# "BALI AGA" AND ISLAM: ETHNICITY, RITUAL PRACTICE, AND "OLD-BALINESE" AS AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONSTRUCT

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## Introduction

The increasing tension between "Hindu-Balinese" and Muslims over the past few years is an expression of the growing formation and expression of a self-consciousness—an identity as well as an ethnicity intrinsically linked to the construction of "otherness" and the drawing of boundaries between people who formerly felt and acted as one. Michel Picard illuminated the rise of Balinese identity, "*Kebalian*" (Bali-ness), a discourse that has been historically constituted by transcultural, interactive dialogues.[1] Leo Howe shed light on the colonial and post-colonial background of this development concerning the Hindu-Balinese, who had to struggle for the recognition of their religious practices and beliefs in order to gain the status of an *agama* (that is, a world religion) in a state dominated by a large Muslim majority.[2] A dominant issue in the construction of Hindu-Balinese identity in the 1920s was Majapahit. The Balinese gentry used this east-Javanese kingdom as the key point

[1] Michel Picard, "The Discourse of Kebalian: Transcultural Constructions of Balinese Identity," in *Staying Local in the Global Village*, ed. R. Rubinstein and L. H. Connor (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), pp. 15-49.

[2] Leo Howe, *Hinduism and Hierarchy in Bali*, World Anthropology (Oxford/Santa Fe: James Currey/School of American Research Press, 2001), pp. 138-62.

of reference for their social origin as well as for their religion, Hinduism. This was later replaced by assigning the "real" roots to India, whereas Majapahit was considered more or less an intermediary between India and Bali.[3] As Picard concluded, "religion, for the Balinese, has become the emblem of their Kebalian."[4] By contrast, after thorough sociocultural transformations due to tourism, "the Javanese" living in Bali were gradually perceived as a threat to the social order by the Hindu-Balinese. One Muslim reaction to this was a movement to cleanse their religion.[5] The bomb blasts in Bali's nightlife center of Kuta on October 12, 2002 that caused more than two hundred deaths, most of them Australian, European, and American tourists, and the consequent accusation that Islamic fundamentalists are linked to international terror networks has cast a spotlight on this tense relationship and drawn international attention to the interaction between Hindus and Muslims in Bali.

In this article I would like to outline to what extent anthropologists have contributed to the notion of more-or-less pure Hindu-Balinese beliefs and practices by neglecting to ask questions about the interaction between Islam and Hinduism that already took place in pre-colonial Bali. The main goal of my article is to show how such interactions (as reflected in temples, ritual practice, and oral histories) took place in a village that anthropologists have labeled as "Bali Aga" ("Old Balinese" or "Mountain Balinese") to denote its pre-Majapahit (fourteenth/fifteenth-century) character. I will do so by presenting the case of mainly one village, Sembiran, in North Bali, complemented by data from the neighboring village, Julah, both sharing a common origin. Sembiran has served as a classic example for many generations of anthropologists because of its alleged antiquity and its isolation.[6] Sembiran, situated on a steep hill above the north coast (between Singaraja and Tejakula), is famous for its (former) megaliths;[7] its (former) practice of exposing the corpses and covering them only with leaves instead of burying or cremating them; its egalitarian, non-caste social structure; and its language, which is considered uniquely antique.[8] The "exotic" customs of Sembiran are still mentioned in travel books to evoke the image of a village inhabited by aboriginal Balinese. By contrast, I shall show that Sembiran has been a village where people of differing origins and with different ritual practices met, producing a culture that displays corresponding traits, Islamic elements being among

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[3] Howe, *Hinduism and Hierarchy in Bali*, pp. 147-49.

[4] Picard, "The Discourse of Kebalian," p. 44.

[5] Jean Couteau, "Bali: crise en paradis," *Archipel* 64 (2002): 231-54.

[6] My research in North Bali, especially in Sembiran and Julah, began in 1997 under the auspices of LIPI (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia, The Indonesian Institute of Sciences) and University Udayana with Dr. Wayan Ardika as my sponsor. The German Research Association (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) funded the research I carried out on behalf of the University of Göttingen, Germany. I am grateful to all these institutions who made this research possible. I dedicate this article to the people of Sembiran and Julah, who—though many of them live in poverty and have other problems besides answering the endless questions of an anthropologist—welcomed my stay and allowed me to participate in their ritual life.

[7] Sutaba I Made, *Megalithic Traditions in Sembiran* (Jakarta: PT Guruh Kemaru Sakti, [1976] 1985); Paul Wirz, *Der Totenkult auf Bali* (Stuttgart: Strecker und Schröder, 1928), figure 2.

[8] I am grateful to Hedi Hinzler who lent me a copy of van der Tuuk's dictionary. H. N. van der Tuuk, *Kawi-Balineesch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek. Vol. III* (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1901), p. 355; I Gusti Ngurah Bagus, *Clan dalam hubungannya dengan pola menetap di desa Sembiran* (Denpasar, 1968).

the most prominent.[9] I will focus on Sembiran's intensive interaction with Islam, and my conclusions will be based on an analysis of Sembiran's oral histories, temples, and rituals, as well as of its social organization.

## "Bali Aga"

The growing discourse on the ethnicity of the Hindu-Balinese and the Muslims living in Bali and its implications for everyday interactions and for political life conceal the fact that another dichotomization smolders below this increasing cultural distinction. It is a dichotomization that leads more and more to the anthropological construction of separate identities and even ethnicities of the "Old-Balinese," "Bali Aga," or "Mountain Balinese," and the Hindu-Balinese living mainly in the southern plains of the island and under the influence of the royal centers there. By now, due to the more than 150-year-long discursive construction of "Bali Aga," many of the villages have started to call themselves by this name, too, although it was originally a derogatory term.

P.L. van Bloemen Waanders, a colonial official, was among the first to point out the cultural particularities of some mountain villages (Sembiran, Cempaka, Sidatapa) within Buleleng district.[10] He described their inhabitants as the aboriginal inhabitants of Bali, a classification used by those Balinese who proudly considered themselves descendants of the East-Javanese kingdom of Majapahit and their nobles who fled to Bali after the advent of Islam there in the sixteenth century.[11] R. van Eck related Bali Aga's ritual practices to those of "Polynesian paganism" and to animism ("*natuur-godsdienst*") and associated them with cannibalism.[12] J. Brandes characterized the Bali Aga as those who acknowledge neither a Brahmana priest's authority nor the power of *toya tirta* (holy water).[13] H. N. van der Tuuk was the first (as far as I can make out) who noted that the Bali Aga of Sembiran do not bury their dead but expose them on a plank and leave them to predators.[14] In his *Noord-Balische desa-monographieen*, compiled between 1882 and 1889, Frederik A. Liefrinck mentioned that the customs of all these "Bali-Aga" or "*oer-Balineezen*" differed in many respects from other villages.[15] In the following decades, travelers as well as colonial officials confirmed what earlier administrators and scholars had written about these aboriginal villages. Roelof Goris suggested that with respect to their ritual practices, the Bali Aga should be not be

[9] I shall concentrate on the Islamic aspects of Sembiran culture and largely omit those that definitely are not.

[10] P. L. van Bloemen Waanders, "Aanteekeningen omtrent de zeden en gebruiken der Balinezen inzonderheid die van Boeleleng," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 8 (1859): 105-279.

[11] Bloemen Waanders, "Aanteekeningen omtrent de zeden en gebruiken der Balinezen," p. 123; R. van Eck, "Schetsen van het eiland Bali," in *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indie* 2 (1878): 165-213, esp. p. 168.

[12] Eck, "Schetsen van het eiland Bali," p. 38.

[13] J. Brandes, "De koperen platen van Sembiran (Boeleleng, Bali)," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 33 (Batavia, 1890): 16-56, esp. p. 22.

[14] Tuuk, *Kawi-Balineesch-Nederlandsch Woordenbook*, p. 355.

[15] Frederik A. Liefrinck, "Noord-Balische desa-monographieen (1882-1889)," in *Adatrechtbundels XXXVII Bali en Lombok* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1934), pp. 65-66.

called pre-Hindu Balinese but "non-Javanized Hindu-Balinese,"[16] since their ritual practices were not influenced by the religion of the priests and nobles who had fled from Majapahit. These elite refugees settled in the fertile southern plains and established there new royal and artistic centers—the Bali romanticized by colonial officials, tourists, and anthropologists.[17]

Jean-François Guermonprez demonstrated recently[18] that the non-Bali Aga, the "Javanized Hindu-Balinese" (to use Goris's terminology), were constructed by Westerners in their search for "little India" as a place where Hinduism survived (probably, in some respects, even in its original form). He speaks of the literary construction of Hinduism as an "indocentric illusion" to which many scholars fell prey. For example, the Balinese began to discover only at school that they were Hindu by being told so by their colonial teachers.[19] As Picard outlined, this Hinduization of Bali served the political ends of the colonial power as well; it could act as a barrier against the spread of Islam and the possible emergence of nationalism. Besides, the colonial power feared that Christianization might lead to a collapse of the entire "Hindu-Balinese" culture.[20]

The colonial descriptions and classifications of Bali Aga were adopted by anthropologists mostly without any further critical considerations.[21] The otherness of the "Bali Aga" they academically constructed was almost identical with the lowland Balinese perspective. Thus, anthropologists reinforced the *topos* of the Bali Aga's antiquity and their backward orientation, even their marginality.[22] Recently the same old appraisals inherent in the term "Bali Aga" reemerge under a new disguise: the resistance to and protection from people and ideas coming from the outside are viewed as a characteristic property of the Bali Aga, as if "Bali-Aga-ness" was and is a kind of trans-regional identity that serves as a kind of ethnicity.[23] Most recently, Thomas Reuter assigned the Bali Aga the status of an "ethnic group."[24] The designation of the

[16] Roelof Goris, "The Position of the Blacksmith," [1929] in *Bali: Studies in Life, Thought, and Ritual* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1984): pp. 289-299, esp. p. 294; J. L. Swellengrebel, "Introduction," [1960] in *Bali: Studies in Life, Thought, and Ritual* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1984), pp. 1-76, esp. p. 31.

[17] Adrian Vickers, *Bali: A Paradise Created* (Singapore, Berkeley: Periplus, 1989).

[18] Jean-François Guermonprez, "La religion balinaise dans le miroir de l'hindouism," *Bullétin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 88 (2001): 271-293.

[19] Guermonprez, "La religion balinaise dans le miroir de l'hindouism," p. 274.

[20] Picard, "The Discourse of Kebalian," pp. 21-23.

[21] For a critical review see: Samuel Wälty, *Kintamani: Dorf, Land und Rituale; Entwicklung und institutioneller Wandel in einer Bergregion auf Bali; Kultur, Gesellschaft, Umwelt.* Band 1 (Münster: LIT, 1997).

[22] As for example, Stephen Lansing, *Rama's Kingdoms: Social Supportive Mechanisms for the Arts in Bali* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1977); Stephen Lansing, *The Three Worlds of Bali* (New York: Praeger, 1983); Clifford Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

[23] "The [ritual] alliances of Bali Aga villages [...] allowed them to show a unified front to the newcomers. Although the Bali Aga were repeatedly violated, they resisted eradication and cultural absorption." Thomas Reuter, "People of the Mountains, Peoples of the Sea: Negotiating the Local and the Foreign in Bali," in *Staying Local in the Global Village*, ed. R. Rubinstein and L. H. Connor (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), pp. 155-80, esp. pp. 165-66. See also, Thomas Reuter, *Custodians of the Sacred Mountains* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002); Thomas Reuter, *The House of Our Ancestors: Precedence and Dualism in Highland Balinese Society* (Leiden: KITLV, 2002).

[24] Reuter, *The House of Our Ancestors*, p. 1.

Bali Aga as an "ethnic group" distinct from the non-Bali Aga (the "Javanized Hindu-Balinese") suggests the existence of two distinct entities; it is a dichotomy that therefore continues in anthropology—so far without any serious political consequences that I can make out.

The establishing of a "standard image of Bali"[25] by focusing on southern lowland Bali—called Bali's "heartland"[26]—was challenged by Fredrik Barth. His goal was to draw attention to Muslim Balinese worlds in the north that differed greatly from the Hindu Balinese life in the south. However, Barth did not question the categorization of "Bali-Aga" villages. By contrast, he took over the sweeping Bali Aga category and even reinforced its stereotypes: "Julah, a village on the northeast coast of Bali [...] belongs typologically in the category generally known as Bali Aga, though most recognized Bali Aga villages are located in the mountains."[27] Moreover, he affirms that these villages (Julah and Sembiran) are more-or-less closed-in villages that resisted all influence from the outside. On Sembiran he wrote, "Sembiran classifies itself, and is widely named, as a Bali Aga village and is certainly both geographically and socially the more isolated of the two [Julah und Sembiran]. [...] Sembiran is a closed community; it does not allow any immigration and so does not stand in need of a distinction between [village ritual association] *krama desa* [*sic*] and other, noncore villagers."[28] He characterizes Sembiran, in comparison with the neighboring village, Julah, as the "clearly more isolated and socially encapsulated community."[29]

As this brief overview shows, the "Bali Aga" largely remained a category that includes all those villages, forms of social organization, and ritual practices that are considered at odds or even in contradiction with mainstream or heartland Hindu-Balinese. Moreover, "Bali Aga" suggests, to a certain degree, villages without a history, or with a past veiled in a mist of myths—again in contrast to those villages whose members could "prove" their glorious past by referring to the historically acknowledged kingdom of Majapahit and beyond. "Bali Aga" villages have largely been treated as if they had always remained the same. They were considered and treated as timeless survivals.

## The Changing History of the North Coast

The so-called Bali Aga villages of Julah and Sembiran were anything but isolated and closed communities.[30] They have been exposed to the vicissitudes of history

[25] Fredrik Barth, *Balinese Worlds* (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 11.

[26] Geertz, *Negara*, p. 47.

[27] Barth, *Balinese Worlds*, p. 77. Barth's descriptions of Julah and Sembiran based only on fleeting visits are inadequate in many respects; for a critique see Jean-François Guermonprez, "Julah, un village 'vieux balinais'," *L'Homme* 147 (1998): 51-79, esp. nn. 16-17.

[28] As will become clear in the course of my article, Sembiran *does* have two organizations, one for core-villagers and another for non-core villagers. Additionally the village possesses a singular organization that was set up especially for integrating immigrants. Barth uses his misinformation to emphasize that Sembiran is still a totally closed community that refuses any contact with the outside.

[29] Barth, *Balinese Worlds*, pp. 82-83.

[30] The same applies (to a varying degree) also to many of those "Bali Aga" villages in the mountains, for example, Batur, that were located along one of the major inland trading routes. The traces of Islam can be

because of their strategic location on the north coast. For several major periods there are historical sources available, ranging from archaeological evidence to indigenous inscriptions and chronicles, as well as other historical documents. I shall first give a brief overview of the major periods over the last two thousand years to demonstrate how the anthropological construction of "isolation" is simply the result of a gross neglect of history.

The strip of land along the north coast on which today's villages (*desa adat*, or customary villages) of Bangkah (today called Alasari), Pacung, Sembiran, and Julah are situated (all belonging to the *kecamatan*, or district, Tejakula) is probably the area most thoroughly investigated so far by archaeologists. Among others, I Wayan Ardika has carried out several excavations. The research brought to light evidence of intermaritime trade as long as some two thousand years ago. Among the archaeological finds are not only skeletons but also Indian rouletted ware, pearls, and metal objects found in burials.[31] Ardika believes that a Dong Son drum used as a container for a second burial in Pacung as well as a mold are artifacts that may prove the local production of these impressive bronze drums. There exist also strong indications that rice was already cultivated in this area around the same time.[32] It is beyond doubt that the area of Bankah, Pacung, Sembiran, and Julah (historically they all form one cluster) was the nodal point of far-reaching transmaritime, as well as inland, trade. The pottery and other objects imported from India, as well as the Dong Son objects, suggest that they were used as prestige artifacts; this again seems to indicate that these trade items were imported and used by a stratified society with complex differentiations of status and rank. As Hall already showed for Southeast Asia in general, prestige objects connected with long-distance trade always point to a stratified society with a ruling elite or even a sovereign in need of prestige goods. Transmaritime trade was certainly one of the most important stimuli to state development in Southeast Asia,[33] and this seems to be confirmed by Ardika's excavations.

The next historical period of this coastal area for which we have evidence covers a time span of almost three hundred years (tenth to thirteenth century) and is documented by twenty copper-plate inscriptions (also called Sembiran inscriptions), of which Liefrinck made casts.[34] Almost every one of these royal edicts bears a date and

overlooked there only if the perspective is limited to the long-established notion of traditional "Bali Aga-ness."

[31] I Wayan Ardika, *Bronze Artefacts and the Rise of Complex Society in Bali* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1987); I Wayan Ardika, "Archaeological Research in Northeastern Bali" (PhD dissertation, Australian National University, 1991); I Wayan Ardika and Peter Bellwood, "Sembiran: the Beginnings of Indian Contact with Bali," *Antiquity* 65 (1991): 221-32; Jacqueline McConnell and Ian Glover, "A Newly Found Bronze Drum from Bali, Indonesia: Some Technical Considerations," *Modern Quaternary Research in Southeast Asia* 11 (1990): 1-38.

[32] Peter Bellwood, R. Gillespie, G. P. Thompson, J. S. Vogel, I. W. Ardika, and Ipoi Datan, "New Dates for Prehistoric Asian Rice," *Asian Perspectives* 31,2 (1992): 161-70.

[33] Kenneth R. Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985), pp. 26-47.

[34] Brandes, "De koperen platen van Sembiran," p. 17. These copper-plate inscriptions, *prasasti*, are kept in the village temples of Julah and Sembiran as sacred heirlooms. In the 1880s, when Liefrinck discovered them, they were all kept in Sembiran. The villagers of Julah had been living in a refugee settlement high

the name of a king, though the places where these kings had their palaces have not yet been determined archaeologically.[35] The first epigraph is dated *saka*-year 844 (AD 932) and the last 1103 (AD 1281). All these edicts are addressed to the village of Julah, which apparently was one of the major ports and emporiums. These texts reveal to what extent this coastal community was a "hot" society in Claude Lévi-Strauss's sense, with many fluctuations and changes in the social institutions and offices. There already existed communities of merchants of different geographical and cultural origin; these traders seemed to have regularly visited the emporium near Julah to sell or buy commodities, to get new provisions, or to wait for the appropriate season and the corresponding trade wind. Most of these inscriptions also tell of the regular raiding and plundering by pirates. Since a guarantee of the safety of their lives and goods was one of the preconditions for merchants to anchor at a port, the king urged the inhabitants of Julah to take measures against such raids. Whether the raiders were "pirates" in the common sense of the word, or whether these were seafaring people who raided the prosperous emporium on behalf of other rival ports or polities that competed with Julah over its riches and its access to the kingdom whose commercial center of import and export this harbor was, cannot be determined.[36]

One of the Sembiran inscriptions—Sembiran A IV, dated *saka* 987 (AD 1065) mentions a (trading?) community living separately from the core village. This community was called *rowangnya pasisi* (coast-dwelling group).[37] Its members had established a settlement right on the edge of the sea; its shape—obviously a fortified cluster—apparently was different from that of Julah's.[38] From the way the edicts mention this settlement, we can gather that its inhabitants had a different cultural background than that of the core villagers. About the *pasisi*'s origin, we can only conjecture by resorting to other sources. Arab documents suggest that Arab maritime trade with insular Southeast Asia started at the beginning of the ninth century.[39] These trade relations must have reached as far as Maluku. We can assume, therefore, that Muslim traders (of different cultural origins) passed along the Balinese north coast on their way to the spice islands at a very early time. There were Muslim travelers already mentioned in records of the Chinese Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907). But the great turning

up in the hills, not too far from Sembiran, until around 1800, when they moved down to the coastal line. They had previously given their share of the copper plates into the trusteeship of Sembiran. Some time after 1880, when Julah felt safe in its coastal settlement, the twenty copper plates were divided again between Julah and Sembiran, each of them keeping ten plates.

[35] Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin, "The Pre-Colonial Balinese State Reconsidered: A Critical Evaluation of Theory Construction on the Relationship between Irrigation, the State, and Rituals," *Current Anthropology* 44,2 (2003): 153-81.

[36] Bennet Bronson, "Exchange at the Upstream and Downstream Ends: Notes toward a Functional Model of the Coastal State in Southeast Asia," in *Economic Exchange and Social Interaction in Southeast Asia*, ed. Karl L. Hutterer (Ann Arbor: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, The University of Michigan, 1997), pp. 39-52.

[37] I Wayan Ardika and Sutjiati Beratha, *Perajin pada masa Bali kuno Abad IX–XI Masehi*, vol. 2 (Denpasar: Fakultas Sastra Universitas Udayana, 1998), pp. 235-236.

[38] The king who issued these copper-plate inscriptions allows the villagers of Julah to build fortified houses like those of the *pasisi* community nearby. See Ardika and Beratha, *Perajin pada masa Bali kuno*, vol. 2, pp. 235-236.

[39] Denys Lombard, *Nusa Jawa: Silang Budaya*, vol. 1-3 (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1996), 2:22.

point was much later, when first Sumatran and later Javanese rulers (and, as a consequence, their followers) converted to Islam, starting apparently in the thirteenth century.[40]

The term *"pasisi"* (also *"pesisir," "pasisir"*) is interesting. Its literal meaning is "coast" or "littoral," but usually it is used for Islamic populations inhabiting the north coast of central Java since the fifteenth/sixteenth century.[41] It is uncertain whether the Javanese (and other islanders) used *"pasisi"* themselves as an indigenous term to designate shore-dwelling Islamic groups in general—first and foremost those involved in intermaritime trade. If they did use the term, it is also uncertain when this usage began. However, the term *"pasisi"* used in the copper-plate inscription of Sembiran for a coast-dwelling community located on the main trading route to the spice islands would certainly be one of the earliest testimonies.

Significantly, most anthropologists and historians have attributed to Islam an influential contact with Bali only in the context of the decline of the east Javanese kingdom of Majapahit. In 1284, King Krtanagara of Majapahit sent a military expedition to Bali. In 1343, Bali was "conquered" by a second military expedition led by Gajah Mada. As a consequence, a Javanese, Krsna Kapakisan, was installed as ruler of Bali.[42] With the fall of Majapahit, priests and nobles fled to Bali in the sixteenth century. These refugees had escaped the advent of Islam in eastern Java, when rulers had converted to the new religion and a fundamental political and cultural transformation began.[43] For these military expeditions as well as for the refugees who came to Bali, the north coast with its well-established trade routes and harbors must have served as one of the gateways, especially since the sea is much calmer there than in the south. Therefore, the coastal villages were places of almost continuous encounters between the people living there and immigrants, even if the latter did not intend to stay but moved over the central mountains to the south, where new royal centers began to flourish.

Since many of the islands east of Bali gradually became Islamized by the sixteenth century, certainly the north coast was also touched by these individuals and groups who disseminated the new religion. In the seventeenth century, Bali—notwithstanding its north coast—became exposed to different expanding Muslim powers, the realms of Mataram (Java) and Makassar (Sulawesi), as Hans Hägerdahl has recently shown.[44] These contacts were accompanied by intense interactions with Islam; we can assume that they left their imprints on the villages of the north coast, too. During this period,

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[40] M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia: c. 1300 to the Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).

[41] In this sense, the term *"pasisi"* became an anthropological category introduced by Denys Lombard. For the attribution of this category to Lombard, see Adrian Vickers, "Hinduism and Islam in Indonesia: Bali and the Pasisir World," *Indonesia* 44 (1987): 57. See also Lombard, *Nusa Jawa,* 1:37.

[42] Helen Creese, "The Balinese Kakawin Tradition; A Preliminary Description and Inventory," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 155,1 (1999): 45-96, esp. pp. 47-48.

[43] Uka Tjandrasasmita, "Majapahit dan kedatangan Islam serta prosesnya," in *700 Tahun Majapahit*, ed. S. Kartodiodjo, R. Soekmono, P. Atmadi, and E. Sedyawati (Surabaya: Dinas Pariwisata Daerah/Propinsi Daerah Tingkat I, Jawa Timur, 1993), pp. 227-87.

[44] Hans Hägerdahl, "From Batuparang to Ayudhya: Bali and the Outside World, 1636-1656," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land en Volkenkunde* 154,1 (1998): 55-94.

the intermaritime trade, then already embedded in a world economy, was severely hampered by the increasing European military and economic interest in the region. As a result, the most dynamic Javanese shippers (on Java's north coast) completely disappeared[45]—with consequences certainly for Bali's entrepôts on the north coast as well. The harbor near Sembiran and its trade relations must have collapsed around that time.[46] With the advent of the Dutch, the north coast in general became an arena of cultural and political encounters with far-reaching consequences up to today.[47] The Dutch started their conquest there; they recruited non-Balinese soldiers (mainly Buginese and Makassars, both from Islamic populations) in large numbers to fight against the (Hinduized) Balinese in the decisive battles near Jagaraga between 1845 and 1849. Twelve hundred Muslim soldiers were killed in these conflicts.[48] Therefore, the Dutch themselves induced many Muslims to come to Bali as long as they served Dutch political ends.

### Sembiran and Islamic Immigrants

Considering the changing history that provides so much evidence of multiculturalism in Bali, it is surprising that anthropology has neglected for such a long time (among other subjects) Islam, its precolonial and colonial history, and the life of Islamic people in Bali. This, although the Dutch administrators had paid much attention to the ethnic composition of the islanders and registered all migrations known to them, as, for example, the immigration of about four thousand Sasak from Lombok who were sent to Bali by the ruler of Lombok.[49] The blindness towards Islam in Bali continued even when, paralleling the continuous rise of tourism, the immigration of Muslims steadily increased. The first work that substantially dealt with Bali and Islam is Vickers's article.[50] Barth,[51] Unni Wikan,[52] and Erni Budiwanti[53]

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[45] Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce*, vol. 2, *Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), chap. 5.

[46] To my knowledge, none of these early colonial accounts mentions a harbor near Sembiran.

[47] With the Dutch, a new cultural policy began that distinguished their "subjects" by race or ethnicity. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London/New York: Verso, [1983] 1991), p. 6. While establishing a census, the colonial officials always noted in every village how many members of each religion or even race lived there. Bloemen Waanders, for example, reproduces interesting demographic statistics based on data he collected himself in the village within Buleleng regency. See Bloemen Waanders, "Aanteekeningen omtrent de zeden en gebruiken der Balinezen," p. 140. He classified people not only according to different title-bearing groups, but also according to their functions. Separate statistics are given for foreigners, Chinese, Arabs, and Buginese/Mandarese who lived in some villages. In his statistics (probably the first ones published), he estimates a total population of 32,170 in Buleleng; 750 were of Bugineze/Madurese origin, fifteen Arabs, and two hundred Chinese. In fact, most of these categories were taken over by the Indonesian government after independence; even today, the census carried out in all villages resemble the colonial ones very much.

[48] Jean Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 2 ; Coexistence et perspectives contemporaines," *Archipel* 60 (2000): 45-64, esp. p. 49.

[49] Victor E. Korn, *Het adatrecht van Bali* ('s-Gravenhage: G. Naeff, 1932), p. 65.

[50] Vickers, "Hinduism and Islam in Indonesia," pp. 31-58.

[51] Barth, *Balinese Worlds*.

produced the first studies based on ethnographic fieldwork among Islamic Balinese. Jean Couteau devoted two articles to the influence of Islam on Hindu-Balinese culture[54] and a recent one to the transformation of Bali with respect to the concepts of religion and ethnicity, the radicalization of religion, and the rising tension in the relations between Muslims and Hindus.[55] Couteau's work also reveals how far-reaching were the effects of the anthropologists' overlooking Islamic elements in Balinese culture. The picture of the so-called golden age of Hinduism in Bali, the time of the royal courts in South Bali, changes substantially if we acknowledge that already at the time of Baturenggong (mid-sixteenth century), Muslims were sent to this king in an unsuccessful attempt to convert him to Islam. There are many more indications that, in one form or another, Islam has been present in Bali for centuries.[56]

However, what today appear as two different religions, two different cultures, and even two different ethnicities were previously perceived not as distinct entities but rather as variations in ritual practices that differed from village to village and region to region. All the early colonial sources tell that what today is called "ethnicity" was not an issue among the Balinese. Bloemen Waanders mentions the difficulties he had in establishing a census "because it never occurred either to the ruler nor to the *punggawa* [their regional representatives] to carry out a census."[57] He was obviously surprised to find an absence of ethnic categories. Liefrinck emphasizes that "quarrelsomeness or incompatibility with differently minded people" (*onverdraagzaamheid jegens andersdenkenden*) was unknown to the Balinese.[58]

Considering the extent to which Sembiran and Julah have been gateways for people and for cultural goods from different parts of the world for the past two thousand years, it is hard to believe they should have remained pre-Hindu or "non-Javanized Hindu-Balinese." Oral histories also tell of numerous raids and attacks the villages along the coastal line suffered over the past few hundred years. The villages were destroyed, the houses burned down, and the inhabitants, if they could not manage to escape, were either killed or taken as captives and sold somewhere else. Additionally, oral histories tell of several epidemics of various kinds—perhaps a consequence of the villages' unprotected exposure to external influence—that swept over the whole region, killing large parts of its population. My investigations along the north coast of *kecamatan* Tejakula revealed that none of the coastal villages had been spared, all had been razed at least once; oral histories tell of second and third (and even more) refoundings of these settlements.

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[52] Unni Wikan, *Managing Turbulent Hearts: A Balinese Formula for Living* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990).

[53] Erni Budiwanti, *The Crescent Behind the Thousand Holy Temples: An Ethnographic Study of the Minority Muslims of Pegayaman, North Bali* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1995).

[54] Jean Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 1; Rencontre historique," *Archipel* 58 (1999): 159-88; Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 2."

[55] Couteau, "Bali: crise en paradis."

[56] Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 1"; Couteau "Bali et l'islam: 2"; Vickers, "Hinduism and Islam in Indonesia."

[57] Bloemen Waanders, "Aanteekeningen omtrent de zeden en gebruiken der Balinezen," p. 139, translation by the author.

[58] F. A. Liefrinck, *Bali en Lombok: Geschriften van F. A. Liefrinck* (Amsterdam: J. H. de Bussy, 1927), p. 201.

The "Old-Balinese" village of Julah was no exception to this. Its inhabitants lived up in the hills quite a distance from the coast until shortly before 1800 (if my counting of generations is correct). They had fled to that place probably one hundred to two hundred years earlier. Large stones, a great amount of pottery sherds, and other traces still reveal even to a non-archaeologist where the main temple, the houses, and the cemetery once were. Oral histories suggest that there were no more descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of Julah among those people who moved back to the place where the village is today; all inhabitants are considered more or less as "immigrants." In what way and why these "immigrants" approached these villages, what goals they had, and whether they came as refugees or as conquerors (or both) can be determined only in very few cases. However, there are several indications of processes of intermarriage between immigrants and local women. What's more, the immigrants "inherited" not only the land and everything on it but took over many of the local customs.

Oral histories maintain that, in contrast to Julah, Sembiran was never raided and that its inhabitants never fled to another place. A few descendants of the "original" inhabitants still live in Sembiran; these descendants call themselves Bali Mula, "original Balinese." According to the oral histories, they were created in Sembiran. The oral histories also attribute to the Bali Mula the particularity of the language still spoken in Sembiran. By contrast, the Bali Mula associate Bali Aga with immigrants "from India."[59] There are several oral histories that tell of a number of "waves" of groups as well as of individuals who migrated to Sembiran at different times and from different directions from outside Bali; most of these immigrants are associated with Islam, though it is impossible to characterize the nature of the Islam these early protagonists brought with them.[60] Julah's flight up to the hills might have protected the village from such a thorough confrontation with Islam as Sembiran had experienced.

It is apparent that the advent of Islam predates the Dutch not only by decades but—judging from the way it became integrated—probably by centuries. Today, there are no people who call themselves Muslim in contrast to Hindu or Buddhist; the worship community is just a single one: the village ritual association or *kerama desa*.[61]

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[59] Van der Tuuk mentions that the people think they are descendants of Chinese. Tuuk, *Kawi-Balineesch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek*, p. 355.

[60] As the genetic research carried out by the Swiss physician and anthropologist Georges Breguet has shown, of the villages throughout Bali he investigated, only three—Julah, Pacung, and Sembiran—displayed particularities that otherwise were unique to the populations of Yogyakarta, Makassar, the Bugis, and Bima. Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 1," p. 186.

[61] However, more recently, immigrants from Lombok and Eastern Bali moved to Julah in the middle of the last century (some probably earlier). They were granted land far up in the hills (apparently at the request of the Dutch and in the context of the land reform in the 1960s). They inhabit a separate *dusun* (a unit of an administrative village) of Julah, Batu Gambir (see also Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 2"). Their mosque and practice in everyday life as well as in ritual (Muslim) are quite different from Julah's customs performed by the core village. Moreover the more-or-less recent immigrants are not members of the village's *kerama desa tegak* (ritual village association). The immigrants as well as their hosts are aware of the cultural differences, and they explain them in terms of a different past. These immigrants—some of whom claim to have been living in this area "for more than one hundred years"—are still able to speak some Sasak language, though obviously only in a *kasar* (crude) version. Furthermore, many of their houses display a non-Balinese style. Over the past seven years, the Islamic community has developed a growing self-

In contrast to the anthropological construction of the antiquity and isolation of the "Bali Aga," a glimpse of the history of the north coast has demonstrated that this part of the island had remained anything but isolated. This conclusion, suggested by historical traces, is supported by the oral histories told in the villages along the north coast. These oral histories give proof of multiple interactions between the local people and the Islamic immigrants. The newcomers are always portrayed as innovators in several respects. As I will show, most encounters with them had some dramatic consequences for the village community, originating from a fundamental disagreement between the locals and the immigrants over ritual practices and beliefs.

One of the stories deals with a technological innovation that a Muslim man—a "black dog"—brought to the village. Sembiran was a village well known for producing cotton as well as textiles. One day a young woman—the story calls her the daughter of a pig, alluding to the fact that she was a descendant of an indigenous couple whose ritual practices included the ritual offering of pigs and pork—was tired of the inefficiency of her weaving gear because when she started to weave, her weft yarn frequently dropped from her loom. She swore that whoever brought a device that prevented the yarn from dropping she would serve for the rest of her life. It was a black dog who brought her such an ingenious device—a weft yarn spool (*peleting*) in a quiver (*tundak*) consisting of a bamboo tube that prevented the yarn from dropping from the weft stick. So she gave him food and let him in her house at night.[62]

This episode needs a brief explanation. This technical innovation sounds unspectacular, though it was certainly revolutionary for the weavers. This oral history has obviously preserved the memory of an early type of weft stick that is today found only in Eastern Indonesia.[63] This type of weft stick allows for only a very slow weaving process as compared to the one introduced by the "black dog" (a weft spool with a quiver), now used in Sembiran (as well as throughout Bali and most of the other parts of insular Southeast Asia).[64]

In another version, a young woman felt pity for a black dog who howled each night outside her house. So she let him in every evening; in the morning when she woke up the dog had already left. In both versions of the story, the black dog impregnates the woman, which gives rise to an upheaval within the village community. In both cases the couple—the daughter of the pig and her husband the dog—was considered a mismatch; the couple was expelled from the village and had to live outside it.[65]

awareness. Since early 2003 there exists a *pesantren* (school of Koranic studies), and the school girls are dressed in an orthodox Islamic manner.

[62] The story of a dog who brings a weaving device (mainly a weft stick) to a young woman (often the daughter of a pig), later impregnates her, and thereby gives rise to a new social group is apparently widespread in Indonesia. See J. P. Kleiweg de Zwaan, "De hond in het volksgeloof der inlanders van den Indischen Archipel," *De Indische Gids* (1915): 173-201.

[63] See, for example, Ruth Barnes, *The Ikat Textiles of Lamalera: A Study of an Eastern Indonesian Weaving Tradition* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989), fig. 4.

[64] I owe this information to the anthropologist Dr. Marie-Louise Nabholz-Kartaschoff (Basel), expert in Asian textiles and former curator of the Department of Asian Textiles at the Museum der Kulturen Basel, Switzerland.

[65] Bestiality is considered one of the most serious offenses, resulting in impurity not only of the person concerned but of the whole village.

However, as the storytellers emphasized, this odd couple produced an offspring in the shape of a human baby. The son whose father practiced *slem* (Islam) rituals and whose mother was a local woman (of *kala* or autochthonous religion)—so the story continues—was told that he may raise dogs as well as pigs, eat pork, and drink palm wine if he wants to. A new form of religious practice sprang from this union, a practice that was subsequently followed by all their descendants, that is, the inhabitants of Sembiran. One of my informants added that there are Muslims who sometimes eat pork and sometimes not; they are called *orang slem gadungan,* not a strict follower of Islam.

In a further version of this story, the (male) child is told that he is neither "Bali" nor "*slem*" but a mixture of both. Since the boy was born under a tree called in Java, "*sasak,*" he should later move to Sasak island (Lombok) and join those Sasak who are "half Bali and half *slem,*" called *slem pengorengan.*[66] The metaphor of the black dog remains largely unexplained.[67] As is well known, Islam considers pigs as well as dogs impure. Whether the story uses this metaphor in a derogatory way or whether this is an allusion to this man's origin as a member of a less orthodox Islamic community where dogs were kept remains uncertain. However, the technical innovation the "black dog" brought along and used to get the young woman to accept him has the same name in the Sasak language as well.[68]

## The Commemoration of Ratu Pesisi and the Ritual and Social Transformations He Achieved

Similar to stories common in neighboring Pacung,[69] a whole complex of Sembiran's oral histories deals with the arrival of several people from Java who must have been in close contact with the Islamic faith. The most prominent among them are Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan. The first had the function of a harbor master (*subander*); he is also called Ratu Subander. His companion, Ratu Kamasan, was a spiritual leader who lead the life of a hermit or saint—in any case he acted as a ritual reformer.

A few words concerning *subander* are necessary in order to explain this important function more fully. As Ardika already noted,[70] the stretch of land between Buleleng and Sembirenteng must have been dotted with numerous places where ships from different areas anchored. The harbor that once existed on the territory of today's Sembiran was—at least in the last period of its existence—most likely in the control of

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[66] This alludes to the so-called Wetu Telu who do not raise pigs but formerly consumed pork and drank alcohol. See Albert Leemann and Werner Röll, *Lombok (Indonesien): Bevölkerungsstrukturierung gemäss Religion und Adat; Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis sozio-kultureller Normen von Sasak und Balinesen,* Anthropogeographie 1 (Zürich: Geographisches Institut der Universität Zürich, 1983), p. 47.

[67] In several similar narrations told in Lombok (as well as in other parts of Indonesia), an analogy is drawn between a circumcised man, a dog's penis, and the shape of a particular type of a *keris* hilt. See J. C. van Eerde, "De Kalanglegende op Lombok," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 45 (1902): 30-58.

[68] I bought some old cotton and silk textiles in Sembiran that are now kept in the Museum der Kulturen Basel; their patterns have much in common with textiles in Lombok. See note 62.

[69] Couteau, "Bali et l'islam : 1," pp. 179-82.

[70] Ardika, "Archaeological Research in Northeastern Bali."

the Muslim *subander* called Ratu Pesisi. Purbatjaraka Purnadi and I Wayan Wardha[71] pointed out that these harbor masters (the term "*subander*" is obviously of Persian origin) were often of foreign origin and were in charge of harbors where traders, predominantly from their own home countries, anchored. Therefore, some were of Chinese, and others of "Muslim" or "Arab" descent (possibly of varying origin).[72] A *subander* was not only responsible for the control of a ship's cargo and the levying of taxes, but also provided the merchants from abroad with assistance, especially if their boats had suffered damage. In precolonial time, the *subander* were mostly appointed by the king. Export and import contributed considerably to the wealth of kingdoms, and the king(s) paid much attention to the well-being of the foreign merchants, as early inscriptions show. The famous royal temple Dalem Balingkang near Batur[73] houses a shrine for a Chinese deity, said to be a deified Chinese *subander* or the daughter of a *subander* who became the king's wife.[74] It was a *subander* who once was in charge of the harbor near Sambirenteng (today's temple of Pekonjongan).[75] This story reveals to what extent a *subander* of foreign origin could gain the king's recognition and even reach the status of a deified ancestor worshiped also by the Hindu-Balinese.[76]

While there are strong indications that the *subander* in charge of a port on Sembiran's territory located in the neighborhood of today's Pura Sang Hyang Marek was a Muslim, the next harbor, in Bondalem, was run by a Chinese harbor master, and the same applies to Sembirenteng.[77] This confirms Wardha's thesis that each harbor was associated with a *subander* and traders of a more or less distinct origin. However, even if we acknowledge that each harbor was associated with a *subander* of different origin, we cannot determine whether, for example, these Chinese *subander* were "Buddhists" or Muslim converts.[78]

Ratu Pesisi is referred to as Ratu Subander in order to emphasize his function rather than his political capacities and the impact his actions had on Sembiran. These

[71] Purbatjaraka Purnadi, "Shabandars in the Archipelago," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 3,2 (1962): 1-9; I Wayan Wardha, *Fungsi Subandar dalam jaman Bali kuno (abad 9-10 masehi)* (Denpasar: Universitas Udayana Fakultas Sastra, 1984).

[72] The designation "Arab" often meant Muslim Indians.

[73] Hauser-Schäublin, "The Pre-Colonial Balinese State Reconsidered."

[74] Wardha, *Fungsi Subandar dalam jaman Bali kuno*, pp. 5-6. In Batur, this Chinese deity has her shrine in one of the most important transregional temples, the Pura Ulun Danu Batur. This shrine is regularly visited by Konce (Hainanese) Chinese and becomes the focus of their worship in a way that that differs substantially from Hindu-Balinese practice. See Claudine Salmon and Myra Sidharta, "The Hainanese of Bali: A Little Known Community," *Archipel* 60 (2000): 87-124.

[75] I was told a similar story in the villages that support the temple of Pekonjongan. Wardha also mentions a shrine for Ratu Subander in the temple complex of Pura Penulisan (Sukawana), in the temple complex of Silayukti (Karangasem), as well as in today's most important temple of Besakih. See Wardha, *Fungsi Subandar dalam jaman Bali kuno*, pp. 5-9.

[76] See also Salmon et al., "The Hainanese of Bali."

[77] The relationship *between* these individual small harbors and their harbor masters is by no means clear. Did they compete or cooperate with each other? Did they use the same inland trade routes and supply the same market places, or were they even appointed by the same kings?

[78] Denys Lombard and Claudine Salmon, "Islam and Chineseners," in *The Propagation of Islam in the Indonesian Malay Archipelago*, ed. Alijah Gordon (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 2001), pp. 181-208.

latter properties are associated with the title of Ratu Pesisi. Ratu Pesisi is described as a historical figure, a person who lived and probably died in Sembiran; this is in contrast to his companions, who remain rather vague. Shrines in two of the most important temples of Sembiran are dedicated to him. There exist different versions of the story concerning his arrival; some maintain that Ratu Pesisi was accompanied only by Ratu Kamasan. Other oral histories speak of five men who arrived as a whole group, come on behalf of "Ratu Solo" (Java).[79] Their leader is called I Ratu (Ngurah) Gede. Their boat shipwrecked at the rock of Ponjok Batu. According to one version, the newcomers gave Sembiran its name (*sembir* = fragment) in commemoration of their shattered boat. Before that, Sembiran had been called Gunung Sinigia and then Gunung Sipapan.[80] Among these men was Ratu Ngurah, whom Ratu Pesisi put ashore at Ponjok Batu. Another companion (Ratu Gede Sakti) landed west of today's temple (*pura*) Sang Hyang Marek; a small shrine still commemorates his "place."[81] Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan continued their journey, eventually landing at today's Pura Sang Hyang Marek located between the two *desa adat* Alasari (Bangkah)[82] and Kubuanyar (Pacung).[83] It is the area where Ardika excavated the first evidence that there had been contact with India two thousand years ago.[84] The temple lies at the mouth of what is today a deep, completely dried-up ravine; in former times it was a river, the Yeh Lengis (called also *tukad* Bayad). In front of the Pura Sang Hyang Marek (*marek*—to arrive), the sea is deep enough for sea-going vessels to have anchored there. Today, Pura Sang Hyang Marek commemorates Ratu Pesisi's domain: a harbor and/or a market.

As the oral histories tell, apparently the immigrants were on colonizing missions, though they were not always successful. Ratu Kamasan and Ratu Bolot[85] stayed at the landing place near today's Pura Sang Hyang Marek, while Ratu Pesisi navigated eastward until he reached Sembirenteng. According to one version of the story, "he did not like the place." According to another, "he was tired from paddling," so he turned back and landed again at Sang Hyang Marek,[86] where he recovered from the journey first. Together with Ratu Ngurah Gede and Ratu Kamasan, he climbed up the hill on which Sembiran is located. Near Pura Dulu (probably Sembiran's oldest temple), they

[79] One of the oral histories I received from Dr. Thomas Reuter (Melbourne) who recorded it in Sembiran in 1994. He translated it with Drs. I Nyoman Sabaraka (Sukawana village) into *bahasa Indonesia*. I am indebted to them.

[80] "*Papan*" means plank.

[81] This might be the *subander* and his place of worship mentioned by Couteau in his analysis of Islamic traces in Pacung. See Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 1"; Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 2."

[82] Bangkah (Alasari) has close associations with Pura Sang Hyang Marek too. In the central village temple, Pura Puseh, there is a shrine (*pesimpangan*) for Pura Sang Hyang Marek. It is dedicated to Ratu Kamasan and I Ratu Gede Sakti.

[83] In Pacung, Ratu Pesisi, associated with Pura Sang Hyang Marek, is integrated into Pacung's major temple (Pura Puseh/Desa) and its rituals that link the Pura Puseh/Desa to Sembiran's temple, Sang Hyang Marek. All these rituals are carried out by the core villagers, the *kerama desa* and their ritual functionaries.

[84] Ardika, "Archaeological Research in Northeastern Bali."

[85] In another version, Ratu Bolot is said to have come from Lombok and not from Java.

[86] This version suggests that it was a paddled boat, though it certainly was a sailing vessel. I understand his return from Sembirenteng as an unsuccessful attempt to gain control over the harbor there (see above).

rested. Ratu Kamasan then turned west; he left the village and proceeded to an isolated place above a huge ravine (Yeh Lengis), where he settled. Today this site is commemorated by a temple called Pura Melaka; the name allegedly came from the *melaka* trees growing there. Halfway between the core village and Pura Melaka lies a further temple, called Pura Sanda, the residence Ratu Pesisir's first wife.[87] After a while, Ratu Kamasan considered his place too far off from the village. Therefore he moved back and settled near a place called Pendem ("grave"). Today a tiny temple commemorates this site, too.[88]

In Sembiran, both Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan are associated with distinct offices. Ratu Pesisi is described as a *prebekel* (or *mekel*) (village head) and Ratu Kamasan as a *klian adat* (ritual leader), implying that the former is concerned mostly with the social order, the latter with ritual practices. Some versions maintain that Ratu Pesisi's domain reached from Pura Polaki (far west of Singaraja) to Pura Pekonjongan (Sembirenteng). Others are less clear about its boundary in the west but confirm Sembirenteng in the east. Ratu Pesisi is said to have restructured the whole village and its organization. Ratu Bolot was said to be the *penyarikan* of Ratu Pesisi, that is, more or less, his assistant (often translated as "secretary"). All these oral histories (or fragments of them) recall the deeds of these immigrants as engendering cultural transformations from the perspective of the successful reformers. These stories tell that Ratu Gede, Ratu Pesisi, and Ratu Kamasan met beings in Sembiran described as cocoons (*bugading*; Indonesian: *kepompong*) hanging from a star fruit tree (*belimbing*), that is, not yet fully developed or mature beings—let alone human beings. A *kepompong* is the cocoon of a kind of insect called *kuha*; the female carries her black-and-white striped young (in a cocoon) on her body. At the moment they hatch, the mother dies.[89] This trope suggests a rupture in tradition, a new generation without the guidance of parents, youngsters who were waiting to be transformed into full human beings. This could relate to the task of Ratu Kamasan, who introduced new ritual practices in sharp contrast to the preexisting ones. As a result, his innovations split people into two different groups with ritual practices of their own before a kind of syncretism arose.

Another story gives further insight into the conflicts between those who followed the old traditions and those who adopted the new ones: A couple had four children: two boys and two girls; one of each was beautiful and the other ugly. The parents decided that these children should marry crosswise. One of the two young couples—the beautiful man and the ugly woman—did not remain in the village because they felt oppressed (by the new ritual practices they were made to follow). The couple moved into the forest where a child was born to them. There, at the place where today Pura Tegal is, they remained. Since the child's father did not know how to perform life-cycle rituals for his child, he went back to his own father. But his father

[87] Liefrinck was told that one of the immigrants was a woman; Liefrinck, "Noord-Balische desa-monographieen," p. 66. Ratu Pesisi also had a second wife, who came from the nearby village of Satra up in the mountains. Her place of residence is said to be commemorated by a tree at Pura Sang Hyang Marek. The *klian adat* of Satra told me that villagers from Satra formerly visited the temple Sang Hyang Marek.

[88] Sutaba mentions seeing this temple in 1971. It then consisted of just a pile of river stones, irregularly arranged; Sutaba, *Megalithic Traditions in Sembiran*, p. 10.

[89] An earlier, even more radical, socio-cultural transformation that has taken place in Sembiran is described in similar terms.

refused to provide ritual assistance because his son had left him. He told him to take "things from the forest" (since he lived there) and to perform the rituals himself. The young man roasted a young wild boar and used it as an offering for his child's life-cycle rituals. This practice is now part of *agama kala* (the autochthonous religion).

The story continues to outline all the further life-cycle rituals this man performed. One of them was to pierce the child's nasal septum by following the practices of the "Arabs" who originated from India and brought Hinduism to Sembiran. The young family was later forced (by the villagers) to move to the cemetery[90] near the beach and live there.

The other couple, the beautiful woman and the ugly man, remained with their parents. When a child was born to them, they performed rites according to *agama suci*, the pure religion.[91] The father later sent his son to Java to find out more about Islam (*slem*). There, he became a disciple of it. When he came back, he reported that Islam was the most widely spread religion in Java. His father told him to return to Java and stay forever; in return, he should send the Hinduism still existing in Java to Bali. He asked him to meet with his older brother before departing. The younger brother told the older one:

> I am already a follower of the pure religion, and I am aware that there exists a difference between the two of us. Whereas you, older brother, take a piglet for an offering, I only use rice and vegetables. But since I originate from *agama* Hindu and I am now a Muslim, we should contribute to these different religions correspondingly. All the offerings must bear the traces of all these religions. This [encompassing] religion I shall call *kala patra* [religion that is typical for this village]. Whenever your offspring perform rituals, they have to contribute offerings in honor of these different religions. Always present *banten suci*, pure offerings, too. Concerning the small offering parcels [*sesajen*], twenty-one of them may contain pork; the other twenty-two, however, [may contain] only rice, or additionally chicken or an egg. These latter offerings are designated for Islam.

"This is the way we do it in Sembiran," the man telling the story concluded. "For each ritual we always prepare offerings and meals that are designated for Islam [*slem*] in addition to meals and offerings that contain pork."

As this history shows, the younger brother, the follower of Islam, did not remain in Sembiran but went back to Java—at his father's request. However, he first taught his elder (!) brother how to perform rituals in the future that would acknowledge the old as well as the new religion and that more offerings should pay respect to Islam than to *agama kala*.

[90] People considered *sebel* (ritually impure) have to move out of the village to live at the cemetery for several weeks or even months. Obviously the young family was ousted because they did not follow the dominant ritual practices.

[91] The story opposes the impurity of the old rituals to the purity of the new rituals. Why this religion is called "pure" in this context and not simply *slem* (Islam) is not clear. Whether this *suci* alludes to the Islamic practice of circumcision that perhaps was formerly carried out in Sembiran is not clear. Circumcision is today unknown in Sembiran.

## *Agama Slem* in Rituals and Temples

But apart from the oral histories concerning Sembiran and its temples, what evidence exists of these suggested cultural heroes of the Islamic faith and the innovations they brought? There are, to begin with, several commemorating rituals and temples that support many aspects of the stories told in these oral histories. As Paul Connerton has pointed out, oral histories (he speaks of "myths") are always *told* to an audience, most often by a single person.[92] To recite a myth is not necessarily to accept it. Moreover, oral histories always exist in many variations according to the individuals who tell them and the situation in which they are told. By contrast, a potential for invariance is built into rites because they specify the relationship between the performance of a ritual and the meaning the participants assign to it. Additionally, the rituals—as long as they are linked to temples in Sembiran, and most of them are—are fixed to a calendar that guarantees regular repetition.[93]

Many of these rituals I am going to describe are commemorating ceremonies that pay homage to these powerful deified immigrants. I would like to start with temples dedicated to Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan. A huge ritual cycle in the fifth Balinese month performed by the whole *kerama desa* starts in the Pura Desa, the central village temple. There, almost all temples crucial for the constitution of the village community and the ritual association are represented by individual shrines. Both Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan (and, additionally, a further partner of Ratu Pesisi, Ratu Bagus Pura Agung) have a shrine in the village temple. On a subsequent day, the ritual cycle moves to Pura Tegal Angin, located at the southeastern border of the village, where one of its main tracks leads up into the mountain area of Batur. Tegal Angin is considered to be a guardian temple that protects the village from raids from that direction. On the third day, the ritual reaches its first climax in the Pura Sang Hyang Marek. The members of the female association of the *kerama desa* start making offerings, some of them of outstanding height; these are made in the name of boy priests dressed in white (*mangku bunga*) who are the sacred followers of Ratu Bagus Pura Agung. He is associated with trading relations with the Batur area, where there probably had been a royal court and one of the most important transisland markets, as well as a state temple responsible for collecting tributes.[94] Some oral histories suggest that Ratu Bagus Pura Agung, to whom the most honorable shrine in the Pura Sang Hyang Marek is dedicated, even originated from Batur and was not one of Ratu Pesisi's companions from Java, though he closely cooperated with him.[95] At noon a group of priests and the most senior members (*paulun desa* or *manggala desa*) of the *kerama desa* go to meet the deity Ratu Gede Sakti at his shrine (directly on the shore) at some distance west of Pura Sang Hyang Marek and invite him to participate in the ritual. Some time in the afternoon, a group of priests and the *dulun desa* (ritual leaders) follow a small track to a crossroads, where they invite Ratu Pesisi's wife from Pura

[92] Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[93] Ibid., pp. 41-71.

[94] See Hauser-Schäublin, "The Pre-Colonial Balinese State Reconsidered."

[95] The *mangku bunga* participate in another ritual cycle as well that focuses on the relationship with temples in the Batur region. Boys between five and twelve years of age are appointed by the gods, often through illness or dreams.

Sanda to participate as an honored guest in the ritual as well. Only when all are assembled are the ceremonial dances (*baris*, *legong*, and *rejang*) performed.

On the next day, after a visit to the temple of Ponjok Batu where the community venerates Ratu Ngurah, the ritual community walks up the Sembiran hill on the old track accompanied by the gong orchestra, passes Pura Sanda, and proceeds to Pura Melaka to celebrate Ratu Kamasan. On the following day, the ritual continues in the Pura Empu, a small temple in a cave where a hermit apparently once lived. On the following day, the cycle reaches Pura Pintu, the temple of a former autonomous settlement, one of the last eradicated by pirates. The whole cycle ends in a small temple in Sembiran. Thus, this ritual cycle in which new offerings and new ceremonial meals are continuously prepared and consumed, where all the dance groups perform, unites all these personalities and their sites. It is probably the most sumptuous ritual cycle of Sembiran and not only keeps the whole village continuously busy for many days but heavily draws on people's resources, too.

Apart from this ritual cycle especially dedicated to the commemoration of Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan, there are many more rituals held in the Pura Sang Hyang Marek. This temple, the core site of Ratu Pesisi, seems to compete with—or perhaps just to complement—many rituals held in the village temple. There is a whole series of ceremonies—mostly with elaborate food offerings and presentations of considerable amounts of uncooked food (*atos*)—that first take place in the Pura Desa and then again, a day or two later, in the Pura Sang Hyang Marek. *Atos* are not just offerings dedicated to gods but are material contributions, even a kind of tribute, destined for superior human beings.

The oral histories tell us little about the social structure that existed before Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan came. Today the village assembly hall (Bale Agung) expresses a basic egalitarian principle, with the *kerama desa* and its paired positions allocated to the male members according to seniority. By contrast, Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan are described not as ordinary village members but as those who, at least to some extent, dominated the political and ritual life of the village. Ratu Pesisi—if we understand him as a person—was a *subander,* who had to spend most of his time at the harbor and who controlled the goods that were imported and exported there. His association with Ratu Bagus Pura Agung, the official who was at the port on behalf of a king and who probably controlled the inland trade, put him in an even more powerful position. The attraction Ratu Pesisi obviously exerted on the people of Sembiran was augmented by his companion, Ratu Kamasan. He is characterized as a kind of a "saint" similar to those who were so successful in missionizing the local rulers in Java.[96] The fact that he first chose an isolated place to settle (Pura Melaka) speaks for that, as does the Pura Empu, a hermit's cave.

Although the immigrants who brought Islamic practices to Sembiran must have established themselves above the indigenous people (more or less as a "stranger king"), they did not succeed in totally transforming the village, its social organization, or its ritual practice. The "older brother" who did not want to be suppressed any

[96] Henri Chambert-Loir, "Saints and Ancestors; The Cult of Muslim Saints in Java," in *The Potent Dead: Ancestors, Saints and Heroes in Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir and A. Reid (Crows Nest/Honolulu: Hallen and Unwin and University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), pp. 132-40.

longer and preferred to live in the forest is certainly used as a metaphor in one of the stories for those people who did not comply with the rituals the immigrants introduced. Rituals—as Connerton has already pointed out—are the crucial point in the constitution of a community's identity.[97] Obviously people did not object to other things the immigrants introduced (as, for example, the new name they gave to the village) as long as they were not compelled to participate in rituals that they considered in opposition to their own identity.

The opposition of the two types of ritual practice, *kala* and *slem*, is represented, too, in the duality of Pura Desa (or Bale Agung) and Pura Sang Hyang Marek. The meeting place for the ritual village community right in the center of the settlement is certainly older than the one on its outskirts, the shore. The former is clearly associated with *agama kala*, the non-Islamic ritual practices where the butchering of pigs and the offering and consumption of pork are essential. The latter is undoubtedly the ritual center of Islamic practices where calves (never pigs) are butchered. Ratu Bolot, one of the cultural heroes represented by a shrine in Pura Sang Hyang Marek, is said to refuse pork completely, while the others accept it during the annual festival only as additional offering.

In all these rituals, the priests make a clear distinction between Islamic and Hindu offerings, as outlined in the narratives. In the Sang Hyang Marek temple, twenty-two food offerings contain chicken and twenty-one food offerings contain pork. The chicken offerings are classified as *baktian slem*, Islamic offerings, in contrast to *baktian bauwi*, offerings containing pork. Other types of offerings that contain colored rice or flowers or those in which yellow dominates are dedicated to *agama slem* as well; they are called *suguhan suci* or *slem*. There are other deities (for example, one of the main deities in the temple linked to the cemetery, Pura Dalem) who "do not like to eat pork" as well and are, therefore, offered chicken. All gods or deified ancestors associated with *Maspait* (Majapahit) or with the sea are adherents of *agama slem*.[98] At certain points of the year, all these deities of different origin (Mekkah, Maspait, Solo, Suralaya, and others) are invited to come, and after a couple of months, when they are about to leave again, are given a ceremonial farewell. The animal offerings presented to them (apart from chicken and duck, used only in small offerings) consist not only of the sacrifice of a *godel* (a calf of a Balinese *sampi*, or cow) but also of dogs (much attention is paid to the pattern of their coats).[99] A *godel* is always killed with a dagger (*keris*) by the highest ranking member of the *kerama desa*; this is never done with pigs. However, I never saw beef used as a food offering put into a shrine in one of the temples. The sacrifice of a cow always took place in a manner similar to a *caru*, that is, a sacrifice presented to netherworldly beings associated with the sea. The offering is spread out on the ground

[97] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, p. 57.

[98] Vickers mentions that Islamic Javanese used Majapahit as a point of reference, too; Vickers, "Hinduism and Islam in Indonesia," p. 55. This is the case in many villages in Bali with Islamic deities; the most impressive are those of Batur (Pura Ulun Danu Batur) where several Islamic deities have their own shrines and rituals. The term *maspait* seems to embrace most of these deities by expressing that they are Islamic. By contrast, in South Bali, Majapahit serves as a point of reference for those who claim to be descendants of Hindu refugees from Majapahit.

[99] I have never seen a dog actually being offered. People explained that dogs whose fur have the required characteristics are no longer available. A bag of coconut fibers filled with *kepeng* coins (Chinese coins with a hole in the center) is displayed in the offerings instead.

or put in a temporary, low ad hoc shrine made of twigs and the like. Goats are used as sacrificial animals as well;[100] the main temple in Julah even has a special hall for the butchering of goats. The few killings of goats I saw followed the rules of Islamic butchering: the throat was cut and the animal was then hung up until it was completely bled.

In rituals not destined for *agama slem*, *godel* are (with one exception) never used.[101] On the contrary, the priest and the ritual leaders of the *kerama desa* sometimes displayed disgust when asked whether they consume this meat, too.[102] In some temples it is explicitly forbidden to butcher a *godel* or even to use its meat, for example, in the Pura Desa and in the Pura Dulu. Moreover, there exist rules that determine that those who have eaten beef recently are not allowed to enter the main temple (for example, Pura Desa in Julah) or have to undergo a cleansing ritual first. Many of my informants maintained that they would not eat beef; in former times, after the ritual sacrifice of a *godel* and its butchering, the meat was—at least partly—buried (and not consumed). This would be unthinkable with pork. One of the main purposes of the sacrifice of pigs, the display of the individual pieces, and their presentation to the gods is not only to feed and please the gods but also to achieve communion with them. The different pieces of the pig are presented to the individual gods, as well as to the members of the *kerama desa* ranked according to seniority. The right ear of the pig is the most highly esteemed piece that can be given either to a deity or a human being, followed by the left ear, the upper part of the right hind leg, the upper part of the left hind leg, the lower part of the right leg, and so on. After the temple ritual, the individual pieces (and all other kinds of food) are collected from the shrines and sorted out according to material. This is then divided up into portions (*kawosan*) for all members of the whole *kerama desa*. In Sembiran (as well as in Julah), portions of food are arranged according to the principle of seniority in the Bale Agung. These portions are taken home and prepared as a meal eaten by all family members. Sometimes, in case of cleansing rituals (*caru*), the ritual leaders and the priest consume this food together sitting on the floor of the temple courtyard. The ritual re-assemblage of the pig for the ritual meal (*paican*) represents the unity of the *kerama desa*.

There exists a further basic distinction between rituals of *agama kala* and of *agama slem*: the latter predominantly take place during the "dark" half of the year, a season associated with the lower part of the cosmos (mainly with the sea and its dark powers), cleansing, and attempts to protect the village from evil. This corresponds also with the way people relate the Islamic immigrants to the sea and with the goal of the rituals—the commemoration of deified ancestors. This "dark" half of the year contrasts

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[100] The goats destined for sacrifice must be black (in the villages of Julah, Sembiran, and Batur); in Julah only pigs without a single fair hair may be used for offerings as well. Whether the color black is so much preferred because the Balinese word for black is "*slem*" and perhaps therefore seen as a correspondence to *agama slem* (Islam) is not clear.

[101] In Julah, where there are only two main village temples (in contrast to Sembiran with its numerous temples), *godel* are used in rituals much less often than in Sembiran.

[102] Goris mentions the prohibition of beef mainly among the Brahmana; this prohibition is related to Hindu ideas about the holiness of the cow. See Roelof Goris, "Holidays and Holy Days," [1933] in *Bali: Studies in Life, Thought, and Ritual* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1984), pp. 113-29, esp. p. 124. Bloemen Waanders says that the Brahmana-Buddha had no food taboos, whereas the Siwaites were not allowed to eat beef; Bloemen Waanders, "Aanteekeningen omtrent de zeden en gebruiken der Balinezen," p. 141.

with the "light" half of the year that is associated with the upper part of the cosmos and its rituals directed towards the mountains and the gods' dwelling place. These rituals aim at procuring fertility for people, gardens, and animals.

Concerning offerings, the people of Sembiran distinguish three kinds of ritual practices that constitute Sembiran religion (*kala patra*). The oldest form they call *sambu*; *sambu* means the veneration of big trees and stones.[103] The preferred offerings in *sambu* rituals are mainly leaves[104] but also flowers; these kinds of offerings are still widely used in Sembiran today. *Kala* is a second form of ritual practice, characterized by offerings with a roasted piglet and pieces of pork. Finally, the last form is *baktian slem*, offerings according to *agama slem*.[105] As several oral histories as well as the ritual practice in Sang Hyang Marek revealed, the majority of the offerings (twenty-two) were dedicated to *slem*, whereas only twenty-one were dedicated to *kala*.[106]

As already mentioned, all these practices are fully integrated into customary life. People cannot be distinguished according to their ritual practice or food taboo. The beliefs and practices are shared by all.

## A New Political Organization of the Village

Nevertheless, this total integration of different ritual practices raises the question of the social processes that favored cultural integration. Sembiran's village organization consists, first of all, of a *kerama desa tegak*,[107] the ritual village organization of married couples. There are further associations linked to the *kerama desa tegak*, for example, the organizations for unmarried girls and women (*daha bunga* and *daha tua*), the organization for unmarried men (*teruna*), and the *kerama desa sampingan*, the "side" organization for all those who, due to different reasons, are not members of the *kerama desa*, the core organization.[108] The *kerama desa* consists of two separate sections, one for women and one for men, which closely cooperate with each other. The *kerama desa tegak* and their "side" organizations are paired, that is, each office is divided into a "younger" and a "older" side (or east and west respectively), so that there are always two men or women who have reached the same rank. They are considered as elder and younger siblings with the elder (the right side) having more authority. The *kerama desa* is organized hierarchically according to age.[109] The eldest men have named positions;

[103] Sembiran was called "megalithic" by many travelers and anthropologists since there existed many temples with huge stones and stone terraces, many of them standing near huge trees. See also Sutaba, *Megalithic Traditions in Sembiran.*

[104] As is well known, corpses were not buried in former times but freely exposed and covered only with certain leaves.

[105] To the latter practice belong a variety of cleansing rituals concerned with individuals rather than with the village community. These are beyond the scope of this paper.

[106] I have no definite explanation for the numbers (twenty-two and twenty-one). Sembiran has twenty-two or twenty-three *dadya* (clans); however, people rejected such interpretations.

[107] "*Tegak*" means to sit, to settle down. In everyday conversation people just speak of the *kerama desa.*

[108] For Julah, see Guermonprez, "Julah, un village 'vieux balinais'," pp. 51-79.

[109] Membership starts when a couple marries; the "age" measures not the age of the individuals, but how long a couple has been in the *kerama desa*. As a consequence, junior members of the *kerama desa* may actually be older than some senior members.

they are the ritual leaders.[110] These are assisted by a number of priests (*mangku*), only one of whom has a special position.[111]

As Stephen Lansing pointed out,[112] Sembiran has a unique institution, the *sekehe gede* (the great association), in which members of all clans (*dadya*) are represented. In this respect, Sembiran indeed seems to differ substantially from other villages, even from Julah. This *sekehe gede* has two meeting places, one south of the village temple, the *bale banjar*, and one east of it. The eastern meeting place was turned into a temple recently and is called Pura Jugan (*jugan* = meeting). There, twice a year, a great ceremony takes place on Manis Galungan and on Manis Kuningan, each being the second day of an important festival according to the Javanese-Balinese calendar.[113]

The representatives of all the clans as well as more than twenty-five temples (represented by symbols) assemble there. The climax of the ceremony consists of a ritual fight between two groups of men. This fight or mock battle is called a fight between the *dharma* and the *adharma*, "the believers" and the "non-believers," with the "the non-believers" said to be defeated, though for an outsider this result is difficult to ascertain. These warlike dances commemorate a fight that threatened the unity of the village sometime in the past.[114] The meeting place (*jugan*) is said to be the positive outcome of this dispute; therefore all people have to meet and reach an agreement for the sake of the unity of the village every six months.

In contrast to the *kerama desa*, the *sekehe gede* is an encompassing organization where people or rather localized units ("clans," or *dadya*) are included without regard to their ritual practice. It displays features of an administrative or political organization;[115] its goal or function is to establish and maintain social order.

There is a further ceremony organized by the *kerama desa* that takes place in the Pura Jugan once a year in the sixth Balinese month (following the Hindu-Balinese calendar); it is called *kelaci*, the official admission of newly married couples to the *kerama desa*. It is surprising that this ceremony does not take place at the *kerama desa's* home place, the Bale Agung in the Pura Desa. However, I understand it as a crossing-over of the two major village organizations that serves to reinforce village solidarity. The couples who newly enter the *kerama desa* have to pay a fee and, formerly, each had to sacrifice a *godel*. Since nowadays most of the inhabitants of Sembiran are rather poor, only one *godel* bought by the village is killed for all couples together. In contrast to—as far as I know—all other sacrifices of *godel*, the one killed at *kelaci* is not offered to the gods. The animal is butchered and its meat immediately allocated in portions to the

[110] See Guermonprez, "Julah un village 'vieux balinais'"; Liefrinck, "Noord-Balische desa-monographieen," pp. 66-67; Lansing, *Rama's Kingdoms*, pp. 21-22; Barth, *Balinese Worlds*, pp. 82-84.

[111] Mangku Gede. His outstanding position was determined by his (former relations) to the state temple of Batur. It is the only office of a priest to which village land is allocated.

[112] Lansing, *Rama's Kingdoms*, p. 28.

[113] Galungan and Kuningan follow a completely different calendar, the Javanese-Balinese (thirty weeks of seven days each), than all other temple festivals that take place according to the Hindu-Balinese calendar (twelve solar-lunar months). See Goris, "Holidays and Holy Days."

[114] Today the mock fight is carried out only irregularly.

[115] After the colonial government separated customary life (*adat*) from colonial administrative life (*dinas*), the *sekehe gede* was moved to *adat* and therefore lost its function of integrating immigrants.

members of the *kerama desa*. This formal and communal celebration supplements the actual admission of individual couples to the *kerama desa* that takes place immediately after marriage at the official monthly meeting in the village temple, Pura Desa, on the day of the "dead moon" (the moonless night). Additionally, Pura Jugan is also concerned with individuals as members of the community; the stages of marriage and death have to be reported there. Moreover, individuals who have trespassed against the norms (who have committed incest, bestiality, etc.) have to perform purification rituals in the course of which they have to report there, too, as well as to another closely related temple, the Pura Cungkup. "*Cungkup*" means the roof over a Muslim grave or even the dome or upper part of a mosque; people in Sembiran translate the word simply as "building." Once a year the unmarried young men (*teruna*) of the village have to construct a new fence starting at Pura Cungkup, passing by Pura Pendem, and ending at Pura Jugan. The purpose of the fence is "to prevent animals [pigs and dogs?] from entering this area"; nowadays this fence is no longer built, though people speak about it as if they continue to build it. Pura Jugan is explained as the place "where a *raja* lived, received his guests, and arranged meetings." Whether Pura Cungkup was a special Islamic site of worship or even the grave of one or both of the prominent Islamic immigrants remains unclear. The same applies to Pura Pendem, "*pendem*" meaning "grave"; there are indications that support this interpretation of former Muslim sacred sites.[116]

The two sites, today's Pura Jugan and Pura Cungkup, were (and partly still are) the major places where the villagers were regularly called to account for their behavior. Changes in their life status were acknowledged there. To this day, there still exist the offices of the *praejuru desa* (village official, *praejuru* means warrior) and the *klian desa* (village head), which, with some assistants, constitute a kind of governing body. They are elected in the Pura Jugan; their office is today restricted to customary life. In contrast to the situation in Julah,[117] they are not integrated into the *kerama desa* but act separately, in cooperation with the *paulun desa* (the senior leaders of the *kerama desa*). The *sekehe gede* was the political organization that encompassed the ritual village association.

From the description of Ratu Pesisi and Ratu Kamasan, (the former being the political and the latter the ritual leader), as well as of the administrative and political organization of the *sekehe gede* and one of its major meeting places, we can conclude that Sembiran was not an egalitarian society. If we analyze land ownership, we can find evidence that formerly Sembiran was a more stratified society, with economic and political dominance by a small group of people. The statistics in the office of the village head (*kantor kepala desa*) show that, apart from irrigation temples/associations,[118] the Sekehe Gede is the greatest communal land owner, followed by the Pura Sang Hyang Marek, whereas Pura Desa does not own even a third of the extent of Sang Hyang Marek's temple land.[119] In the early 1880s, Liefrinck was told in Sembiran that the

[116] Chambert-Loir, "Saints and Ancestors."

[117] Guermonprez, "Julah, un village 'vieux balinais'," pp. 54-55.

[118] These are defunct since there are no longer any rivers or other water sources that could be used for the irrigation of fields.

[119] As is well known, a land reform was carried out in the 1960s whereby a privatization of land took place. What effects this had on Sembiran's land and landownership needs further clarification. See Inge

villagers were forbidden by customary law to wear any golden ornaments.[120] Such ornaments certainly were prestige goods, the display of which was associated with rank and status; to wear them was the privilege of those who held such status.

Ratu Pesisi's deeds and those of his companions affected not only Sembiran, but had effects on neighboring areas as well. As already briefly mentioned, Pacung and Bangkah are daughter villages of Sembiran. People who were expelled from the core village, for reasons of incest and leprosy, among others, were allowed to settle in the places where Pacung and Bangkah respectively are today.[121] This explains why Pacung owns only very little land: most of the area it occupies today belonged until some decades ago to Sembiran. As Couteau has shown, an Islamic deity, Batara uli Mekkah ("the deified ancestor from Mekkah"), who is also associated with the office of a *subander*, is venerated in Pacung as well.[122] In contrast to Pura Sang Hyang Marek, the sanctified site of Ratu Pesisi, Batara uli Mekkah and his shrine are not represented in Pacung's major village temple.[123] Couteau relates this deity to a former Muslim community, which he dates back to the sixteenth century (that is, after the fall of Majapahit) and the advent of the legendary Brahmana priest, Dang Hyang Nirarta, who, according the Brahmana's version of history, founded the major regional temple of Ponjok Batu as well.[124] As I pointed out above, it is likely that not a single settlement in this area of the coast has been continuously inhabited since the sixteenth century. But, we know from colonial sources that Muslim immigrants lived in the Pacung area already in the first half of the nineteenth century, so they too could have established shrines for Batara uli Mekkah.[125]

However, I suggest that "Batara uli Mekkah" is another way of referring to the person who, in Sembiran, is called "Ratu Pesisi." The worship of Batara uli Mekkah was brought to Sembiran's coastal fringe much earlier by people who were expelled from the mother village (Sembiran) and who established Pacung, a daughter

Bundschu, "Probleme der agraren Grundbesitzverfassung auf Bali, Indonesien," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Asienkunde* 143 (1985).

[120] Liefrinck, "Noord-Balische desa-monographieen," p. 69.

[121] Ibid., pp. 60-63; Ch. J. Grader, "De Desa Patjung (district Kubutambahan), kerajaan Buleleng, daerah, Bali" (manuscript, n.p., 1950), p. 4; "Monografi Desa Pacung, Kacamatan Tejakula, Kabupaten daerah, Tingkat II Buleleng" (village manuscript, Pacung, 1990).

[122] Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 1"; Couteau, "Bali et l'islam: 2."

[123] See n. 83 above.

[124] An analysis of the major sculptures housed in the temple of Ponjok Batu indicates that they predate the sixteenth century. One of Sembiran's copper-plate inscriptions mentions a sacred site and even a *candi*, a monument for a deceased person of royal descent, that points to today's temple of Ponjok Batu. Moreover the "renovation" of the temple (preceded by its first being totally disassembled) in 1997-98 brought to light a sarcophagus that proves the antiquity of this site. It is interesting that many places across the entire island where today there are major temples (and all are attributed to this legendary Brahmana priest) are described in the indigenous (Brahmana) sources as empty, isolated places. See, for example, Raechelle Rubinstein, *Beyond the Realm of the Senses: The Balinese Ritual of Kakawin Composition* (Leiden: KITLV, 2000), p. 105, and "The Brahmana According to their Babad," in *State and Society in Bali*, ed. Hildred Geertz (Leiden: KITLV, 1991), pp. 43-84. These allegedly founding activities of the Brahmana priest should be considered in terms of Brahmana colonization and appropriation of pre-existing sanctuaries and temples, too.

[125] See Grader's description in Grader, "De Desa Patjung." See also n. 61 above.

settlement, on the coast. Even if we conceive of Batara uli Mekkah and Ratu Pasisi as two different persons, they certainly belonged to the same context, namely, Sembiran's trade and trade relations, and the office of *subander* described above. Although Couteau does not mention that this Islamic deity is related to the temple of Sang Hyang Marek (the "home" of Ratu Pasisi), located in the immediate neighborhood of Pacung, I believe, nevertheless, that the worship of Batara uli Mekkah should be explained against the backdrop of Ratu Pasisi, whose traces in oral history, in temples and rituals, as well as in Sembiran's social organization are overwhelming. Moreover, both deified Islamic ancestors are said to possess strong ties to the temple of Ponjok Batu.

Oral histories remain silent on how the rule of Ratu Pesisi ended and a transformation into a more egalitarian society took place. Some tell us of Islamic people who left Sembiran for Lombok or Java. They did so in order to avoid acculturation or the merging with autochthonous traditions.

## Conclusion

The oral histories, the temples and their rituals, as well as the *sekehe gede* make it clear that the view of Sembiran as an antiquated "Bali Aga" village—a non-stratified society resisting all foreign, especially post-Majapahit, influence and immigrants and resembling an original Austronesian society—is an anthropological construct. I have shown that during the last precolonial period, Sembiran must have intensively interacted with Islam—certainly with Islamized people with different cultural backgrounds than the people of either Java or Lombok—and that these interactions are remembered in oral histories, and through rituals and temples. (We can take it for certain that previously Sembiran welcomed other influences from the outside as well—but that was not the focus of this article.) The egalitarian structure that Sembiran displays is recent, the last sequence in a long-standing process that corresponds to the changing history of the north coast of which Sembiran is part.

When Sembiran is seen from this perspective, the question arises whether it is simply an exception to the anthropological definition of a "Bali-Aga" "standard." As Bowker and Star pointed out, any classification implies a thinking in mutually exclusive categories.[126] Thus, what are these mutually exclusive categories? "Bali Aga" versus "Javanized Hindu-Balinese," as many anthropologists assumed by perpetuating this dichotomization? What is the goal of "ethnic" classifications—can it be purely academic or doesn't it have political consequences as well, since the establishment of boundaries is inevitable?[127] The most serious objection against such classifications—if we remain in the academic realm—is that they prevent us from perceiving Balinese villages and their social organization from the perspective of variations based on structural principles existing in all of them. Such a perspective would enable us to investigate processes of transformations, instead of constructing a priori classifications and dichotomizations. Egalitarianism and dualism are not structural principles

[126] Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Leigh Star, *Sorting Things out: Classification and its Consequences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1999).

[127] Anderson, *Imagined Communities.*

restricted to "Bali Aga" or "Mountain Balinese." Conversely, hierarchization, ranking, and inequality are not restricted to "Javanized Hindu-Balinese," as Ottino has also recently demonstrated.[128] Both principles, hierarchization and egalitarianism, "are engaged in Bali in war without end."[129] These principles are inherent in Balinese society; transformations from the one to the other are obviously possible in both directions depending on the circumstances and the power of the actors.[130]

There are several mechanisms that favor egalitarianism both in Julah and in Sembiran. Among them are the de-emphasis of descent,[131] and the prohibition against tracing one's origin from outside the village and claiming titles. As we know from South Bali, the search for origins in order to trace noble descent and to present "proofs" for it are mechanisms that support claims to superiority and rank; they create or maintain inequality.[132] In Julah, people tell of a *perang kasta*, a fight between castes, that once took place when some people claimed superiority over others by referring to their origin, their descent, and their titles. As a resolution to the conflict, people henceforth were forbidden to bear any title or to trace their origin from outside the village. In a ritual context, each person calls the other *"jero,"* a honorific title that expresses respect towards the person addressed. Land ownership is another thing that (in former times) was predominantly communal.

However, the possibilities for ranking and hierarchization are inherent in Sembiran, too. There is a temple that is definitely located at the highest position of the village. Characteristically this temple is "owned" by the clan (apparently a formerly title-bearing group with relations that reached beyond the village) that procures the highest-ranking village priest (*mangku gede*). But this office-holder has to follow the same rule as the members of the *kerama desa*: he has access to this office only if he is married and a member of the *kerama desa*. When his wife dies or his children are married, he has to step down again. The organization of the *kerama desa* with its principle of seniority and dualism (paired positions) cuts across all "clan" relations, too. All these structural possibilities and tendencies to inequality are met by corresponding limiting mechanisms. This demonstrates the potential of structure and the power of social practice. These imponderables block attempts at installing an individual in a permanent superior position.

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[128] Arlette Ottino, "Ritual Subordination to the Core-Line and Bali Aga Cultural Identity," *Antropologi Indonesia* 70 (2003): 1-19.

[129] Hildred Geertz and Clifford Geertz, *Kinship in Bali* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 167.

[130] For example, in the South Bali village of Intaran, Sanur, which is nowadays dominated by title-bearing groups, there still exist traces of former dual organizations. See Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin, *Traces of Gods and Men: Temples and Rituals as Landmarks of Social Events and Processes in a South Bali Village* (Berlin: Reimer, 1997), pp. 88-89.

[131] See Lansing, *The Three Worlds of Bali*, p. 123, and Guermonprez, "Julah un village 'vieux balinais'" for a general discussion.

[132] Henk Schulte Nordholt, "The Invented Ancestor: Origin and Descent in Bali," in *Texts from the Islands*, Ethnologica Bernensia 4, ed. Wolfgang Marschall (Bern: Institute of Ethnology, 1994), pp. 245-64; Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin, *Traces of Gods and Men*; Hauser-Schäublin, "The Politics of Sacred Space: The Use of Conceptual Models of Space for the Implementation of Socio-Political Transformations in Bali," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* (forthcoming).

Within the temple courtyards, the distribution of the shrines follows an order of precedence or even hierarchy. The former is true for deified ancestors of "clans" (*dadya*) localized within Sembiran, the latter for deities and their temples beyond the village boundaries. Sembiran—and in a restricted form Julah, too—is embedded in a variety of relationships with temples in different areas. Their importance can be gathered not only from people's pilgrimages to those places and the kind of tributes and offerings they bring, but first and foremost from the shrine's location in relation to others within the temple courtyard. Many of the "Bali Aga" villages were embedded in complex relations with royal centers and their temples in pre- and early colonial times. These unequal relationships were expressed in shrines and deities in the major temples of many "Bali Aga" villages.[133]

In one of the oral histories dealing with Sembiran, a further mechanism is mentioned that until recently impeded inequality and difference. One of the rulers (probably not associated with Islam), called I Dewa Gede, proclaimed that people from other places who wished to move to Sembiran had to give up their customs and follow strictly, exclusively, those of Sembiran. This admonition to integrate touches the question of ethnicity raised at the beginning of this paper. Was ethnicity an issue in the Sembiran interactions with Islamic immigrants?

First of all, the situation in precolonial Bali concerning ethnicity differs radically from that of the twenty-first century; it is even doubtful whether the modern concept of ethnicity applies to precolonial Bali.[134] The major differences (apart from economics and the cultural impact of tourism) consist in the political situation: today's identity has to be considered against the backdrop of a postcolonial state that set a general standard—the status of a world religion—for the official recognition of any ritual practices and beliefs. In the colonial and postcolonial context, this led to the external creation of a need for self-definition for those groups who were perceived as different. This external frame of reference apparently did not exist in the period the oral histories deal with. Moreover, the precolonial Islamic immigrants were not—as far as represented in the oral histories—in continuous contact with any home communities or Islamic elite that permanently provided them with ideological guidelines or imperatives. The immigrants were mostly confined to close interactions with the indigenous local population apparently on all levels of everyday life. Intermarriage between immigrant men and local women, mentioned in several oral histories, as well as economic interdependence, may have prevented the drawing of permanent boundaries between immigrants and local groups. The choice and means of onward migration were limited, as one oral history shows—Ratu Pesisi's futile attempt to land at Sembirenteng. The ritual practices and the beliefs of the local people and those of the immigrants constituted the major lines along which difference was constructed. Exclusion—even expulsion—was one major consequence. Those who were in the position (and had the power) to decide the fate of other people could determine who should leave the village. The oral histories give evidence of both either Islamic or mixed couples who had to quit the village and others, ritual "traditionalists," who were stigmatized and expelled from the village.

[133] Hauser-Schäublin, "The Pre-Colonial Balinese State Reconsidered."

[134] See also Bowker et al., *Sorting Things out*, pp. 41-42.

As mentioned above, the Islamic immigrants were lacking—as far as we can judge from the indigenous non-written sources—an ideological fixed point of reference that would have allowed them a continuous affirmation and verification of the ideological correctness of their practice and their traditions. The transgenerational handing down of practices and beliefs obviously resulted in modifications and variations. This probably was the context in which, as one story tells us, a father sent his son to Java to find out about the "real" Islam. Or in another story, the offspring of a "mixed" marriage were told to behave either as Muslim or as Hindu or perform rituals in Sembiran that include both aspects—or even to emigrate to Lombok, where non-orthodox Muslims live.

At the core of identity construction were ritual practices as a central means to define group membership and boundaries. To some extent this is also true for twenty-first century Bali, though the making of religion as a bounded system, be it *agama* Hindu Bali or *agama* Islam, did not previously exist in the same way as it does today.[135] However, and this is the (promising) message the case of Sembiran conveys: in the long run, the boundaries between people who followed different ritual practices and beliefs dissolved and led to an integrated culture that was no longer rocked by struggles for hegemony.

[135] Michel Picard, "What's in a Name? Agama Hindu Bali in the Making," in *Hinduism in Modern Indonesia*, ed. Martin Ramstedt (London and New York: Routledge/Curzon, 2004), pp. 56-75.