

## PREFACE

In 1665 a report of the Dutch East Indies Company emphasized 'the brutality and murderousness' of Balinese slaves:

'They are an evil kind of people who do much harm to the republic (Batavia, hsn) and from whom no good is to be expected' (Van der Chijs II, 405).

In 1914 however this opinion had changed and the familiar 20th-century-tourist-guide-book-image of Bali emerged:

'... I must exclaim in wholehearted admiration at that land and that people, where everything is so different from Java, the clouds as well as the earth, the plants as well as the animals, the people as well as their religion, customs and ideas. That land where everything has something sturdy and sincere about it, and that (way of) life, that joyous world, which free from foreign influences, can spread its wings; it throws a spell over everyone who visits Bali, a spell from which there is no escape ever after.'

Bali, Bali, my melancholy thoughts continue to dwell on you' (Van Kol 1914, 263).

These two views of Bali are not unique, but illustrate a long history of Western ideas about a non-western world<sup>1</sup>. The contrast between the two also demonstrates the transformation of the political order that had taken place between the 17th and the 20th century in Bali.

In this contribution it is my aim to elaborate upon the fact that Western conceptions of Bali formed a substantial component of colonial policy, with perhaps protracted post-colonial after-effects.

I shall begin with a short review of the dominant images that have been in existence about Bali since the 19th century and demonstrate how these ideas originated. Then I will give a concise description of the pre-colonial political order in Bali as never ending quest for hierarchy under royal rule. Eventually the articulation between the Balinese and the Dutch modes of dominance will be analyzed, i.e. how the Dutch - and their conceptions of Bali - transformed the Balinese political order from 'a state of flux' into a fixed 'traditional' order.



## 1. WESTERN IMAGES OF BALI

'In Western eyes there was never a Bali per se, but only a Bali derived' (Boon 1977, 17).

### 1.1. Bali as ancient Java preserved

At the beginning of the 19th century T.S. Raffles and J. Crawfurd were the first who attempted to create an academic image of Bali. It is true that Raffles was still not committing himself when he wrote that

'the present state of Bali may be considered as a kind of commentary on the ancient conditions of the natives of Java' (1817, app.K,ccxxxvi).

But with this he had, nonetheless, set the tone for further research. It was Crawfurd (1820) who emphasized the conception of Hindu-Bali, and the idea that ancient Hindu Java could be rediscovered in Bali gained ground when, in the middle of the 19th century, on the insistence of W.R. van Hoëvell - then president of the Batavian Society for the Arts and Sciences - the Sanskrit scholar and orientalist R. Friederich was commissioned to do research there. Implicitly Friederich was given the task to discover ancient Java in Bali. For, there was no longer any doubt in Van Hoëvell's mind that the former still survived there:

'It is certain that the Balinese are in the same situation as the Javanese at the beginning of the 15th century' (Van Hoëvell 1846a, 32).

Now Bali began to represent to 19th century Orientalist circles that which must have been lost in Java in the 15th century with the event of Islam: the old and 'classical' Hindu-Javanese civilization. In their eyes Islam had destroyed this Hindu-Javanese culture, after which there could follow only moral and spiritual degeneration. But, fortunately, Bali had been spared (Van Hoëvell, 1846a, 17; 1846b).

In Bali Friederich found what he was supposed to find. He had, according to the method of Oriental studies, immersed himself in the 'old texts', especially the so-called Kawi sources and extracted his material primarily from these<sup>2</sup>.

The first academic image of Bali was now further developed through the work of Friederich (1849-1850). He saw it as an elite culture of Hindu-Javanese origin, which had been established there in the

14th-15th century by conquerors from the Javanese realm of Majapahit, and which had since then survived there virtually intact in the 'lee of the time'. This image has proved itself extremely persistent and is still repeated today (Covarrubias 1973, Hanna 1976, but also Swellengrebel in his Introduction of 1960). This image, born of 19th century Orientalist notions and anti-Islamic sentiments, was to have great political significance for Bali in the later colonial period. For instance, in 1922, Resident H.T. Damsté stated that the governing elite in Bali was something of an aristocratic 'canopy' which was extraneous to the general population (Damsté 1922, 7-8), and in 1921 his Assistent-Resident, Berkhout, thought that Bali had to be preserved from the 'damaging effects' of Islam. For,

'... the whole of the history of the Indies as demonstrated that conversion to Islam has brought decline, moral, physical and financial as well'<sup>3</sup>.

In these statements two primary 19th century opinions were given voice and these provided the basic principles of 20th century colonial policy. First, that the Balinese elite, as far as descent was concerned, consisted of 'foreign conquerors' who had in fact little to do with the 'real' Bali, and secondly that Bali, at whatever cost, should be protected from the outside world, including Islam.

### 1.2. Bali as isolated 'village republics'

About forty years after Van Hoëvell and Friederich had 're-discovered' ancient Java in Bali, the establishment of the colonial administration in North-Bali was complete. And it was there that a young colonial administrator, F.A. Liefrinck, discovered the 'real' Bali.

In contrast to his Orientalist predecessors - who had created their image of the East mainly from the written word - Liefrinck was an administrative officer in the field. He had to solve the practical problems of establishing colonial authority in a foreign environment. Not only did his perspective differ from that of the Orientalists but his priorities also diverged. He attached the greatest importance not to the elite but to village Bali.

As a result Liefrinck discovered in North-Bali local - and in his

eyes autonomous - traditional communities, such as the desa (village) and the subak (irrigation society). These represented to him the 'real' Bali (Liefrinck 1890, 1886-'87).

F.A. Liefrinck has enjoyed the reputation of being one of the Founding Fathers of the so-called Adatlaw School (Van Vollenhoven 1928), which was committed to the recording of local customs and institutions and their formulation according to Western juridical concepts. Liefrinck's principal thesis was that the village represented 'primeval Bali'. He even called them 'village republics' (1927, 281), a term which was to echo for a long time in the pages of the colonial literature. With regard to this Boon rightly remarks that

'what began as a reaction against too much emphasis on the court sphere ended as an overisolation and reification of the desa community' (1977, 31).

And this led to a bifurcation in the image of Bali. On the one hand there was the rule of the princely conquerors, originating from Java; on the other hand there was the 'real' Bali which had succeeded in protecting itself from the noble elite in the isolation of the small 'village republics'. There was thought to be no real interaction between the two worlds nor mutual exclusion. They supposedly simply existed side by side.

Liefrinck's idea linked up with a general point of view current during the 19th century, that the nature of Asiatic states was one in which 'village' and 'state' were entirely separated. This view was mainly based on British material on India and it is likely that Liefrinck was also influenced by European images of the 'Indian state'<sup>4</sup>.

Liefrinck's perspective fitted equally neatly into the context of the requirements of colonial administration. The rule of the princes should, namely, be replaced by colonial government, because the princes were in fact no more than usurpers, whereas the Dutch officials would respect the 'real' Balinese society. At the same time it also seemed feasible to introduce administration of villages rather than control of individuals. This was not only more convenient, it was also cheaper (for Java, see Breman 1980).

Two principles formed the basis of the Adat law approach. First there was the belief in a gradual evolution which led closed communal

villages slowly towards more individual freedom, but still within the boundaries of the local communities. Secondly the Adat school had a strict legalistic approach. Formal rules and institutions, and not actual, changing and conflicting human relationships formed the objects of research. As a consequence there was within the framework of Adat law hardly any room for the dynamic of actual power relationships and historical change. The only 'change' that was perceived was seen in terms of 'decline' and 'destruction' of local communities as a result of 'royal despotism'.

The extent to which these principles influenced Liefrinck's conclusions becomes apparent from other, unpublished material which casts serious doubts on the simple Bali-model that was constructed by him. From unpublished archival reports emerges a North-Bali - contemporaneous with the period in which Liefrinck was active there - that was much more complex and in which many tensions existed and swift transitions took place. Liefrinck must have been aware of this but he probably did not consider these changes as relevant for they did not fit in his analytical framework.

During the process of the establishment of colonial administration in North-Bali, Liefrinck's ideas won the day. They gained even authority as he progressed in his career within the Dutch bureaucracy (1895-1901 Resident of Bali and Lombok; 1904-1908 Councillor of the Indies).

Although Korn would later add some nuances to Liefrinck's findings in his Adatrecht on Bali (1932), the image of Bali which had now been created was to persist until the end of the colonial period.

### 1.3. Bali as 'the dream of a summer's afternoon'

With the dawn of the 20th century a whole new era suddenly began in South-Bali. In a dramatic way an end came to three of the six southern royal families and, in the aftermath, the area was swept into the political and ideological system of the late colonial state. During the term of Governor General J.B. van Heutz (1904-1909) the formation of the Dutch East Indies Empire was completed and the last areas outside Java were brought under Western control under the banner of the 'Ethical Policy'. In 1915 the former Resident of Bali and Lombok

related how he had an audience with Van Heutz in 1905, just before taking up his appointment in Bali. It was the Governor General who

'... upon my request for some instructions led me to a map of Bali and pushing his hand across the provinces of South Bali said no more than "this all has to be changed" ...' (De Bruyn Kops 1915, 466).

And change it did because, after the military expedition to South Sulawesi ended in 1905, it was Bali's turn during the years 1906-1908. Not all South Balinese kingdoms were captured by force. Three of the six rulers had perceived in time that it was better not to offer any open resistance but, conversely, to accommodate the Dutch to such a degree that for the time being they could preserve a reasonable degree of autonomy<sup>5</sup>. The three remaining dynasties - Badung, Tabanan (1906) and Klungkung (1908) - collapsed. It was above all the way in which this occurred in Badung in September 1906 that was to cause quite a sensation. The ruler, together with his family and retainers, chose for a mass death by violence - the puputan, the end. While the previous night the Balinese had dedicated themselves to death, the Dutch were still ignorant of what was about to happen. In the morning of the 20th September 1906 the expeditionary force marched towards Badung and suddenly and violently the puputan took place.

'About 11 'clock a great crowd clad in white and armed passed the crossroads...the artillery opened fire and the effects of this on the closely packed throng were dreadful..(...). women with weapons in their hands, lance or kris, and children in their arms, advanced fearlessly upon the troops and sought death. Where an attempt was made to disarm them this only led to an increase of our losses. The survivors were repeatedly called upon to lay down arms and surrender, but in vain. The uninjured made use of every lull in the firing to stab the wounded with kris and then they fell upon the troops afresh. People who had initially fled before our fire, returned as it were ashamed of their vacillation and sought death. This drama was played out in a short space of time and the ruler and the members of his family and his wives as well as some children were slain'<sup>6</sup>.

The Dutch for their part - bewildered by this unexpected explosion of violence - did everything to cover up the precise number of killed Balinese, but it may be assumed that on that day more than 1100 Balinese lost their lives.

This Balinese violence has never been seriously investigated. At most it is written off as a melancholy curiosity or as a 'cultural' idiosyncracy of Bali. Moreover the puputan, even when it happened, was already a thing of the past, connected as it was with the then defeated rulers. The blood-bath had to be forgotten quickly because, for the Dutch, it was a nightmare that did not fit in the colonial 'Ethical Policy'. I shall return to this in depth in part 3. Here a pleasant dream, that replaced the nightmare and that was to form a supplementary image of Bali, needs to be located.

That dream emerged during the 1920's and 1930's and was a peculiar fusion of some anthropological notions, superficial romantic impressions and tourist-guide slogans. This dream supplemented the existing images and it eventually represented Bali as the 'Last Paradise' (Powell 1930), symbol of the Oriental happiness and Western yearning.

Only two interrelated aspects of this image will be discussed here. The first one was a notion developed by foreign anthropologists who came to Bali in the 1930's<sup>7</sup>. There they too often found what they were looking for. Roughly summarized they saw Bali as a society that was characterized by stasis and equilibrium, while culture and nature were finely attuned to each other. J. Belo, for instance, concluded her article on The Balinese Temper as follows:

'If we see in the equilibrated, delicately adjusted and essentially unstrained behaviour of the people the clue to their happy temper, we must conclude that a static, traditional society as theirs, solving all problems, prescribing every act, does form a desirable background against which well-balanced personalities may be reared' (1970(1935), 110).

On another level G. Bateson analyzed in an influential article the nature of Balinese society as a 'Steady State'. Such a 'Steady State' - a condition of the Balinese mind - was characterized by a 'balanced', 'non-progressive change' (1970(1949), 400), tightly framed in an order without history.

Balance and stasis were the key words in these notions. These also formed the backbone of a more structural analysis of Balinese life in which a relationship between macro- and micro cosmos - i.e. symbolic

order and social organization - was represented in a model in which the cosmic order determined the social order (Grader n.d.).

However, not primarily the Balinese character nor the cosmic order, but Dutch colonial rule under which research was conducted during the 1930's provided the conditions for an emphasis on stasis and equilibrium. Moreover the 'Pax Neerlandica' and the almost exclusive emphasis on the 'traditional' situation obscured a perception on recent historical changes. Anthropologists like Belo, Bateson and M. Mead were of course aware of the Dutch colonial presence in Bali, but just like other anthropologists of their time they thought that they could 'factor out' the Western element (see Asad 1973). But, as I will show in part 3, Balinese and colonial order were already too much inter-related that one could deny the impact of colonial rule. It was also the colonial condition which influenced the perspective of western observers in another respect. It is striking that in most of the Western writings from the 1930's Bali is represented as an island of abundance. The Balinese were, in the words of Bateson '... not hungry or poverty stricken. They are wasteful of food.' (1970(1949), 391). The reality was different for the world wide Depression of the 1930's caused also in Bali economic hardship for many people. Nevertheless the privileged position of Western observers and their interests in other things than economy closed their eyes for this rather dramatic situation in the daily life of the majority of the Balinese population.

On the contrary, the image of Bali that emerged was one of a splendid place for romantic foreigners who were looking for an Eastern Paradise. Men like the photographer Gregor Krause and the artist Walter Spies reinforced this idyllic image<sup>8</sup>.

A writer who made the romantic image of Bali known to the world was M. Covarrubias. His Island of Bali (1937, 1973) was seven times reprinted and gave a popular representation of what he called the 'happy and peaceful island of Bali' (1973, 405). Covarrubias more or less summarized the images that had been established by now: the foreign elite of Hindu-Javanese descent, the autonomous local communities, balance and equilibrium, added with advertising descriptions of the arts and some exotic rituals. Bali was now to represent an escape for those who did not feel at home in their own

Western world. In the words of M. Mead:

'Many Americans in the 1920's sought for an escape as single individuals from a society which denied them selfexpression. Many in the 1930's sought a formula by which we could build our society into a form which would make possible, on a firm economic basis, both simple happiness and complexity of spiritual expression. Of such a dream, Bali was a fitting symbol' (1970(1940), 340).

Bali was by now better known as a symbol than as a human society. It had become 'the dream of a summer's afternoon' (Kraemer 1933, 19). However, not everyone believed in the images that had been created, and dissident voices were raised. But these were drowned by the great chorus of administrators, scientists, journalists, artists and travellers who came to believe in the images. These images were not only continuously reinforced by reiteration, but possibly also by Balinese informants who gradually perceived what sort of information was required. And when in the thirties the international Bohemian left for Bali he saw what he wanted to see: a dormant 'traditional' society which, every so often, erupted into great rituals, but apart from this, lived on in a joyful, eternal and, above all, Eastern way. At the same time more and more Western Bali experts filtered in to keep watch over 'their' culture and little by little the Balinese acquiesced in this new view of themselves.

#### 1.4. Bali as a theatre of rituals

The fact that the dream was more persistent than one would have dared to suppose, and that it had even survived the years 1945-1966 - which were so turbulent and eventually dramatic for Bali - is not only illustrated by the reprints of many older publications (Swellengrebel 1960, 1969, Belo 1970, Covarrubias 1973) but, in a way, also by C. Geertz's well known Negara (1980).

Negara is doubtless a book with many levels but here I will focus only at its historical value<sup>9</sup>. The concept of the theatre state is presented in order to sketch a pre-colonial system in Bali that put all its emphasis and energy on the ritual expression of status differences. State rituals were theatrical performances in which the ceremonial display of status was more important than the actual concentration of

power. In this conception the 'cultural hierarchy' came from the top (the elite) whereas the 'power' and the actual government came from the bottom (the desa and subak). It was according to Geertz the human quest for divinity that was at the centre of the rituals and that created the theatre state, but left the quest for political power and unity almost deliberately unsolved.

Geertz gives his interpretation of the way the Balinese 'state' was imagined, not how it actually worked. As a consequence three criticisms must be made. In the first place the close parallel that is suggested between the imagined cosmic order and the socio-political reality - which resembles notions from the 1930's - is not so obvious (see also Hobart, 1985, 7). For, the effort to mirror a divine reality, as the Balinese did, did not result in the realization of the imagined. That dilemma is not sufficiently taken into account, and has to do with a second point. As Tambiah remarks (1985b, 324) perennial rebellions and conflicts formed an integral part of the pre-colonial order, an aspect that is underestimated in Geertz's theatre state. It leads Geertz to the creation of the Balinese king as 'icon, a figuration of the sacred in itself sacred' (1980, 108), instead of a charismatic leader of flesh and blood who had to overcome constant threats to his position. Perhaps a a-historical perception that was characteristic for the colonial period and its 'Pax Neerlandica' may have influenced Geertz's interpretation in this respect.

In the third place it is according to Tambiah 'implausible to hold that 'culture came from the top down ... while power welled up from the bottom (Negara, 85)'. Tambiah 1985b, 319. The artificial division which Geertz made between elite/theatrical expression/culture and the people/desa, subak/instrumental government/power leaves us with a 'disconnected' situation (Tambiah 1985b, 319; Schulte Nordholt 1981b, 474). In this way we cannot understand how the vital interaction between elite and people actually worked. This brings us to one of the basic assumptions underlying Geertz's concept, namely that in the theatre state 'power served pomp, not pomp power' (1980, 13). This, however, is an artificial distinction which does not explain what the 'power' was - where it came from, how it was organized, who was in control of it - that served 'pomp'.

Moreover this disconnection resembles again an older colonial image in which desa and elite formed separate worlds that lived side by side. It can therefore be argued that also in Negara images of Bali that were created during the colonial period are again reformulated. Let us therefore turn away from the imagination to another perception of the pre-colonial past.

## 2. THE BALINESE POLITICAL ORDER: THE QUEST FOR HIERARCHY, 17TH-19TH CENTURIES

'The power of the king solely depends on the fact whether the people will obey his orders' (P. Dubois 5-7-1829, ANRI, Bali 6.51).

In this section I will replace the images with a more plausible concept of the pre-colonial order in Bali. This had to be done in order to demonstrate more clearly in part 3 the degree to which Western imagery and policy were to create an other Bali and to what extent the colonial period burdened Bali with new contradictions. Here, the more paradoxal nature of the pre-colonial order will be stressed first.

### 2.1. Ancient Java: the source of the Balinese hierarchy

As I have pointed out, since the day of Friederich, it has been assumed that the Balinese elite (rulers, nobility, Brahmana's) were actually descendants of the Javanese realm of Majapahit (1292-1520). Friederich based his theories on a number of Balinese historical chronicles (babad). And on the authority of the 14th century Nagarakrtagama (Pigeaud 1960-1963) it has been assumed that the conquest of Bali - followed by a migration of Javanese nobility - took place in the year 1343. At that point, according to Balinese chronicles (esp. the Babad Dalem), a new political order and hierarchy came into being. In that order there was one chief ruler - the Dalem at Gelgel - who was surrounded by a number of vassals - the so-called Arya's - who were each granted a region of the island for their personal control.

There are sufficient facts to confirm the existence of the Gelgel royal centre and some of the Arya families. However, on the basis of recent research, substantial doubts may be raised as to what kind of a conquest occurred in 1343 and, more especially whether there ever was a migration of a Javanese elite into Bali<sup>10</sup>. First of all it is striking that in the Balinese babads the genealogies of a number of aristocratic families cannot be traced back beyond 1500 at the earliest. In other words, calculating back - and allowing a generous average of thirty years per generation - the famous year 1343 remains absolutely unattainable. Thus there is a 'gap' in Balinese history of more than 150 years (1343-1500) about which hardly anything is known<sup>11</sup>.

Secondly, Hinzler (1983) has demonstrated that during the heyday of the Gelgel period (ca. 1550) not a single word, in any connection whatsoever, was written about Majapahit in Balinese texts. From this can be deduced that the 16th century Balinese courts were not yet having any intention to trace their origin explicitly and specifically to Majapahit. This was to come later, probably about 1700.

Why did the link with Majapahit become important only at the beginning of the 18th century? I think the following hypothesis can be formulated in answer to this question.

External threats from a political expansion of 'Islam' which was directed towards Bali from Central Java and Makassar between  $\pm$  1550 and 1670, and, in Bali itself, a redistribution of the power between 1650 and 1730 may have combined to develop a new ideological framework. I do not intend to suggest here that 'politics' could suddenly create a whole new ideology. What I mean is that vague and perhaps disconnected notions were (re)activated and transformed into a more coherent framework. In that framework new criteria, for a Balinese identity on the one hand and on the other for internal hierarchical differences, were borrowed from a fictitious past, in which the year 1343 formed a 'historical' focus.

In Java the growth of the Islamized political power of Mataram became clearly manifest about 1550 and gradually set course for East-Java. There, one by one, smaller Hindu-Javanese centres were destroyed (De Graaf and Pigeaud 1976). Then it seemed that it was the turn of Bali and things began to look very grim indeed for the island when, from 1600 onwards, an Islamized expansion also emerged in Makassar. It was Makassar that was to pose a threat to Bali from the east (De Graaf 1941).

In order to be able to resist these threats not only thousands of people were mobilized but - and this is part one of my hypothesis - an ideological 'bastion' was built at the same time. Under the influence of Brahman priests who had fled before the Islam expansion in East-Java during the second half of the 16th century, and whom the Gelgel court had given refuge, the consciousness of being the sole heir of a Hindu tradition took root in Bali. And in this tradition the, by then vanished, Javanese realm of Majapahit formed a shining example.

This then was perhaps the way in which from about 1600 onwards the identification of the Balinese elite with a fictitious Hindu-Javanese origin gradually was developed. The fact that this hypothesis has not just been plucked out of thin air is evidenced by two fragments of texts.

When the Dutch made their first journey through the archipelago in 1597 they came upon Bali by chance. This was just at the very moment that a few thousand warriors were being prepared to cross over to Java to halt further Islamic expansion. If they did not, according to a Balinese leader

'... then would the sufficiency of the island of Baelle be done with, for then could the war of the Turks and Moors (i.e. Islam, hsn) be expected daily' (Rouffaer and Yzerman 1929, 82).

Thirty-eight years later, in 1635, the story was repeated with Makassar. The Balinese ruler of Gelgel refused to heed a request from Makassar to convert to Islam. A Portuguese missionary priest who was by chance on a visit noted:

'This people of Bali is however so determined not to relinquish the eating of pork and is so averse to Mohammed that they yet remain heathen, although these regions are already infected by the plague (i.e. Islam, hsn)' (Wessels 1923, 438-439).

The Balinese answer to the rule of Makassar was that they had an army of 70.000 men 'with lances greased with pork fat' (*idem*)<sup>12</sup>.

In the end Bali did not become Muslim, a.o. thanks to the V.O.C. (Dutch East Indies Company) when it paralyzed the Islamic centres of Mataram and Makassar in time. So it may have been the V.O.C. which in first instance was not at all interested in culture, that contributed more to the survival of Balinese culture than all the concerned administrators and travellers of later times together.

Quite apart from this external threat, Bali underwent an internal reorganization of power relationships between the years 1650-1730. In 1650 the royal centre of Gelgel collapsed as a result of discord and found eventually in 1686 a successor in the court of Klungkung. There the putative descendants of the old royal house would from then onwards try in vain to emulate the former might of the dynasty. They did not

succeed. Although highest in terms of esteem, the ruler of Klungkung was one of the weaker parties among those in power. This was mainly due to the rise of the small Balinese coastal centres which based their power to a large extent on the slave trade <sup>13</sup>. So a new balance of power came into being and by  $\pm$  1730 the new relationships were more or less stabilized. Then - part two of the hypothesis - these had to be brought together in a new comprehensible framework. For this purpose I assume that one turned to the 'event of 1343' and the idea of being heirs of Majapahit. This was further enhanced because actual power relationships at that time ( $\pm$  1690-1730) were now projected back to 1343. In other words, whoever was strong in 1730 was then endowed with an illustrious ancestor in the person of one of those Javanese lords from Majapahit who had - supposedly - conquered Bali.

There is evidence to support this consciousness of being the heir to Majapahit. It caused the rulers of Mengwi, Tabanan and Klungkung to make attempts to restore the site where the capital of Majapahit had formerly stood,

'... being of the idea to restore again the ruined place and make it into a splendid 'negorije' (negara, hsn) as it formerly had been' <sup>14</sup>.

Recently Vickers (1986a) as also underlined the link with Majapahit in 18th century Balinese court circles, and it seems that his conclusion support the hypothesis presented here. Rather than there had been an actual migration to Bali of a new Javanese elite in 1343, it is more likely that at the beginning of the 18th century the Balinese lords anchored their newly acquired power by a genealogical legitimization in the past. So long before the Europeans appeared on the scene the phenomenon of 'invention of tradition' already existed, because 'authority once achieved must have a secure and usable past' (Plumb 1974, 41).

## 2.2. The interaction between lords and their people

Now that it may reasonably be assumed that the Balinese elite are themselves of Balinese origin, the contrast between a 'foreign' elite and the 'real village Bali' is no longer valid. However the question of the nature of village organization during the 18th and 19th centuries

still remains.

During my research into the post-Gelgel negara Mengwi I never came across 'the village' as a political factor of any importance. This fact corresponds to earlier findings relating to Java (see Onghokham 1975 and Kumar 1980)<sup>15</sup>. In other words, the sharp distinction between aristocracy and the 'autonomous village' did not exist. Yet there were many vital relations between nobility (triwangsa) and commoners (wong jaba).

During the 18th and 19th centuries the political order of Bali was extremely dynamic and it contained many uncertainties and dangers. Epidemics, bad harvests, slavery, dissensions and wars were ever-recurring threats to the progress of rural life. In such a relatively tumultuous situation strong leaders - 'men of prowess' as Wolters (1982) calls them - came to the fore as important political instigators. By means of personal exercise of force and by their constant physical presence these leaders succeeded in forming an entourage of followers around them. The members of the entourage had in turn their own entourage and so wider circles of followers were grouped around the main leader<sup>16</sup>. With the help of their entourage and its wider circles a leader could incorporate, or if necessary destroy, rivals in his immediate vicinity.

Occasionally this sort of leader eventually succeeded in making his 'house' into a dynasty, that lasted longer than the lifetime of the one strong man (see Locher 1985). Such a dynasty then managed to control a local area for an extended period of time and, with varying success, the regions around it as well.

In the Balinese poem Bagus Diarsa an excellent metaphor explains these lord-follower dynamics (Hooykaas-Van Leeuwen Boomkamp 1949, 101-102, my transl.):

'The subjects are like cattle  
their guardian is the Anak Agung  
if he feeds them well, they will be fat  
their horns pointed and sharp  
Who dares to touch them?  
One will take very good care not to do so  
But if the cattle is hungry and bony  
then they will go everywhere, where grass growth richly  
there they will go, straightforward'

If they make a false step then they will be captured  
What will be the ransom?

Then the stupidity of the guardian appears  
and he will be laughed at by his neighbours'.

The extent to which Balinese Anak Agung (lords, or 'Big Man') actively showed themselves - in battle, in law-making, administration of justice and granting of titles, in negotiating innumerable personal relationships, in agriculture, in the instigation and fulfillment of ritual obligations and so forth - was crucial to the success of such a dynasty. The respect which a ruler contrived to build up in this way formed the nucleus of his political power because, by compelling respect, he could then call upon sufficient loyal followers from entourage and the wider circles of clients to sustain his position. Allies, followers and 'foot-soldiers' gave substance to the power of the ruler and it is remarkable to what extend all these relationships were expressed in kinship terms in 18th century Bali. Allies were 'younger brothers' and affinal relations in which women were married into the direction of the centre had to stand guarantee for the preservations of alliances. Besides this, some locally strong families were annexed through the new ruler taking a wife from such a family, having a son by her and then sending him, as sole heir, back to the family concerned, after which this boy - the son of the ruler - would later become the founding father of a new branch of the royal dynasty. Loyal but minor vassal families were made into a separate category of the nobility - in Mengwi the so-called perbali - and in the course of time some of these came to regard themselves as lesser branches of the same great family of which the ruler was the head. Besides that, in Mengwi the nuclear body of jabu warriors were made 'sons' of the ruler - the so-called soroh Batu Bata - and were granted a privileged position and a special place of worship in the main temple.

In this fashion the house of the leader developed into a dynasty and a small negara ('kingdom'), the backbone of which consisted of a hierarchy of relations between high and low. And ideally, this hierarchy was made clearly visible and legitimized in large rituals - palebon (cremation), pancawalikrama (purification of the negara), ngerebeg (show of arms) and the odalan (periodic celebration) in the

main temples. Later I will return to this ritual aspect, but first it needs to be stressed that this hierarchy was characterized by two paradoxical features, namely respects and intimacy. Two examples, one from the Bagus Diarsa and the other witnessed in 1818 will clarify this.

- 1) 'Speak in order to instruct  
consult your followers (servants)  
then your words will strike them to the heart  
.....  
Do not allow that your followers are unpolite  
disregard will be your lot  
Keep an eye on what is equal and what unequal  
let the manners of looking be proper  
their words serious and polite, clear and friendly  
That makes that they behave properly and take good care  
and that you will not suddenly be surprised'  
(Hooykaas-Van Leeuwen Boomkamp 1949, 101-102, my  
transl.)
- 2) Whenever the ruler went abroad he was accompanied by the requisite pomp but, at the same time, the whole affair had a remarkably relaxed character.

'... some of the concubines pertained to the public state of the ruler and accompanied him in public, to bear behind him his betel-box, writing materials, toilette boxes, looking glasses, fans and such like (...) while two or three hundred men, mostly the sons of nobles or of important chiefs who bear pikes shields and swords, comprise the vanguard. The male retinue of the prince is - apart from the respect they show to him when His Highness addresses them, in which case they immediately fall upon their knees and respond to every word of command by the raising of folded hands to the head - is very free and unconstrained; they laugh among themselves and greet each witty remark of the prince with loud laughter, while they also take the liberty of coming out fearlessly with their own witticisms, at which the ruler not infrequently joins in their laughter' (Van den Broek 1835, 200-201, see also Olivier 1827, 469).

Such a dynamic order cannot be explained in terms of dichotomy between elite and village, but in terms of interaction between high and low. Firstly, a village was considered too weak to protect itself from all external danger. In fact, just the opposite was the case. From my research it appears that the local community was - politically - of a fragmented nature. Various families who lived together were actually

subjected to different overlords from whom they received protection and access to land and to whom, in their turn, they owed allegiance and services. Much more important than the presumed 'village solidarity' was the question whether or not one was subject to one of the powerful lords of the region or that one enjoyed the direct protection of the ruler himself. As one informant said: 'Ah, you are asking me now about local adat (customs, rules). Local adat, what did it matter in those days? It was the lord who decided about local adat, for he had power'.

In the second place it was a conscious policy on the part of the ruler to have large groups of the population migrate considerable distances. Balinese historical tales abound with such exoduses which demonstrate how mobile, in fact, the agrarian population was. Moreover, among the oral traditions there are a lot of stories known from which it emerges that princes were actually active in the founding of new villages<sup>17</sup>.

Finally, closer investigation reveals that not very much remains of the putative divisions between elite and the local, autonomous, irrigation communities, the famous subak. Here as well many local traditions - and ritual 'traffic' - indicate that it was usually the ruler and his lords who opened up new areas or converted existing small-scale irrigation systems into large-scale projects. The foci of such systems were the large upstream dams which were constructed, maintained and guarded under the leadership of the nobility, whereas the local lords were also responsible for the maintenance of irrigation temples and rituals. These were all tasks which were far beyond the capabilities of the various villages individually. Moreover, the dams were also the Achilles' heel of the whole system. If they burst the whole of the lower-lying area fell dry. Nature and enemies formed a constant threat to the dams because, during the wet season these were liable to break and so a constant supply of labour was necessary. On the other hand, by gaining control over a dam - and hence the irrigation water-enemies could get their opponents in their power. For these reasons it is fairly irrelevant to emphasize the so-called autonomy of the local subak exclusively if the fundamental point - the supply of water - is omitted<sup>18</sup>.

I have tried to make clear that, at least in the southern

rice-bowl of Bali, there existed no separate worlds of elite and village in the 18th and 19th centuries, because the very nature of the political order implied many intensive and personal contacts between lords, followers and wider circles of clients within the framework of a dynamic hierarchy.

### 2.3. The perennial conflict

It goes without saying that we can deal summarily with the supposed static and harmonious nature of Balinese society before the advent of colonial rule. This was of course a complete fiction. Rather, the Balinese political order was characterized by a state of perennial conflict.

Towards the end of the 18th century, a rather clear hierarchical model did develop in which theoretically everyone in Bali had his and her appointed place<sup>19</sup>.

The exercise of authority, the privileges and duties of all sorts of groups were more or less defined, and, at least in theory, were also accepted. Yet there remained an enormous dilemma, for on the one hand the hierarchy as a model was accepted but at the same time everyday reality proved to be recalcitrant.

It is at this point that the Balinese political order poses analytical problems. It cannot be defined according to one model for there were at least two competing models. Boon illustrated this by saying: 'Yet ... outside its Hinduized rites and Sanskritic texts, Bali can appear as much Polynesian as Indic' (1977, 18). Recently Guermonprez (1985) focused on the same issue by demonstrating how an earlier type of Hinduized, divine kinship in Bali (12th century) transformed into a more 'secular' kind of leadership (18th century). In other words, the patih ('second in command') had become 'king' in Bali whereas the divine king had disappeared.

The same transition is also reflected in two historical texts, the Usana Bali from the 16th century and the Babad Dalem (probably 18th century). In the former the descent of the Balinese rulers is directly linked with the gods, whereas in the latter human warriors from Majapahit are the ancestors of the Balinese nobility. Though much more research needs to be done in this respect, one movement becomes clear

when one looks at the 19th century Bali. That is that there was an ongoing oscillation of, on the one hand, a more 'kingly' and, on the other hand, a more 'chiefly' model of political hierarchy. Neither the 'king' nor the 'chief' predominated, for both were present on the scene. This dilemma could not be solved and gave the hierarchy one of its main dynamics. The best illustrations of this are to be found time and again when a succession to the throne was at stake. Then the typical conflict was one between the oldest son of the deceased king - but from a lower mother - and the son of the padmi (mother of high birth) - but of a younger age. Age and position formed almost equal starting points and the babads of many Balinese dynasties reveal that one could never predict in advance what the outcome of such a fight was to be. Sometimes ingenious kinship manipulations had to legitimize a temporary compromise between factions<sup>20</sup>.

In other words, the intention to follow the model was there but the execution remained a free interpretation of the hierarchical concept. Not only were the hierarchical relationships of a complex nature, but violent conflicts between negaras, within negaras and within the leading families also recurred regularly. Discord and violent conflict was indissolubly interwoven into the Balinese political order and, during the 18th and 19th centuries, not a decade passed without fierce war somewhere in Bali. Lords fought about women, water, control of trade and manpower and above all for personal honour and a place higher up on the hierarchical ladder. Bloodshed, followed by diseases and the disruption of agrarian life were often the consequence for the ordinary people, for warfare in Bali was not a ritual affair (see also Hobart 1985). Michael Adas' concept of the 'contest state' still seems to be best suited to the violent and ambivalent character of this pre-colonial Balinese order (see Adas 1981 and Van den Muyzenberg 1983). There is however one problem, for can one really apply the Western concept of 'state' to the Balinese situation? I doubt that for the Balinese negara had not even the vaguest signs of things like a bureaucracy, uniformity in regulations or government, nor a monopoly of power in the centre. Therefore I prefer the concept of 'hierarchical order' which will now be further developed.

#### 2.4. Hierarchy against the threat of chaos: three flows of water

In the Balinese political order establishing a uniform administration was not as relevant as recognition of the hierarchical order. On the contrary, it was not the centralization of power but the delegation of it to loyal subjects that increased the authority of a ruler.

C. Geerts also alluded to this paradox but my approach will be different from his because instead of the 'theatre state' I would like to propose an alternative - but still primarily and very speculative - metaphor, that of the 'Sisyphean fluctuation'<sup>21</sup>. In this metaphor three 'flows of water' went downwards and ordered the hierarchy, but at the same time the downward movement threatened to dissolve the hierarchical order itself. Therefore time and again new leaders had to restore that order, but they never succeeded in establishing an 'ever'-lasting order; it was like Sisyphean labour.

Central in this concept was not so much the ruler as well as a thing: his kris (dagger). Errington (1983) had shown how in South Sulawesi pusaka (sacred heirlooms) were considered as divine sources of power and how in the dynamic changes of relationships these pusaka remained immobile centres. I think that this idea can be applied to Bali as well, for the kris of the ruler was his main pusaka. In many texts and stories instances can be found that the kris and not the person of the ruler was considered as the main source of divine power. The babad Blahbatuh for instance is in fact not primarily a story of a noble family but of their krises, around which events and generations are composed<sup>22</sup>.

Also in the negara Mengwi the krises Dalem Smeru, I Panglipur and I Sekar Gadung were considered as divine sources of power whereas the ruler was seen as the legitimate powerholder. The central place of the kris emphasizes the aggressive qualities of his negara. Moreover, the term kawitan, meaning origin or ancestor in a genealogical sense, was also often applied to the kris. Several of these sacred heirlooms were called kris kawitan<sup>23</sup>.

So, two types of origins, that of the ancestor and of the divine sources, merged in the kris, which was in the hands of the ruler the source of power. If the kris - and its legitimate holder - forms the

central point in the hierarchy, connecting both gods and deified ancestors with the ruler and his negara, the hierarchical order can be demonstrated by the flow of three kinds of water: kama putih, toya and yeh.

I owe this idea to a remark by Hobart:

'Now, in traditional Balinese theories of physiology, semen is regarded as water. Just as water flowing uphill is impossible, so is semen ascending from a lower to a higher caste' (1978b, 21 see also Weck 1937, 45)'.

In this sense kama putih, or semen virile, could only go downwards, for men were only allowed to marry women of (the same or of) a lower position. By that this flow of water ordered the hierarchy of the negara. And it was the ruler who was responsible for this order and he was the only one to grant titles or to put persons in a lower position.

A place where kama putih met another flow of water was the pamerajan (house temple of the nobility). There rulers and lords worshipped their ancestors and received toya (holy water)<sup>24</sup>.

Toya formed a second - and ritual - flow of water that only could go downwards, for no one was allowed to accept holy water from a lower person. The highest source of this kind of water was the purohita of the ruler, the highest Brahman priest in the negara. It was the purohita who legitimized the hierarchy. He knew the texts and laws and celebrated the hierarchy in large rituals where he provided the holiest water, whereas Brahman priests who were in lower position gave their toya to the lower strata in society. It is in this respect interesting to point at a rather close correspondence between puris and Brahman houses in, for instance, Mengwi. Both spread almost side by side through the area and eventually there was no puri in Mengwi without a Brahman house nearby<sup>25</sup>. Where the puri came to power, the house of the Brahman more or less controlled the distribution of toya for the important rituals in the lives of entourage and circles of a lord. And so a ritual order was, at least ideally, established in which water went from high to low.

A third flow of water was yeh (low Balinese, water), and in this case irrigation water. That came from the holy mountains and went down to the sea, dwelling place of demons and evil. However, in its way down

it was distributed over the rice fields by an irrigation system in which royal dams played - at least in Mengwi - a crucial role. Here again it was the ruler who maintained the order by building and protecting the major dams, and by stimulating the necessary rituals.

During my fieldwork I found some unexpected evidences for the royal dimension in this. At least in two areas a kris belonging to the ruling dynasty was brought in procession to the major dam and stabbed into it. Informants explained explicitly that only with the power of that particular kris the dam would stay intact and a new season could start 26.

Another instance was more puzzling.

North of the desa Mengwi lays the main dam for the rice fields of that village. In the temple of that dam there is one shrine called Dalem Smeru, which is a rare name for a shrine and no one could explain it to me.

Later on, looking in the babad Mengwi-Buleleng and V.O.C. notes from the first half of the 18th century a possible answer appeared. The shrine was probably devoted to a royal kris, the Dalem Smeru. This heirloom was a gift from the priest of Mount Smeru (East Java) to the second ruler of Mengwi when he was on his pilgrimage to Majapahit in 1730. And with the same kris the ruler defeated his main enemies in Bali in 1733. Moreover, though it has been forgotten, that kris also helped to secure the area around the desa Mengwi of food, as the shrine suggests.

In Bali water is believed to circulate for it flows from the holy mountains to the sea from where it returns to the mountains. In the same way the souls of the Balinese are believed to circulate for they descend from the mountains into man and after death and cremation they are brought to the sea from where they reunite with the divine ancestors in the mountains. So Balinese life is a constant movement between kaja (towards the mountains) and kelod (towards the sea), the main direction of orientation in Bali. Temples are important signs in this 'flow of life', for there is, at least in Mengwi, a clear correlation between the main mountain temple and the one at the sea shore. In this respect it was, again the ruler who connected both temples by building the central temple of the negara at the north east side of his palace (puri). In this way a crucial mountain-centre-sea axis was constructed in which the three negara temples were signs of order<sup>27</sup>.

It can be argued that eventually the ruler constructed his negara by constructing these temples, for a negara without these temples had 'no direction' and was as helpless as a ruler without his kris<sup>28</sup>.

Negara temples were more than signs of order for they were also guardians of a 'collective memory', remembering for instance the origin of kingroups or certain events from the past. Temples provided groups but also a negara ultimately with an identity. Moreover, they formed the main centres of mobilization. In and around the main temples the ruler, his whole entourage and all its circles came, ideally, together and then the negara became most manifest when its hierarchical order was celebrated in great rituals. The masses attending such events were as important as the proper order of the rituals for, as Vickers argues (1986b), only large amounts of people made a ritual on this scale into a success. At the same time such mass rituals were manifest demonstrations of the power of a ruler who had shown to be able to organize them. The masses showed nothing less than the manpower the ruler was able to mobilize. Yet at another level the ultimate power of a ruler was demonstrated by the way he could sustain the 'flow of life'. And this went beyond 'theatre' for ordering the proper flows of water meant that the ruler ordered life. The authority of such a ruler was respected and only then he could delegate parts of his power downwards by distributing these among persons and groups lower in the hierarchy. This process of delegation depended however on the fact whether one obeyed the authority of the ruler and the way he sustained the hierarchy or not.

This speculative 'model' of the three flows of water - which had the advantage that it moves and connects different categories and levels - shows a Balinese polity in which hierarchy structured the negara and in which the ruler played a central and active role. However, kries were not permanent, nor exclusive as various copies of one and the same kris suggest. Also the flow of kama putih was not perfect nor the distribution of toya and the performance of important rituals. Obviously irrigation was many times disrupted, and temples could lose their importance after which they remained almost forgotten signs of defeated power. All this meant that the order was constantly in danger and that new strong leaders had to climb upwards to restore

again the undisturbed flows of water. If they succeeded it was only as long as their lifetime, for another kaliyuga (time of destruction) was always nearby.



### 3. THE COLONIAL TRANSFORMATION: 'TRADITION' AND CONTRADICTION, 1906-1942

#### 3.1. Power generated knowledge

In the years between 1895 and 1908 six South Balinese negaras were subjected to Dutch colonial rule. There were however important differences between them. To the east in the negaras of Karangasem, Bangli and Gianyar the ruling dynasties were left intact. This was the work of F.A. Liefrinck in his capacity as Resident of Bali and Lombok and then as member of the Council of the Indies. In this later position he was an opponent of Governor General Van Heutz. Liefrinck wanted to leave Balinese society as 'untouched' as possible; Van Heutz on the other hand wanted to sweep it into the 'modern' era quickly and forcibly. They both had their way because the remaining three negaras were subjugated by force of arms. As a result different parts of Bali entered in different ways the colonial period. For the next 34 years (1908-1942) the area as a whole was to enjoy the Pax Neerlandica. An imposed peace which in no time at all was considered to be a characteristic of Balinese culture.

Thereby the first new 'reality' was created by colonial interference. Having achieved this, the Dutch colonial administration was by no means out of the woods, because things still had to be governed. The colonial state, the administrative apparatus of which became increasingly bureaucratic, could only function with a great degree of uniformity. As a consequence uniform administration was introduced into a South Bali which had, by the very nature of its royal rule, been almost entirely composed of local differences. This however never presented a great dilemma to the European administrators, for since they were in power they were in a position to reformulate the Balinese reality. In order to do this 'knowledge' was necessary, which derived from a position of power. In other words, the Dutch sought the supposed - i.e. desired - uniformity in Balinese society, so that they could make it conform to colonial requirements. Power generated knowledge. In the remaining part of this paragraph I want to show that colonial knowledge produced in such a fashion was continually to create unavoidable contradictions within Balinese society.

### 3.2. Egalitarianism and the cast hierarchy, 1906-1920

In what can be called the chaos of the new order after 1906, the colonial administrators undaunted set to work to remodel South Bali. The Dutch officials had scarcely any profound knowledge about South Bali, but to compensate they had a clear picture of how that society should look. They were convinced that much of the 'old', 'real' Balinese society had been destroyed by princely despotism. Now this had to be restored. Consequently the Resident declared that he had seen his task as

'... to purge the adat of the excesses and excrescences that have fastened themselves onto it through the sheer despotism of those in power' (ARA MvK MvO G.F. de Bruyn Kops 1909).

These words are yet one more indication that, right from the outset, the colonial administration conferred upon itself the exclusive right of distinguishing between 'real adat' and 'excrescences'. For this purpose they appealed to two sources which were virtually mutually exclusive, i.e. on the one hand the writings of F.A. Liefrinck - in which the emphasis lay on the egalitarian village community - and, on the other, the Old Javanese lawbooks - which underlined nothing less than royal authority. At this point a colonial contradiction was created. Under the pretext of restoring Balinese society in its 'original state' exactly the opposite took place: the hierarchy was legalized in the caste system to the benefit of the aristocracy. In September 1910 it was decided

'... to uphold the caste concept, being the principle foundation of Balinese society ...' (minutes of an administrative conference, 15/17-9-1910, Korn coll., 166).

This meant that the three highest groups in Bali - Brahmanas, Satrias and Wesyas - who together made up the triwangsa and represented 6 to 8% of the total population, would, from that time onwards, be treated in a uniform fashion as superior castes. The flexibility, the regional variations and the fact that the order of priority in the hierarchy was in a constant flux - all characteristics of the old system - were now replaced by one new norm to which everyone had to conform and from which there was no longer any escape. As legal sources several Old Javanese texts which, in the Balinese case, contain often theoretical

and, what is more, conflicting regulation were elevated tot the status of official lawbooks. This is the reason why, a few years later, a colonial report could unhesitatingly explain that

'... the selfsame laws that were being observed in Java about the time of the fall of Majapahit (ca. 1500) are being observed in full force at this very moment in Bali' (Report of the Head of the Archeological Service 13-2-1917, ARA MvK V 18-6-1918-39).

A newly invented tradition had rapidly taken root in European thought. Nonetheless several civil servants noted in the margin that there was some question of a contradiction. Thus Fraser (1910, 900), while recognizing on the one hand the egalitarian nature of society continued to declare that a political and administrative problem was involved in the game. The Dutch wanted, in fact, to be assured of the loyalty of the old elite. Keeping the friendship of the aristocracy consequently carried more weight than a concern for the proper positions of the commoners.

As a result, Bali was endowed with an administration of justice that, at least up to the thirties, primarily confirmed and reinforced the caste hierarchy. At the same time many rules of law were far from clear. In a burst of frankness Fraser expressed his doubts on this subject in a handsome manner:

'when such an old, venerable pedanda (Brahman priest, here judge, hsn) with his imperturbably friendly and benign countenance, but from whom one, in urgent matters, has such difficulty in obtaining certain information about a particular subject, when such a pedanda, after the close of a court session or meeting, wraps his old and yellowed law book in the same dirty cloth and takes up his staff, the symbol of his dignity, in order to return home, then a mystery walks away from me' (Fraser 1910, 908).

The colonial administration sought refuge in a mystery and continued to believe in a uniform caste system so that, well into the thirties, there was gross overestimation of the supposedly 'pure' Hindu-Javanese juridical principles.

Korn explained how the mystification was reproduced time and again.

'Every civil servant who arrives to take up duty on Bali knows he has been transferred to the island of Hinduism. He looks for Hinduism there and he finds it: his office, in the

lawcourt, in the titles and the temples ... so there is an unending repetition of the same administrative errors' (Korn 1932, 57).

The colonial administrative apparatus prevented any possible readjustment of the image once it had been created because legal matters generated such an amount of paperwork that the controleurs (district administrators) were, for the most part, confined to their offices. According to Assistant Resident A.J.L. Couvreur the result of all this was that

'our controleurs have long since lost touch with the population and hereby have lost their essential function as antennae; one never gets into the real village' (ARA MvK MvO A.J.L Couvreur 1920).

During the initial years of the colonial administration in Bali the controleurs, for that matter, scarcely had the opportunity to work themselves in well somewhere because there was a policy of rapid transfers. One district even had had twelve different controleurs in ten years.

The exclusive emphasis on Hindu-Javanese law was also revealed in the appointment of members of the local court - the so-called Raad Kerta. In 1932 of the 23 Balinese judges no less than 17 were Brahmana, five Wesya and only one was Sudra (representing the ca. 94% of the non-aristocracy) (Korn 1932, 415). Such a composition of the courts perpetuated yet again the privileges of the triwangsa.

The process of the construction of an immutable caste system did not occur completely without protest. In the early years especially there were quite a few local disturbances. These occurred in conjunction with the implementation of the so-called 'herendiensten' (corvee) - the compulsory work of road-building. Members of the triwangsa were exempted by the colonial administration from this work. As a result there was, as it were, a real run on titles because whoever could prove to belong to the triwangsa was not obliged to perform heavy labour and could thereby show himself to be of much more importance than those who did have to work. Many families from the fringes of the nobility did their best to have dormant claims to titles recognized as quickly as possible because the demarcation between aristocrat and non-aristocrat

was no longer fluid but had become rigid. Those who missed the boat were to be excluded for a long time.

Protest came as well from a number of non-aristocratic groups such as Bendesa, Pasek, Pande and Sungguhu. Formerly some of them had enjoyed special privileges and had been respected by their rulers. Now they had suddenly been lumped together with all the other 'Sudras' under one common denominator. A new 'Sudra cast' was created. Egalitarian society had never existed in Bali but now, as the result of colonial interference, it had been realized to a certain extent by the formation of a large 'remainder group' as an undifferentiated body of people.

The Dutch colonial administration had, from a political point of view, chosen to associate itself with the theoretical four-caste system which, in practice, had never existed in Bali as a uniform and closed system (Korn 1932, 174-175). In other words, 'caste (was) taken largely as fact rather than ideology' (Boon 1977, 40), and aristocratic Balinese informants assiduously abetted the Dutch in the creation of it.

### 3.3. Village 'restoration' and the power of the triwangsa, 1906-1920

The pièce de résistance of colonial policy was indubitably its care of 'the desa' and the 'local adat'. Later on I shall deal with the phenomenon of adat at some length but first, at this point, I shall discuss the creation of new villages in South Bali by the colonial administration.

The idea that the village was the primeval form of Balinese society had been completely accepted ever since the time of Liefrinck. He had stated that 'each village forms in itself a small republic' (1927, 281). This basic idea was accompanied by two other, complementary principles, i.e. that the desa had a primarily religious character and that the internal relationships were 'of a pure democratic nature' (Liefrinck 1927, 258).

So the myth of the democratic, religious village republic was born. Under the pretext of 'restoration of tradition' this myth permitted the colonial administrators to create a new situation.

The presumed republican character of the village was seized upon

in order to form, often entirely new, territorial units, and then to designate these as 'villages'. The supposedly religious character of the village was emphasized out of all proportion and had, above all, to remain 'untouched'. In this way space was created in the 'political' area for the colonial authorities to have an administrative grip on the newly-formed territorial units. A distinction, that was completely new for Bali, between 'religious' (or 'adat') and 'secular' (or administrative) authority now made its appearance, never more to be dispelled. Religion and/or adat (whatever that was exactly) had to be preserved, and, as long as this was the case, the new government might pursue its own administrative course.

Finally the 'democratic' character of the village was used as a counterbalance to the reinforcement of the aristocracy: it is true that the aristocracy was firmly maintained in their saddles, but this was not really so terrible because the 'democratic village republic' would be able to resist this pressure.

Armed with this 'knowledge' almost the whole of South Bali was reorganized within four years (1906-1910). Newly arrived civil servants quickly set to work to 'simplify the village administration and return it to its original state' because it seemed necessary

'to purge village administration of royal impositions and intrusions' (quote from MvO Assistant Resident H.J.E.F. Schwartz 1909 in MvO Ass.Res. A.J.L. Couvreur, 1920 ARA MvK).

And it was not impossible that a long enumeration of all the changes (!) which had been carried out could be summed up with the conclusion

'... in the essence of the village administration no actual change had thus been made' (Report on January 1909, V 28-6-1910, ARA MvK).

Although from other reports and from more recent fieldwork data it is clear that, at the beginning of this century scarcely a desa was left unscathed during the years of reorganization, nonetheless it was still maintained that '... the arrangement of the village organization remains intact' (ARA MvK MvO Resident H.W. Veenhuyzen, 1914).

A consummation devoutly to be wished was declared to be an unalterable characteristic of the society.

The irrigation system in South Bali was also thoroughly

reorganized. Again, on the authority of J.A. Liefrinck (1886-1887) almost nothing of existing, 'degenerate' situation was to remain and various systems were 'restored' to condition that had never previously existed.

After the reorganization the myth of the autonomous local subak could gradually take shape. Because the colonial administration made more and more of the central dams permanent by constructing them with concrete, the work and ritual relations between local irrigation and central water supply fell into disuse. This was again reinforced when a special colonial service - the Civil Public Works Department, or Burgerlijk Openbare Werken - began to concern itself with irrigation control of the supra local level to an ever-increasing extent <sup>29</sup>. Only because of these new conditions the South Balinese subak could indeed function fairly independent and was eventually described as principally a local autonomous concern (see Grader 1960; C. Geerts 1980, 68-87).

It was not until 1920 that it became obvious that the colonial administrative system was still not functioning properly. Too many 'irregularities' emerged, which the Dutch could not explain away on the basis of the knowledge that had been utilized up to that time. Then glimmerings began to enter the minds of several of the civil servants that South Bali perhaps fitted together in a manner different to that promulgated in the Liefrinck model. It began to dawn on one or two that a huge contradiction lay hidden behind the policy which was being put into practice. What then had happened?

After the Dutch had taken over the administration of South Bali, they found themselves confronted by a large group of minor nobility who had become superfluous. In former times many of the intermediaries in the royal hierarchy had been recruited from this group but, with the abolition of royal rule, this group threatened to become 'unemployed' and thus politically unpredictable.

This problem was obviated by selecting the majority of the heads for the newly-'restored' villages from this very group. Of the forty seven villages which remained in the South Balinese sub-districts Mengwi and Abiansemal after the reorganization, no less than thirty-eight were now headed by someone of aristocratic birth. And this was a ratio that had

been demonstrably different in the era of the princes (Korn Coll. 147).

In the negara of Gianyar the nobility also gained unprecedented power over the villages because former triwangsa members of the district hierarchy were now appointed as new village heads (De Kat Angelino 1921; Korn 1932, 129).

Village 'restoration' had not only led to the formation of new territorial administration units, but also the hold of the aristocracy over these was greater than ever before.

### 3.4. The restoration of self-government and continuing bureaucratization, 1920-1940

In January 1917 South Bali was hit by a severe earthquake which caused damage to houses, dams and temples. A year later the 'Spanish' influenza also reached the island and claimed about 22.000 victims (ARA MvK MvO Resident L. van Stenis 1919). The text Bhuwana Winasa, i.e. 'the destruction of the world' (Coll Korn, 270), completes its documentary description of the eclipse of the old Bali with these disasters. Implicitly it seems to suggest that through the earthquake the gods had given notice that they had taken leave of the island. Consequently there were frightening times in the offing under foreign colonial rule.

Indeed colonial interference had resulted in the ritual aspect of the political order being ignored and relegated to the background. Land-tax was collected and roads were built, but for what? No Balinese had asked for asphalt motor roads and saw little or nothing of the tax return directly, whereas a special grief was that corvee laborers had to work the whole day, instead of till noon, and did not receive any food! Moreover, the new Western powers that be did not perform the ritual obligations of a lord - such as the periodical cleansing of the land - and thus threatened the flow of life. In other words, Bali was getting 'dirty'.

By bringing 'law and order' the Dutch had also sown a great deal of unrest and disorder, not only by their entirely new vision of the caste relations and the reorganizations of villages and subaks, but also by the way in which they managed their corps of Balinese (sub)-district administrators, the punggawas. These were, it is true, largely

recruited from the old elite, but they were now confronted with new requirements. Larger and larger (sub)districts had been formed in which not only 'law and order' had to prevail but where roads had to be drawn up, registers kept, official reports written etc., and everything had to be filled in neatly and returned on time. The young Dutch civil servants '... attached more importance to a little scholastic knowledge and experience gained in the office' <sup>30</sup>, because

'no longer was he who was at home among his own arts and letters, but he who could write a letter in the least broken Dutch in demand with the new masters of the land' (Korn 1932, 674).

About 1920 however, a complete reversal was introduced with reference to the colonial criteria for the native administrative corps. The so-called 'Volkshoofd' or 'Native Chief', was invented (see Sutherland 1979, ch. 10). As far as Bali was concerned there was a pretty precise description of what this entailed:

'In administration one has a great deal of use for an intellectually clever person, but for government and in order to keep in touch with the feelings of the people one has more use for a dunce, but one who is a native of the land and is respected' (ARA MvK MvO Assistant Resident A.J.L. Couveur 1920).

Hence within the Dutch colonial government apparatus local, 'traditional' authority was disengaged from bureaucratic administration. In other words, 'the clever ones' ruled and 'the dunces' were left with the respect. Yet in spite of all this, this new search for the Native Chief did not come about entirely of its own accord. On the basis of the dilemma faced by Resident H.T. Damsté (1919-1923) I shall attempt to reproduce the conflicting principles of the colonial view of Bali. In this the images formulated in part 1 will manifest themselves clearly.

Damsté had revealed himself as an opponent of the 'Volkshoofd' idea (1922, 1923). He did not want Bali to be ruled by an aristocracy who had been reinstated by colonial authority. First of all such an aristocratic 'icing' was, in his opinion, alien to Bali because this had at some time in the past intruded itself from outside - i.e. the idea of the Majapahit conquest. Secondly a restored nobility would,

according to Damst , cause substantially damage to the 'ancient' democratic foundations' of the society, 'the desa and the subak system'.

Whoever might now have expected that Damst 's repudiation of the top of the nobility -'they are useless, they are pernicious, they are parasites' - would result in the dismantling of, at least the top of, the nobility, misses the crux of the dilemma he faced. For, were the aristocracy to be expunged, this would signify the end of the 'hinduistic religion' in Bali, and would thus result in the collapse of Balinese culture. And this, above all else, had to be prevented. For Bali was not yet 'Islamic, grey, drab, monotonous' (Damst  1923, 141). His Assistant Resident, Berkhout, concurred with him elsewhere:

'we shall, before all else, have to uphold the caste system, otherwise the religion is done for and there is a chance for the Muslims' 31.

Summarized, Damst 's reasoning consisted of the following points:

1) religion is the cornerstone of Balinese society, an idea prevalent since Liefrinck; 2) the notion that the aristocracy was a 'foreign' but exclusive vehicle of the Hindu religion, a 19th century Orientalist view; 3) conclusion: the aristocracy formed - despite Damst 's aversion to powerful representatives of this group - the cornerstone of the society. Without the aristocracy there would be no religion, hence no Bali. Several of the leaders of the old royal families who, in East Bali especially, had managed to weather the initial years of colonial rule fairly well, now saw their opportunity. Since 'politics' and 'religion' had been divorced by the Dutch and 'politics' declared forbidden territory for the Balinese, it would appear that 'religion' was the raft which was keeping the whole valuable culture afloat. And now the aristocracy had officially to manoeuvre the religious domain, which was yet masterless, into their care.

The spokesman for the aristocracy, I Gusti Bagus Jelantik of Karangasem, described this operation in 1929 as follows:

'Were the Balinese princes so bad? ... Certainly the Netherlands-Indies government is a just ruler, but it is only a ruler in relation to material interests.

The Balinese rulers were less mindful of these, however, they taught the people reverence for God and they gave the

population the opportunity of allowing the souls of the dead to reach their destination by means of the ceremonies intended for this purpose' (Korn 1932, 341).

Here a claim is being laid, in a quasi a-political way, to the care for the salvation of the people, but what nobody wanted to say openly was that in Bali 'religion' and ritual were indissolubly linked to the hierarchy and to political power.

The reinstatement of the former royal families took place apace. In the twenties, it is true, there were some verbal protests, especially from lower-ranking Sudra personnel in the colonial services - for they saw their way blocked by caste barriers - but their movement was swiftly rendered harmless by the Dutch (see Bagus 1970).

The restoration of the royal families confirmed yet again the importance of belonging to the aristocracy. Those who did not quite make it and lost case after case in their efforts to be entitled Gusti quickly earned the nickname 'Gusti Ponis' (from 'vonnis', verdict).

Just as is the case of the villages and the subak the 'reinstatement' of royal authority actually meant the creation of something totally new, that was hallowed in adopted, fabricated traditions. In 1929, when representatives of the old royal families were appointed as administrators in their own negaras, the Resident L.J.J. Caron was of the opinion that there was now a protective 'roof' on the 'house' formed by the fully integrated Balinese society (ARA MvK MvO Resident L.J.J. Caron 1929). The fact that this 'purely' Balinese house had been built solely by Dutch architects and was shored up by a colonial bureaucracy apparently was not recognized.

Nonetheless everything was not quite perfect because, in the opinion of Caron's predecessor, Resident P.E. Moolenburgh, the ideal was

'a reasoned authority of the old powerful families over the people who were at the liberty to go about their own affairs' (ARA MvK MvO Resident P.E. Moolenburgh 1926).

This ideal was not yet achieved and therefore colonial supervision was still indispensable. The high Balinese administrators had first to be trained 'in a more modern fashion, both intellectually as morally' (*idem*).

A typical product of such tutelage was the member of the Volksraad

(People's Council) and later, in 1946, President of the State of Eastern Indonesia, Cokorda Raka Sukawati. His father had been a famous Balinese leaser who had attained great eminence in the pre-colonial 'contest state' and had made his family one of the richest of the island, but the son was trained according to Western norms and was soon the epitome of a well-brought-up, but completely innocuous, young man of the 'native' elite, who was occasionally permitted to make a speech in the Volksraad, where he was listened to indulgently. The tragedy of Sukawati junior was that he had scarcely any influence in the colonial society that had educated him, while, at the same time, he had become alienated from Bali. There he was accused of no longer being able to speak Balinese properly.

The ethical ideals of training an ingenious elite to 'modern responsibility' was never achieved, for the Ethical colonial policy was already on the wane in Batavia where Conservatives took the lead. This probably did not bother the heads of the royal families who had been restored to their dignity. Although they were officially just civil servants in the colonial administration, they were at the same time permitted to use their royal titles. This implied that their office was hereditary in the family and, indeed, in the eyes of the population they had long since once more become rulers.

This only officially occurred about ten years later, in 1938, and had been preceded by a Balinese petition. In the petition the authors - the Balinese administrators under discussion - ventured this time openly into the field of politics. They intimated that, if they were to be reinstated as rajas (kings), there need not be the slightest fear of (nationalist) unrest in Bali. Restored rules as keepers of the colonial order. The fact that these rulers were seen as the best tools for colonial control was not new, for already in the 1920's controleur V.E. Korn had stated:

'When the idea of traditional authority (of the aristocracy, hsn) disappears, then we will need a lot of other measures to keep the Balinese with their sturdy character under control' (Report 22-12-1925, Coll. Korn, 147).

A decade later, during the thirties, people in reactionary Batavia were more receptive to this argument. This was strengthened by the ideas

that the unique character of Bali could also be better preserved with its own royal rule and, not quite unimportant, that 'self-government' was, on balance, cheaper than direct colonial rule <sup>32</sup>.

Yet a vague uneasiness stirred beneath the discussion. Was, after all, the population well-served with restored 'self-governments'? To this the director of the Department of the Interior (Binnenlands Bestuur) answered with an unqualified 'yes'.

According to his insight it was 'the wish of the people' that 'self-government' be restored. For the sake of convenience he chose to regard the petition of the Balinese administrators as the unanimous desire of all the Balinese. Furthermore he remarked that when one

'... takes into consideration the democratic nature of Balinese society, one really does not need to fear that the restoration of self-government in Bali will betoken in introduction of an autocratic self-government' (Volksraad, nota van wijziging, 1937-'38, 144/5, Korn Coll. 110).

The myth of the egalitarian counterpoise was in full swing. Moreover, as the director of the Department of the Interior stated elsewhere

'The era in which the praises of Western democracy were generally sung and imitation had to be striven for is happily now past, now it is understood that for the implementation of government it is better to adapt the political superstructure to Eastern attitudes and even more appreciation has developed for that which exists according to its own forms in the East' (ARA MvK V 15-7-1938-14).

Freely interpreted one can read into this that the Dutch had begun to appreciate what they had created themselves: an interesting Eastern society that became increasingly 'Eastern' as Western dominance grew. This was in line with a broader policy in which for instance Boeke's concept of a Dual, or Eastern Economy was generally accepted, while troublesome nationalists were transported to prison camps like Boven Digul. Also in Bali the slightest sign of nationalism was immediately suppressed <sup>33</sup>.

Scientific research also did not fail to play its part in the interpretation for Balinese 'self-government'. The orientalist R. Goris, who served as language expert in Bali, was asked for advice about the correct constitution of a 'state council' (Rijksraad) of the ruler. And

Goris produced a report - based on data from the 9th to the 13th centuries - in which he proved that such a council was an 'original' Balinese institution, whereas the position of a patih (second in command) was 'only' a 'recent phenomenon', i.e. since the Gelgel period (16th century). So the Rijksraad was reinvented, a patih not.

The eventual installation of the new rulers in 1938 comprised a new kind of ritual including both Western and Balinese elements. Its locale was the central temple of Besakih; the time chosen Galungan, the day on which the gods/ancestors descend; the robes of state were half-Balinese/half Western; the oath of loyalty was in Balinese but the speeches in Malay; Western were the official photographs, to say nothing of the champagne.

Under colonial supervision the Zelfbestuurders ('self governors') ruled now over their Landschappen (territories), or, as a Balinese pun had it, they were now 'lan sakap' (from land (Dutch), and sakap (Balin., tenant farmer)).

Did the system work? This depends on who answers the question. On the colonial side it was maintained that it functioned beautifully, not least because it was always Dutchmen who remained in control of the apparatus of government. Here the contradictions emerges again. Even though, for a number of reasons, a restoration of self-government was intended, the bureaucratization and centralization of the colonial state continued apace. Within this there was absolutely no place for autonomy of rulers who governed by themselves. It was the Dutch who smoothed over the rough patches and covered up the absurdity from the eyes of the outside world. Whether during council sessions of the self-government members fell asleep and awoke with a start when the time came to vote, or if a ruler himself declared that he understood not a word of the document he had to sign did not matter one iota. The game had begun and had to be played out.

One of the rulers had his desk in an open gallery and right in front of him he had a full-length mirror placed. Sometimes he used to go and sit at his desk in order to gaze at himself a while. If there were really troublesome documents to be dealt with he rang up the controleur and asked him: 'would you do it, I find it such a bother'. More important than their involvement in actual administration was the fact that the

rulers had to keep Bali under 'traditional' colonial rule. As Assistent Resident B. Cox wrote:

'Young Bali (the Western educated Balinese, hsn) develops very well, but fortunately Old Bali has things still under firm control' (letter to Korn 24-4-1940, Korn Coll. 138).

There were some Dutchmen who were able to see through the facade of self-government, but they were outside the framework of the government apparatus. One of them was the late Dr. Swellengrebel. He commented: 'In fact the self-governors were not taken at all seriously by the Dutch civil servants' (personal communication).

This agrees with what someone else had to say. He had heard one of the high-ranking Dutch officials entrusted with the introduction of self-government heave a sigh from the bottom of his heart: 'Oh wouldn't I love to push these natives (rulers to be) back to where they belong'.<sup>34</sup>

On the Dutch side arrogance, myth-making and bureaucratic frameworks determined self-government, but there was also a Balinese side. Several confessions from the former civil servants cast light on what happened in that quarter.

'Look, we had only just reinstated these princes and you could not haul them up before the judge the very next day because they had overreached their authority'.

'No, perhaps what Anak Agung ... did was probably not absolutely comme-il-faut; apart from that he was an excellent man, i.e. ideal for the government, but it would be very much begging the question if the people thought the same way about him. You did get some inklings about abuse of power'.

'Well, now, when it's all said and done, you had to keep up a workable relationship. If you were to go and investigate some such rumour about extortion, then you had no idea of what else might come to light'.

'We did hear that things that wouldn't pass muster happened in Anak Agung ... 's house, but we were not supposed to know about that sort of things'.

In contrast to Java where most of the priyayi or regents had long ago lost their local power basis and had become dependent, salaried officials (see Sutherland 1979), the reinstated Balinese rulers, besides enjoying colonial protection, also commanded a local power

basis which grew very quickly. Increasing ownerships of large tracks of land by them and their relatives was one sign of this. No single outlet for expression even the slightest sign of dissatisfaction existed any longer for the ordinary people, residing in many cases under village heads of noble birth who had a personal relationship with the self-governor. If, in former times, they could take themselves off to a rival lord who might offer them protection and marginally better conditions, to whom could they now turn? In this way the image of the equitable, friendly Balinese peasant came into being, or as Hanna stated: 'The ordinary people had on the whole plenty of rice and relatively few complaints' (1976, 107).

That was, and I am afraid still is, the generally held view about life in Bali during the thirties. Few complaints and an 'Eastern' smile were, however, to prove unreliable barometers.

Korn was one of the very few people who, because of his long experience in Bali was in a position to take a look in the homes of the ordinary people. There he saw poverty as a result of the economic depression, but aggravated by the almost uncheckable power of the higher echelons of the nobility.

'Whoever gets to know the situation of the common man in Bali from close only then discovers what a drab, poverty stricken mass of people inhabit this beautiful island. And the poverty is on the increase ...' (1932, 337).

The beautiful appearance of Bali did it a disservice. Luxuriant nature and the colorful rituals created the impression that life in Bali was one long feast. And, for that matter, this was indeed the case with the various Western travellers who could live there for next-to-nothing. For the majority of the Balinese peasants - small sawah owners ( $\pm$  0,5 ha.) and sharecroppers (in my research area approx. 40% of the households) - the situation was quite different. Since the 1920's a new colonial land revenue system was introduced. Not only did Balinese peasants then had to pay more than ever before, they also had to pay with Dutch Indies money instead of in kind or with Balinese currency (the kepeng). Besides, sharecroppers generally had to pay the full amount of tax, instead of sharing this with their landowner. Up till 1930 paying the new land revenue, or Landrente, did not seem to be a

big problem. As a result of an increased export of pigs and copra by individual households, a large flow of Dutch Indies money entered Bali. And with that money one could pay the Landrente. When, however, in 1931 as a result of the economic depression the export almost collapsed, many Balinese peasants were in trouble because they had lost their opportunity to 'buy' the necessary Dutch Indies money.

Colonial measures for dealing with this crisis came very late for the island gave the impression of possessing inexhaustible reserves, but these reserves were soon exhausted as the sudden increase and decline of the export of gold and silver from Bali indicate. Still most of the Dutch civil servants did not notice that economic hardship increased in Bali. Only in 1934 the level of the land revenue was lowered but even that did not cause much relief, because the rate of the kepeng, by which peasants now had to buy the necessary Dutch Indies money, had increased dramatically<sup>35</sup>.

The rituals were, and remained, beautiful, but they were for the greater part in the hands of the elite who grew ever richer. It is remarkable that the rapidly increasing large-scale landownership of powerful nobles during the thirties is hardly mentioned in the archives, and even then it is dismissed very summarily. Fieldwork data demonstrate that it was this process, be it in retrospect, which was considered by peasant informants to be one of the worst evils of the colonial period. It was perhaps then that something began to brew which, as we know now, would reach the point of explosion with full intensity in the years 1964-1966.

### 3.5. Closing and unlocking, the unsolved dilemma

During the thirties Bali was generally referred to in stereotypes. Bali had become a museum and tourism began to leave its mark. The 'natural' artistic talent of the people and their 'harmonious' way of life were so generally accepted as the truth that no one took the trouble to question these assumptions. Anyone who reads especially the Dutch articles of this period will, afterwards, come to the conclusion that hardly anything has been written about recognizable individuals but that constantly recurring types are described: the natural equable Balinese, the contented Balinese. All this aside Bali excellently

suited analyses and speculation in the field of the symbolic arrangement of the culture. The two, four, five, eight, nine and eleven-fold division of the cosmos, the bi-partition of the 'Old Balinese village' etc. attracted the spotlight of scientific attention, while for the philologist Bali was increasingly becoming a living library of Old-Javanese literature.

In Dutch colonial circles there was a strong tendency to describe Bali more and more in static and abstract terms. Influenced by the Leiden School of Etnology of that time a search for the 'Ur'-Bali started. Inspired by scholars like F.D.E. van Ossenbruggen and H.W. Rassers one was convinced that under the 'recent layers' of colonialism and Hinduism there still was an original, genuine Indonesian, 'Ur'-structure in Balinese society. This 'Ur'-Bali with its supposed dualism had to be found in the so-called 'Old-Balinese' villages where Hinduism had not taken root and where Western influences were still absent. This explains why during the thirties many monographies were written about those 'Old-Balinese' villages and why instead of recognizable individuals abstract structures were described. Finally the original 'real' Bali was found and understood by removing the Balinese from the scene<sup>36</sup>.

The official colonial documents also produced even more 'bureaucratic mumbling' rather than genuine information about ordinary Balinese life. The more Western concepts and the images which streamed forth from them gained in strength, the more the view of Bali itself tended to be lost in obscurity. There emerged what Taufik Abdullah calls a 'schakel'-society, by which he means a relationship between the colonial power and the local elite that was only partly connected for it was also

'a world of pretence that created its own realities of both ruler and ruled (...). It was an artificial world, a theatre, where both ruler and ruled played their roles while maintaining their separate sense of reality' (1976, 144 and 148).

It was the final articulation between the colonial and the Balinese modes of dominance. The place where in this respect the Balinese and the Westerner met formed, to state it broadly, the abstract terrains of

adat, literature, cosmic classifications, basic structures of the village etc. There people could communicate interminably with each other without trespassing too much on each other's territory. They left each other in a state of reciprocal delusion.

In order to preserve the stereotypes and the 'schakel'-society, seemingly unchanged Bali had to be locked and barred. This could be only an illusory struggle because with the advent of the colonial administration, Bali had already been absorbed into the wider world, despite all the pretence about being able to conserve the island. This formed yet another contradiction.

The main dilemma for the colonial government was basically created by its own presence in Bali for on the one hand the Dutch tried to stop the clock by endeavouring, as it were, to put Balinese culture under a glass dome, yet, on the other hand, the colonial state had by its very presence brought many radical changes in its wake. This latter fact was not sufficiently realized and it seems as though the colonial authority saw itself as a sort of neutral element that exercised very little influence. This was the delusion that had to disguise the colonial contradiction.

A quartet of examples of the ways in which attempts were made by the colonial government to keep Balinese culture 'pure' will serve to demonstrate the degree of paternalism with which the island had begun to be treated.

1. After the great earthquake of 1917 the burning question was whether, and to what extent, the Dutch administration should be actively involved in the reconstruction of the many ruined temples and noble houses. As far as at least one controleur was concerned, there was nothing doing. His brutal answer to the Balinese punggawa (sub-district administrator) who had come to him for help was simple: 'What do I care about your temples, as far as I'm concerned you can all become Mohammedan' (ARA MvK V 13-1-1922-65).

But, because Islam was not to be permitted to penetrate Bali and the higher ranking Dutch officials did manifest concern for the temples, help was given. However, financial support was not just handed out heedlessly. Restoration of the temples was to be carried out under the direction of the Dutch architect P.A.J. Moojen, President of the

Batavian Society of Arts. According to Moojen there was not the shadow of a doubt that, of course, Western supervision was necessary for the restoration of the showplaces of Balinese cultures, the temples. What is more, no erratic whims, such as funny statues of European soldiers as temple guards, were allowed by him. No, indeed restoration had to follow strictly 'traditional' lines which were determined by Moojen. He appeared to have no appreciation for the great talent for improvisation of some of the Balinese artists and, whenever he was able, he impeded any innovations.

This colonial interference did not occur without any discussion, for the fact that there was something somewhat amiss here was recognized<sup>37</sup>:

'It was better to admit honestly that only Western interests profit from keeping Balinese culture pure' (report advisory committee 18-9-1917).

But this critical idea was counteracted by the opinion that

'Among our people a consciousness is dawning of the duties that we owe to the people under our government, that not only excludes the making of a contrast between the interests of the Balinese on the one hand and those of the Europeans on the other, quite the contrary, our positive duty imposes protection for the benefit of the Balinese educated posterity' (letter acting Resident of Bali and Lombok 26-11-1917).

This set the tone. Balinese culture had to be trussed up in a sort of symbiotic harmony with traditional bonds. Of course this could not succeed. Already by 1936 the painter R. Bonnet (Philokalos 1936) worried about the insidious degeneration of Balinese culture as a result of Western influences. Architecture and dress served him as examples and, by way of illustration, he printed photographs with the captions 'good' (traditional and 'wrong' (Western).

2. Education was yet another problem. After initially having allowed children of the elite to participate in the Dutch-Indies education system in order to process them quickly for subordinate office work, the tide turned about 1920. 'What shall we do with all those Dutch speaking Balinese?', wondered controleur V.E. Korn (ARA MvK MvO Badung 1921). Gradually people came round to thinking that it would be better to adapt education to the distinctive Balinese sphere and to admit only

a few individuals to higher education outside Bali. One of the results of this was that, in 1940 there were only six Balinese who had visited university<sup>38</sup>, and that only children of the elite were allowed to enter the Dutch-Indies schools in Bali.

3. A terrain upon a vehement conflict raged was that of religion. As has been stated earlier, religion was considered to be the cornerstone of Balinese society and had to be fiercely protected. When both the Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries made attempts to preach Christianity in Bali, an enormous controversy developed in the colonial press. Bali-experts such as V.E. Korn, F.D.K. Bosch and R. Goris resisted en bloc every 'Christian campaign' in Bali because 'Bali is an exception .... is more finely tuned than any other part of the Indies' (Korn 1925).

Moreover, it was Goris, who, in a state of outright panic, wrote that Christianity would totally destroy Balinese culture, for that culture was fragile and 'Calvinism is an enemy of Art' (Coll. Hooykaas, Goris to Resident 4-8-1932).

Goris found an ally in Covarrubias who opposed Christianity along the same line. In the last chapter of his Island of Bali he also predicted nothing less than social and economic chaos as a result of missionary activities (1937, 396-405). The other side was composed of people like H. Kraemer and M.J. Yzerman who wrote an article entitled 'Bali a land of remarkable contrasts, on the outside superficially absolutely marvelous, on the inside miserable heathenism' (1931-'32), whereas the journalist Zentgraaf coined the term 'the Bali reservation' (Javabode 9-8-1933).

This discussion went largely beyond the Balinese, a number of whom were even surprised why the colonial government hesitated to impose its own religion. For, Majapahit had done this in the past, so why not the new masters? (personal comm. C.J. Grader).

The conviction that Balinese culture was so fragile and incapable of standing on its own feet without wise Western protection won the day. Officially neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant missionaries were admitted, unless a stay on the island was connived at for them on the condition that no active converting took place. Finally there were about 1500 Balinese converted to Christianity and the Balinese culture

did not collapse<sup>39</sup>.

4. The contradiction - closing and unlocking - was sharply underlined in the field of administration. In reality Bali had been absorbed into the colonial state which then unleashed to the island its ever-expanding number of administrative services - land-revenue, irrigation and agricultural services, credit schemes, forest protection, schools, roads etc. At first some civil servants remained rebellious about the uniform approach of the increasingly centralized working of Batavia, because they saw it as a threat to the distinctiveness of the local culture from a exterior bureaucratic force. Resident P.E. Moolenburgh put his dissatisfaction into words this way:

'What struck me in particular is that only hard and persistent struggle is sometimes able to convince government offices of the particular demands of Bali. The special services and branches of offices, used to rubber-stamp work, do not want to take this into account, or lack the goodwill or the capacity to cut their uniform service to fit the special Balinese body' (ARA MvK MvO 1926).

In order to resist this pressure exerted from the hub of the colonial government, Resident Damst   had put in a plea for the encouragement of research into Balinese adat law (Damst   1923; Korn 1955). Adat law was the key to learning to understand the endigenous society and for governing it. Adat, the collection of written and unwritten customs which constituted the framework for daily life, was a system that has always been in a state of flux. But, from the moment that Dutch academics began to set down their interpretation of adat on a juridical foundation in handbooks, it was transformed into an immutable strait-jacket: officially approved tradition. Korn believed that the study of adat law was the only possible way

'to perceive the meaning of legal institutions and rules, since only then can be judged what should be preserved without useless material being preserved along with it' (1932, 676).

Several interesting statements are made here. First, that knowledge of 'legal' institutions and rules would explain the mechanism of a society. Secondly, that with the knowledge of adat law one could control and, if necessary repair that mechanism. Thirdly, that it was

of course Western adat experts who should control this mechanism for they were supposed to know what was 'useless' and what was not. Here the illusory conviction emerges that the colonial government was believed to be able to operate as 'social engineer' in order to control local societies according to theoretical blueprints. The case of Bali shows also that it seems to have been the law of the late colonial state that it wanted to preserve local society in a fixed 'traditional' order, whereas at the same time Bali underwent rapid and profound changes as a result of the colonial presence<sup>40</sup>.

Knowledge of adat law - emanating from a power ascendancy - was not only essential to the preservation of the fossilization of the culture, but at the same time it legitimized protracted Dutch control of Balinese society. For, it was unthinkable that the 'restored' self-governments and the 'fragile' society would be able to stand on their own feet in the foreseeable future.

Because the Dutch colonial presence in Bali was not called to account and, as a result, became almost as 'natural' as the Balinese cosmic classifications and the equalibility of the population, the Dutch never had cause to worry about the contradictions they themselves had created. As long as these remained under Dutch control they produced no crisis and, during that period, the foreigners' image of Bali lost none of its persuasiveness. Nonetheless, it was none other than V.E. Korn, exponent of paternalistic authority and indisputable adat expert, who was not at ease. He knew Bali too well to believe in the dominant images and therefore he concluded his Adatrecht van Bali in this way:

'Knowing what something is or was and to understand whiter the new era is leading an old people, can alone prevent the present transitional period with its many and sudden changes from becoming a period of unspeakable suffering for the Balinese people' (1932, 677).

These were, as we know now, prophetic words, and it was eventually left to the Balinese to solve the colonial contradictions by themselves.

## Notes

1. The material used for this paper was collected during my research (1981-1984) into changing power relationships in South Bali from the 18th to the 20th century which was subsidized by the Programme of Indonesian Studies, Leiden. The main result will be a dissertation on the history of the negara Mengwi (forthcoming), whereas a second publication will deal in more detail with the history of the Dutch-Balinese encounter, 1650-1950. I would like to thank Hildred Geertz, Jean-Francois Guermonprez and Adrian Vickers for their comments on earlier drafts. An earlier version was published in Dutch (1986).  
All quotes from Dutch sources are translated into English.
2. Kawi, Old-Javanese mixed with Balinese. Friederich carried out his research in the factory of the Danish trader Mads Lange (see Schulte Nordholt 1981a), and from Lange's correspondence it would seem that he had to put up rather a lot from him. The man was regularly the worse for drink and, in that state, he would assault members of the Balinese elite. Van Hoëvell had to pay the fines that Lange had imposed on him. I will not discuss here the role of the famous scholar H.N. Neubronner van der Tuuk who did his research in North Bali in the second part of the 19th century for his influence on colonial policy was not that important.  
See for a general consideration of 19th century Oriental studies, Said 1977.
3. Private letter Berkhout to V.E. Korn 5-8-1921, Coll. Korn 284.
4. In his article from 1890 Liefrinck mentions Gustave le Bon's Les Civilisations de l'Inde, Paris 1887. On the basis of British data on India Marx was to develop his well known 'foot note' notion about 'the Asiatic mode of Production', see P. Anderson 1974, app. B. See for a recent but surprisingly uncritical application of 19th century marxist and adat law principles on Bali Van der Kraan 1983. Van der Kraan's conclusion that the Balinese situation shows a deviation from the AMP says more about the weakness of his own theoretical concept than that about Balinese society.
5. These were the areas of Karangasem, Gianyar and Bali which were granted the relatively unique status of 'governementslandschap' (government area), a kind of indirect rule in 1895, 1900 and 1908 respectively.
6. Algemeen Rijksarchief (ARA), Ministerie van Koloniën (MvK), Verbaal (V) 1-5-1908-S2, journal chief of staff Bali expedition. V. Baum gave a sometimes rather romanticized description of the puputan in her novel (1937) 1949.

7. It is not my intention to discuss here the full range of ideas of anthropologists like J. Belo, G. Bateson and M. Mead. Some of their writings, like Bateson's article *An Old Temple and a New Myth* (in Belo 1970, 111-136) are still exemplary pieces of scholarship. I will only stress here those notions which were closely related to the colonial ideology with regard to Bali.
8. Krause published photobooks in the 1920's - with special emphasis on half naked women who were now presented as 'Eastern beauty', and Spies attracted in his residence near Ubud many high class Western visitors who in their turn took a romanticized impression of Bali back home (see Rhodius n.d.).
9. See for critical reviews a.o. Anderson 1981, Tambiah 1985b and Schulte Nordholt 1981b, and in a more general vein of Geertz's concept of interpretive anthropology Lieberson 1984.
10. This does not mean that long before 1343 there had not been many political contacts between (East) Java and Bali, see Stutterheim 1929. Amidst all the historical changes that are discussed here one interesting exception must be mentioned, i.e. that in the whole body of the Old Javanese kakawin texts nothing was changed during its century long survival in Bali, see Robson 1972.
11. See also Berg 1938, 126-127, who pointed at this impossibility in Balinese genealogies. In this respect a piece of information from a Babad Bhoemi (Korn Coll. 232) becomes interesting. There it is stated that the first Dalem of Gelgel came to Bali in Saka 1378 = ± 1456 AD.
12. A similar incident is mentioned in the Babad Dalem when the story is told how envoys of 'Mekah' (Mecca) tried in vain to convert the Dalem of Gelgel.
13. The centres that rose to power were respectively Buleleng in the north, Karangasem in the east, Badung in the south and Mengwi dominating West Bali and Blambangan in Java, see Schulte Nordholt 1980, ch. 2 and on the slave trade in general see Reid 1983.
14. Notes H.J. de Graaf, Coll. De Graaf box 8 and ARA VOC 2169. The capital of Majapahit was located near the desa Wirasaba 'fourteen hours walk from Surabaya'. A century before Sultan Agung of Mataram conquered the same area, probably also in order to link the Majapahit past with his own ambitions (Ricklefs 1981, 40).

The Balinese lords however never reached Wirasaba, but they had reached Majapahit by way of their genealogies, and that was more important.

15. This does not mean that 'the village' had ever existed, nor had ever been a political factor. In inscriptions prior to 1400 villages feature much more frequent as political units, see Goris 1954. A second proviso to be borne in mind is that here I am discussing only the rice basins in South Bali and neither the mountainous area of Central Bali nor the littoral of North Bali which have a different ecological setting.
16. I borrow the terms 'entourage' and 'circle' from Hanks (1975) who uses them in the Thai context.
17. Examples from the history of Mengwi are large scale migrations between Buleleng and Mengwi in the years 1710-1735, the founding of new villages in East Mengwi (a.o. Sedang) in ± 1750-'60, the migration of about 300 families from Badung to Kapal in 1893 and the founding of new 'old style' villages north of Petang after 1850.
18. Examples of large scale irrigation, initiated by the nobility in Mengwi, are the dams of Mambal, Kadewatan, Kapal and Singasari (now Blahkiuh). Up till the colonial period the term subak denoted in Mengwi a local irrigation agent and not an irrigation community. Control of irrigation water played a crucial role in the wars between Badung and Mengwi (1887-1891) and in the Gianyar war (1884-1894) when about 1/4 of the sawahs in Gianyar fell dry.
19. One may even argue that during the Gelgel period (16th century) there may have been a stronger political unity in Bali without a recognizable overall ideology, whereas the post-Gelgel period was one without a state but with a well-developed ideology, uniting whole Bali in one hierarchical model (J.F. Guermonprez, pers. comm.)
20. It needs to be stressed here that the position of the padmi was remarkable strong. In the first half of the 19th century the areas of Badung, Mengwi and Klunkung were all ruled by women, Badung and Mengwi by padmi widows. Because of their own wealth and networks these women had considerable power.

21. This metaphor resembles in a way that of the Galactic Polity of Tambiah (1985a), for it also intends to connect several levels and different categories of the political order as a totality. In my thesis (forthcoming ch. 4) the idea of the flows of water and the Sisyphean fluctuation will be further developed. Here I give only a preliminary impression.
22. See Berg 1932. This explains also why the babad Blahbatu contains so many ('too many') generations because every new event concerning the krises is located in a new generation.
23. See also Korn 1932, 445.
24. Besides the kingroup, members of the entourage and circles of a powerful lord also came to the pamarajan to pay respect to the gods (not to the ancestors of their lord) in order to show their loyalty to their lord. In this respect an interesting explanation of the word pamarajan is given by Goris (Coll. Hooykaas) in a note on 'Contemporaneous religious phenomena in Bali' n.d. According to Goris pamarajan comes from praja (Skt. Praj) and means: descendants, family but also followers.
25. Genealogies of the Brahmana Mas in Mengwi, Gria Tandeg, Lambing and of the Brahmana Manuaba, Gria Manuaba, Taman. It is quite possible that during this spread of the new 'ritual frontier' in Mengwi in the 18th century, older local priests like the Sengguhu were pushed to the background. In many villages banjars ('hamlets') are named Senggu(hu) and seem to indicate the former existence of that older type of priest there.
26. The two areas are Kapal and Sibang. The dam Sibang was located many miles to the north, near Bongkasa, and though it has now been rebuilt with concrete, the kris from puri Sibang is still brought every year in procession to the dam.
27. In the negara Mengwi the temple axis was not permanent for in the mountains the temple of Bratan was replaced by the one of Tinggan, at the seashore the temple Jimbaran by the one in Seseh, whereas the central temples were Pura Sada Kapal, Pura Bekak Mengwi and, finally, Pura Taman Ayun Mengwi. The connection between the temples were made in the shape of so-called pasimpangan, shrines that represented the other temple. So in the central temple of Taman Ayun pasimpangan of Bratan, Jimbaran and Seseh represented the mountain and sea-temples and made the connections manifest.

28. It will be clear that I disagree with C. Geertz's statement that 'the driving aim of higher politics was to construct a state by constructing a king' (1980, 124). Secondly his description of 'the Palace as Temple' (1980, 109-116) is debatable for puri's and temples were quite different things, whereas the temple was on a higher order than a palace. I am grateful to J.F. Guermonprez for discussing the importance of temple systems in Bali.

29. See Van Doorn 1982 for the development of colonial technology and the conflicts within Dutch bureaucracy that this brought in its wake.

30. Report by the member of the Council of the Indies J.H. Liefrinck - a younger brother of F.A. Liefrinck - 4-6-1918, ARA MvK V 29-3-1919-36.

31. Letter to V.E. Korn 5-8-1921, Korn Coll 284. Islam in the guise of the Sarekat Islam formed at that moment the most extensive opposition movement in the colonial state.

32. ARA MvK V 15-7-1938-14. See Visman 1928 for general policy lines on the restoration of self-governments.

33. See for instance the booklet by G.Ny.M. Wirjasutha n.d. in which he called the Dutch the 'real' triwangsa in Bali and advocated instead of the notion of wangsa (group in the caste system) the idea of bangsa (nation). The booklet was immediately forbidden (ARA MvK MvO Ass.Res. B. Cox 1940). I am grateful to David Start who gave me a photocopy of the booklet.

34. This quote and the ones that follow are from interviews (1981-1982) with former members of the Dutch Civil Services (B.B.) who served on Bali in the 1930's.

35. In ch. 8 of my thesis I give more data about the effects of the crisis in Bali.

36. See for the Leiden School of Etnology Koentjaraningrat 1975, ch. 8 and for a critique C. Geertz 1961. Some of the desa monographies are Grader 1937a, 1937b; Korn 1933; Boekian 1936; for the echo of these notions in government reports, see ARA MvK MvO Resident G.A.W.Ch. de Haze Winkelman 1937 and C.J. Grader Nota van Toelichting Buleleng 1938.

37. See on this debate ARA MvK V 18-6-1918-39, V 24-10-1919-52, V 13-1-1922-65, and KITLV H 1169. The quotes that follow are from V 18-6-1918-39. Moojen had the special protection of the last 'ethical' Governor General J.P. van Limburg Stirum (1916-1921). In 1922 however, he lost his position in Bali because Resident Damst  strongly opposed the subsidizing of the restoration of the temples and puris, because they belonged to the aristocracy and Damst  was not in favour of the elite.
38. Report T. Baud, 4-1-1949, ARA Rapportage Indonesië 1945-'50, no. 728. See Te Flierhaar 1941 for the Western creation of Balinese adapted education.
39. See for the discussion also Kraemer 1933; Lekkerkerker 1933; Bosch 1932 and Goris 1933.
40. See also Benda 1958, 67-68 and for a comparable situation in colonial Africa Ranger 1983.

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