges of goods and/or services which constitute the Surya-*sisia* relation into an equal exchange (D-C 1984b: 498, *post*). It may be, though, that "symmetrical" better describes this mode of relation, rather as an exchange of women between two lines of descent (in which one line is both giver and receiver of women in relation to the other line) may be termed symmetrical. "Equal" and "symmetrical" are not, however, synonyms (D-C 1985b).
- 25 *Aget*, good fortune, profit.
- 26 Duality is explicit in the god Rwa-Bhinéda, and Balinese words correspond with "alternate" and other notions implied by this and other modes of periodicity.
- 27 This assertion is justified by the section "Some Other Cases: Striking a Balance" in Gerdin (1982: chap. 6).
- 28 Yoshida (1986) describes another case.
- 29 Such transformations, especially the second mentioned, appear to have had empirical expression in Japan from the end of the first world war through the second and third decades of this century (Nakane 1984: 16-18).
- 30 This trend has been hastened, according to Gerdin, by the introduction of high-yielding varieties of rice such as IR36, now mostly grown in the village. "[Rice-] fields constitute something approaching the private

possession of the household, vested in a single named titleholder" (Hobart 1980: 45). Cederroth has it (1985: 136) that "on Lombok, certificates of ownership of land are issued in the names of individuals, while it is the household, being the basic unit of production as well as consumption, which uses the produce of the land". As no individual may hold rights in more than 7 ha rice-fields, however, certificates of ownership are no sure guide to "real" ownership: a holder of rights in more than 7 ha may have the excess registered in another's or others' names (although this is risky, for the latter may claim the rights registered in his or her or her name as his (her) own). As for "the household being the basic unit of production as well as consumption", the adequacy of this formulation depends upon the definitions of the terms used to frame it which Cederroth (and in the case of "household", Hobart) employs, which are not of course selfevident.

- 31 I do not, of course, mean to imply that other's work cannot also be so taken. . . .
- 32 Mr. Alan Kay, B.Sc., M.A., sometime of the School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, and a VSO teacher of English at the University of Mataram, tells many lurid tales of the ways in which foreign aid fails to reach those for whom it was intended, but I am not in a position here to recount them, for various reasons.
- 33 With very important provisos, Howe, for instance, appears (1985: 147-148) to support this assertion.

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