



From Śivaśāsana to Agama Hindu Bali: Tracing the Indic Roots of Modern Balinese Hinduism

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INTRODUCTION: RECEIVED IDEAS AND NEW PARADIGMS IN THE STUDY OF BALINESE HINDUISM

A significant number of anthropological studies on Balinese religion has been published since the 1970s. Those studies—primarily tackling socio-logical issues connected with ritual, politics, and hierarchy—have paid particular attention to the reformed version of Hinduism (*Agama Hindu Bali*) that came to the fore from the early twentieth century onwards. According to the most influential theories, Balinese religion emphasized orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy, lacking a proper theological and philosophical tradition as well as a set of shared beliefs expressed in a body of canonized sacred scriptures. It was only after contact with the ideologies carried by representatives of Christian, Islamic, and Indian Hindu faiths that the Balinese reformers sought to promote a shift from a kind of embedded orthopraxy to a universalistic and abstract dogmatic religion, the allegiance to a single deity, and the ‘scripturalization’ of traditional beliefs.

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Such views may be traced back to the influential essay “Internal Conversion” in Contemporary Bali’ by North American anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973). Geertz posited that Balinese religion, in contrast to the ‘rationalized’ world religion that is Indian Hinduism, is thoroughly ‘traditional’, being characterized by ‘metaphysical nonchalance’, its ritual and religious specialists being ‘more professional magicians than true priests’ (pp. 176–179). Traditional Balinese palm-leaf manuscripts are ‘more magical esoterica than canonical scriptures’, in other words religious paraphernalia traditionally used as sacred heirlooms and bearing no relevance to our understanding of current Balinese religious discourse and ritual practice (p. 185).

Following Geertz, James Boon (1990: 158–164) argued that Balinese religious texts constitute ‘dispersed fragments of Tantric influence [...] not doctrinal, seldam corporate, not coherent or even necessarily cultic, and orthodoxies’ (p. xiii). In a similar fashion, Fredrik Barth (1993: 216–217) pointed out that Balinese texts ‘fail to function in a way that enhances a unity of doctrine and dogma’ and, rather than constituting a ‘literary heritage allowing reference, comparison, and a critical scholarship of establishing a shared authentic knowledge’, they must be regarded as ‘separate, independent sources of authority to their priestly possessors, at best read for their unique and place-and-person-specific knowledge’. Jean-François Guernonprez (2001: 277) maintained that there is no demonstrable relation between Sanskrit Śaiva scriptures from South Asia and Balinese texts, for the latter would be ‘aides-mémoires’ concerned with mystical and yogic practices rather than proper manuals of religion. In a recent contribution, Annette Hornbacher (2014: 316) argues that the texts called Tuturs do not contain any religious beliefs and therefore are not canonical scriptures, but rather ‘sacral texts’ (*sakralen Texten*) whose ‘often dark’ (*oft dunklen*) speculations describe cosmogony and deliverance, micro-macrocosmic analogies, and powerful and ambivalent knowledge of life and death. To her, unlike the canonical texts of the reformed version of Balinese Hinduism, Tuturs convey neither a doctrine nor even a tutorial or explanation of Balinese ritual practice, requiring not a primary theoretical understanding of the text but rather an existential and transformative implementation of what is written in the life of the practitioner (*ibid.*: p. 317). Further, Hornbacher casts doubt on the validity to interpret the Tatur genre as an expression of an Indic Śaiva system.¹

¹ See, for instance, Hornbacher (2014: 332, fn. 25), referring to Acri 2011a and 2013 (the latter article does not, however, appear in her bibliography); she claims that all the names,

Writing from the disciplinary perspective of philology, in 1971—hence before the publication of Geertz’s study—Haryati Soebadio argued that

In Bali, the more speculative parts of the religious texts are no longer evident in present day religious life. [...] The Tutur are not so much used as treasured as *pusaka*, a sacred heirloom, and venerated as such. [...] Balinese religious life as we witness it at present seems thus to show that since the day Tutur were composed, theological speculation has receded into the background to the point of near oblivion. (Soebadio 1971: 61–62)

Building on these premises, and on the theories of Geertz and his epigones, Sanskritist Frits Staal (1995: 31) bluntly stated that ‘Balinese ritual is a classic case of ritual without religion’.²

Such views (subliminally) imply a higher position of the ‘intellectual West’ over the ‘ritual East’. To sum up: the majority of Western scholars of Balinese religion have denied Balinese agency by ignoring its sophisticated religious discourse stemming from a pre-modern tradition of Śaiva theology and philosophy. Not recognizing a scriptural basis for Balinese religion, they have perceived ethnographic data as more significant than data mined from texts; those texts have been generally regarded as belonging to a dimension removed from daily life, to the point of becoming totally irrelevant to the study of Balinese religion and its living manifestations.

Even the anthropologists who have (marginally) engaged with the Balinese scriptural corpus, such as Barth, Guérmonprez, Picard, and Hornbacher, have characterized it as a heterogeneous mass of mystical, esoteric, and obscure texts that can be understood uniquely in their own terms. Not surprisingly, those scholars have refrained from embarking on a comparison of features of Balinese religion(s) and ancient South Asian religions and philosophies, which since the first millennium AD have con-

designations and personifications of the highest form of Śiva as the Absolute (such as Sañ Hyañ Tuṅgal, Sañ Hyañ Nora, etc.) that are found in Tuturs ‘get completely out of sight if one accepts the fact of monism and his sporadic connection with Śiva as a sufficient reason to interpret Tuturs overall as expression of an Indian Śivaite system’ (*Sie geraten vollkommen aus dem Blick, wenn man die Tatsache des Monismus und seine sporadische Verbindung mit Shiva als hinreichenden Grund dafür nimmt, die tutur insgesamt als Ausdruck eines indischen Shivaitischen Systems zu deuten*). This statement over-simplifies the matter; elsewhere (Acri 2011b: 7, 2011e: 549) I have pointed out that the proliferation of names of God in His various aspects that are rarely found, or altogether unattested, in the Śiva Sanskrit literature from South Asia is a distinctive feature of apparently late, more ‘localised’ Tuturs, but not of Tattvas, which follow Sanskrit prototypes more closely.

² See also Howell (1978: 265), Picard (1997: 188, 1999: 42), Howe (2001: 148).

tributed to shaping the religious discourse on Bali. The opinion that these materials must be understood exclusively in their own (i.e. Balinese) terms and that any comparison with South Asia and other areas of the Sanskritic world is bound to be, or ill advised, has hampered a full understanding of Balinese religion and its foundational scriptural body. This perspective has favoured a ‘parochialization’ of Balinese culture, denying as it does its trans-local, Indic cosmopolitan dimension.

The corollary ensuing from this perspective is that any trans-local, intellectual, and ‘universalizing’ elements of the religious discourse are to be regarded as having been triggered by external influences that occurred during the colonial and post-Independence period. Indeed, the synchronic approach championed by anthropology has paid little attention to the historical dimension of Balinese religion, thereby failing to distinguish between features that are the result of reformist influence from those that have been inherited from the pre-colonial period. Finally, one notes a lack of ethnographic documentation and study of the discourses and practices current among the Brahmanical Śaiva religious/ritual specialists (*pedanda śiva*), who constitute the elite in charge of the preservation of the specialised (and esoteric) knowledge upon which the edifice of Balinese ritual rests.

In a series of articles (Acri 2011a, 2013, 2014a, b), I have offered a critique of the current scholarly opinions on Balinese Hinduism. My critique has revolved around the fact that most Western scholars have largely, and surprisingly, ignored an important source of data on the latter aspects of Balinese religion, namely the extensive corpus of Old Javanese-cum-Sanskrit Śaiva texts known as Tuturs and Tattvas—a body of literature reconfiguring materials of South Asian provenance within a Javano-Balinese doctrinal framework. Balinese society in the pre-colonial period had a relatively high degree of literacy (Rubinstein 2000), as well as a high number of manuscripts per capita; it is, therefore, deeply ironical that it has been treated virtually as an oral, pre-literate one. Indeed, Balinese religion involves a ‘specialization’ and ‘compartmentalization’ of knowledge, which reflects different levels of knowledge accessible to, and dominated by, different social groups. Thus, one needs to acknowledge that different persons have different schemes of knowledge, depending on their status, education, needs, personal abilities, and interests. Since texts written on palm-leaf manuscripts (*lontar*) are agreed on by most Balinese to be the ultimate source of authority, even by those who cannot read them or understand them, they have to be regarded as providing insight—either directly or indirectly—for Balinese culture as a whole (Stephen 2002: 63). However, scholars have tended to treat Balinese Hinduism as a

virtually pre-literate religion consisting in village-rituals and ancestor-cults with an uppercrust of universalizing beliefs and ritual practices introduced in the colonial and post-colonial period, after the contact with Semitic religions and Indian (Neo-)Hinduism, thereby imparting a monochrome and ahistorical characterization of it.

Making use of textual and historical data that have so far been neglected by both anthropologists and scholars of Old Javanese, I have made a case for the existence of a trans-local, and text-based, shared tradition of theology and philosophy in the (Javano-)Balinese world. This tradition constitutes the link connecting modern Balinese Hinduism with its pre-modern Śaiva formative phase in Java. Building on the compelling arguments advanced by text-savvy anthropologist Michele Stephen in her groundbreaking monograph *Desire, Divine and Demonic* (2005), I have presented textual evidence supporting the claim that the cultural exchanges with South Asia that started at the beginning of the Common Era led to the existence on Bali of a sophisticated theological tradition predating twentieth-century reformism. The existence of a dialectic relationship between the modern and contemporary religious discourse and the past tradition is suggested by the great number of translations into modern Indonesian of Sanskrit religious texts published on Bali since the advent of printing, and by the even greater number of publications on Hinduism written in modern Balinese and Malay-Indonesian. The same dialectic is documented in the cultural events during which Old Javanese sources are either (re)interpreted, (re)enacted and commented upon in Balinese, or ‘performed’ in a variety of manners.

My starting point is the assumption that the use of data drawn from pre-modern Śaiva sources from both the Indonesian Archipelago and South Asia is indispensable for a better understanding of the more recent religious discourse on Bali, where reformist groups have attempted to adopt (and adapt) the canon of neo-Hinduism as a constitutive part of modern Balinese Hinduism. I argue that the Javano-Balinese religious discourse is characterized by a remarkable continuity with the earlier tradition, especially when it comes to its exegetical and text-building practices, but also by important elements of change. To appraise the nature of such changes, single them out, and explain them in the light of their context-specific historical, literary, and theologico-philosophical background remain scholarly desiderata. If we are to understand the (trans)formation of the religious discourse on Bali, it is imperative to use data drawn from pre-modern textual sources, and contrast them with the newly imported beliefs from various neo-Hindu trends; to determine the textual strata within the available corpus through text-historical research; and to inves-

tigate how the Balinese have (re)interpreted and reconfigured their own textual tradition at different historical junctures to the present.

In what follows, my analysis mainly focuses on the treatment of doctrine and yoga featuring in selected texts belonging to the pre-modern body of Javano-Balinese Tattva literature (*Dharma Pātañjala*, *Tattvajñāna* and *Vṛhaspatitattva*) and in textbooks of Balinese Hinduism published in the twentieth century (*Aji Sanghya* by Ida Ketut Jelantik and *Rsi Yādnya Sankya dan Yoga* by Shri Rsi Anandakusuma). My comparison shows that independent, yet related, Javano-Balinese cultural products were shaped by analogous historical conditions and epistemic paradigms.

PRE-MODERN TATTVAS: DHARMA PĀTAÑJALA, VṚHASPATITATTVA, TATTVAJÑĀNA

On the basis of intertextual and comparative analysis, I have argued (Acri 2011a: 152, 2011b: 8–11, 2013: 71–72) that within the wider corpus collectively referred to as Tutur a distinct subclass (or subgenre) of speculative and systematic scriptures can be distinguished, namely Tattvas. The three pre-modern Old Javanese sources discussed here belong to the corpus of Śaiva Tattvas. It is difficult to ascertain the date of composition of both Tuturs and Tattvas, which may have spanned from the eighth to the fifteenth century AD. Be this as it may, Tattvas, on account of their intrinsic textual and doctrinal features, are likely to form a relatively early stratum of the corpus, based on/compiled after sources (in either Old Javanese and/or Sanskrit) pre-dating the tenth/eleventh century. While an ‘early core’ of Tuturs may have been composed in the same period, the majority of them are clearly late compilations post-dating the fifteenth century, and continuing well into the modern period on Bali.

Tattvas can be distinguished from Tuturs on account of their peculiarities of style, textual features, and contents. Tuturs are usually (and explicitly) esoteric, often unsystematic, oriented towards mantric and yogic practice, and mystically minded; further, they display a higher degree of localization. On the other hand, Tattvas reveal Śaiva doctrines and philosophical, epistemological, and ontological matters in a systematic and coherent manner, and share a core of fundamental tenets through the corpus. Like the early Tuturs, but to a much greater extent, Tattvas show a lesser degree of localization, and indeed appear to have inherited their main doctrinal elements directly from the pan-South Asian early Śaiva Saiddhāntika literature in Sanskrit (circa sixth–tenth century AD), which

may be regarded as the scriptural canon through which Śaivism was transmitted to the Indonesian Archipelago in the pre-modern period (see Aciri 2006).

The most representative text of the Tattva genre is the *Dharma Pātañjala*, written in Old Javanese prose interspersed with a handful of Sanskrit verses. It has come down to us in a single fifteenth-century *gebang* palm-leaf manuscript of West Javanese provenance, but allegedly found in the Central Javanese Merapi-Merbabu collection and now kept in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek.³ It has not been handed down in Bali.

The *Dharma Pātañjala*, arranged in the form of a dialogue between the Lord and his son Kumāra, is remarkable in that it provides what is as yet the most complete, coherent and detailed exposition of Śaiva doctrine to be found in an Old Javanese text. It also constitutes the unique testimony for the existence of (theoretical knowledge of) the yoga of Patañjali in Java. Nearly a third of it is based on parts of the Sanskrit *Yogasūtra* and a commentary that is closely related, albeit by no means identical, to the one, popularly referred to as *Bhāṣya*, embedding the *Yogasūtra*. The *Dharma Pātañjala* appears to be the work of a single author or mastermind, who carried out a conscious operation of doctrinal innovation insofar that he tried to intelligently incorporate Pātañjala yoga into a predominantly Śaiva theological framework.

The *Vṛhaspatitattva* consists of seventy-three Sanskrit verses provided with an Old Javanese exegesis. It opens with a rather long prose introduction. Judging from the significant number of extant palm-leaf manuscripts containing copies of the text, the *Vṛhaspatitattva* held a prominent and authoritative position in Bali, where it has remained popular until today. Come down to us in single the primary prototypical source of many twentieth-century Balinese textbooks of Hinduism, the *Vṛhaspatitattva* has been translated into English by Sudarshana Devi (1957, along with a critical edition) and into modern Indonesian by Mirsha (1995).

The *Vṛhaspatitattva* is a composite and complex text integrating materials belonging to various Sanskritic doctrinal traditions, such as Pāśupata Śaivism and Sāṅkhya, within a Śaiva Saiddhāntika framework.⁴ The Sanskrit–Old Javanese translation dyads 53–59 features a detailed descrip-

³ Gunawan (2015) has convincingly argued that the manuscripts that have been hitherto described as Nipahs (*Nypa fructicans*) were called by the pre-modern indigenous sources *gebang*, which corresponds to a different writing support (*corypa gebanga* or *corypa utan*).

⁴ See Nihom 1995 (on the Sāṅkhya and Pāśupata parallels) and Aciri 2006, 2011d (on the early Śaiva Saiddhāntika parallels).

tion of the variety of (non-Pātañjala) Śaiva yoga that became paradigmatic in Javano-Balinese Tuturs.

The *Tattvajñāna* is composed entirely in Old Javanese prose; unlike the other two Tattvas discussed here, it is not arranged in the form of a dialogue but expounds its arguments in the form of a lesson given by an anonymous teacher. This scripture is remarkable in the Tattva and Tuttur genres insofar that it has been preserved not only in Balinese manuscripts, but also in two complete palm-leaf manuscripts (*lontar*) from the Central Javanese collection of Merapi-Merbabu (now at the National Library of Indonesia in Jakarta) and the (East Javanese?) Mackenzie collection (now at the British Library in London), as well as in a short fragment of palm-leaf manuscript (*gebang*) from the West Javanese collection of Ciburuy (Acri 2000b). The text was edited on the basis of the Balinese manuscripts, and translated into Hindi, by Sudarshana Devi (-Singhal) at the International Academy of Indian Culture (1962). Besides being characterized by a less sophisticated argumentative style, the *Tattvajñāna* features a more localised approach to religious experience, as it mixes the speculative themes found in the *Dharma Pātañjala* and *Vṛhaspatitattva* with the kind of esoteric and mystical themes thriving in Tuturs, thereby constituting a ‘link’ between the two genres.

TEXTBOOKS AND PAMPHLETS OF HINDUISM: AJI SANGKYA AND RSI YADNYA SANKYA DAN YOGA

Numerous mimeographed pamphlets and printed booklets, written in either Balinese or Malay-Indonesian, sprang up on Bali soon after the introduction of modern stencilling and printing techniques in the early twentieth century. These publications, aiming at those Balinese—the majority—who could not read the scriptures in their original languages and scripts, quickly superseded, yet never entirely replaced, *lontar* as the favourite medium of dissemination of the religious lore on the island (Hooykaas 1963). The main reason to study such literature is that it documents a crucial phase in the (re)formation of what is now called Agama Hindu Bali, during which the Balinese intellectuals and religious leaders were intent upon (re)creating a textual canon that, through the incorporation of elements of Indian Hinduism, would have sanctioned recognition of Balinese religion as a fully fledged, and pan-Indonesian, world religion.

The *Aji Sangkya* (‘Textbook of the Sāṅkhya Philosophy’, Jelantik 1947) is a short theologico-philosophical treatise (fifty-seven pages),

composed in Balinese by the intellectual Ida Ketut Jelantik (d. 1961) of Banjar, Singaraja. First published, as a mimeographed pamphlet, in 1947, the work circulated in Bali through a number of printed editions, the last dating from 1979, as well as in *lontar* manuscripts. Not long after the publication of the original work, a Dutch translation by Hooykaas (1951) appeared as ‘Çāngkhya-leer van Bali’ in the *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*. The *Aji Sangkya* was subsequently rediscovered among the *lontar* of the late Jelantik’s library in 1972 by Gede Sandhi, who translated it into modern Indonesian and republished it. As far as I know, the only subsequent reprint of the work appeared in 2012, published by Paramita Press (Surabaya and Denpasar).

In the foreword to his work, Jelantik explains that he wished to produce a small booklet describing the Śaiva religion (*Igama Siwa*) in low-level Balinese (*bahasa Bali kapara*) and not in the Old Javanese and Sanskrit used in the available body of sacred texts, in order that his work be read and understood by a larger public. The author declares that he has taken as his basis a body of foundational sacred texts preserved in *lontar* manuscripts, which he chose according to their contents, and which he thought to be more important for the edification of his readers. The listed sources are the following (spelling standardized): *Bhuvanakośa*, *Vṛhaspatitattva*, *Tattvajñāna*, *Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa*, *Pañcaviṃśatitattva*, *Buku Yogasūtra*, *Nirmalajñāna* (otherwise known as *Navaruci*), *Saṅ Hyaṅ Daśa Ātmā*, *Sārasamuccaya*, *lontar Samādhi*, *Catur Yuga Vidhi Śāstra*, *Sapta Bhuvana*.

While the *Aji Sangkya* constitutes a synthesis and restyling of materials drawn from Sanskrit–Old Javanese sources, it displays unmistakable traces of originality. Jelantik, himself a proficient theologian and eclectic intellectual, should not be regarded as a mere synthesizer and systematizer but rather as an author in his own right, aiming at implementing a well-defined doctrinal and moralistic agenda. To study his treatise is therefore interesting in order to establish where the boundaries between originality and adherence to a canon lie in the Javano-Balinese tradition.

Jelantik’s main intention is to describe the characteristics of Ida Sang Hyang Widhi, who created the world and everything living there, especially human beings; and to characterize the basic dichotomy described in Tattvas, namely between the metaphysical principles of Sentience (*cetana*) and Insentience (*acetana*), which accounts for the entire creation. This dichotomy reflects the one espoused by the Sāṅkhya school of Indian philosophy, which names the two principles Spirit (*puruṣa*) and Nature (*prakṛti*). The treatise unfolds through ten chapters, each dedicated to a particular (set of) constitutive principle(s) of the universe

(*tattva*), beginning from the uppermost, that is the Lord in His various aspects (*paramāśivatattva*, *sadāśivatattva*, *śivatattva*), the Soul, the lower twenty-five *tattva* of Sāṅkhya from Spirit down to the five gross elements, and Man. Besides dealing with ontology, Jelantik provides his readers with directions to the worship of God and the practice of yoga.

The *Aji Sangkya* has been appraised by various Balinese authors as a document of great importance for the study of Balinese religion (Dharma Palguna 2009). Hooykaas (1951: 434–435) regarded it as groundbreaking since it benefited from the advantages of printing technology, which enabled the work to have a far-reaching impact among the common Balinese. Hooykaas further remarked that, unlike contemporary manuscripts, the *Aji Sangkya* was reproduced free of copying mistakes, therefore any mistakes in the exposition could be attributed to the author himself rather than to sloppy anonymous copyists. More importantly, Jelantik may be regarded to be among the first Balinese reformers to have looked at India as the cradle of Hinduism (see Bakker 1993: 302).

Another theologico-philosophical treatise is the *Rsi Yadnya Sankya dan Yoga* (sixty-eight pages), written in Bahasa Indonesia and published in Klungkung in the early 1970s (Anandakusuma 1973). The author, Shri Rsi Anandakusuma (for the record Gusti Ngoerah Sidemen, 1912–1992), was a polymath with ninety books to his name (Bakker 1993: 335–339). He was a respected religious personality of the reform movement. Bearing the prestigious title of Rsi ('seer'), he served as the head of the Satya Hindu Dharma Pusat from 1959 to his death. In an interview he gave in 1989, Anandakusuma stated that through his work he wished to spread 'true Hinduism' among the Balinese so that they would gain 'greater knowledge of the philosophical background and more emphasis on the mystical side of the religion'. He was influenced by Hindu philosophers and religious leaders such as Swami Vivekānanda (1863–1902), Swami Śivānanda (1887–1963) and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888–1975).

Like his predecessor Jelantik, Anandakusuma composed his textbook by making use of existing sources, which he listed in a bibliography; these are, following the original order, *Rsi Shasana*, *Wrehaspati Tattwa*, *Swatika Sutra* (*sic*, read *Swastika Sutra*) by Anandakusuma himself and *Kundalini Yoga* by Swami Śivānanda. His treatise is divided into three parts, entitled respectively *Rsi Yadnya*, *Sankya* and *Yoga*. Part I, *Rsi Yadnya*, forms an extended introduction in which the author explains the background and aims of his literary and edifying endeavour. He embarks on a semantic analysis of the words *guru* and *sattwam*; declares that in the Veda the Lord (*tuhan yang maha esa*) is Sat-Chit-Ananda; explains the prerogatives of a

Rsi or Bhagawan; narrates the story of the Rsi Wyasa; lists the moral duties of human beings; defines the supreme principle of Brahman as Atman Aikyam ('one with the Self'); and describes the characteristics of an Acharya or Wiku.

Part II, *Sankya*, starts with introductory remarks about the meaning of Sāṅkya philosophy and its sharing the same aim (*mempunyai satu tujuan*) with yoga. Anandakusuma's declared aim is to improve spirituality (*kerokhaniaan, kejawaan*), which is a part of philosophy (*tattwa*), by clarifying or disentangling (*menguraikan*) the teaching of the Lord (*Ishwara*), so that that after death one may become one with Him. He then very briefly introduces the frame story of Ishwara teaching the gods on the peak of the Kelasa, who are joined by Wrehaspati. From this point onwards, the text closely follows the *Vṛhaspatitattva*, except for a few additions as well as doctrinal divergences, most notably the description of Pātāñjala yoga in part III (*Yoga*). Although Anandakusuma is likely to have been familiar with Jelantik's *Aji Sangkya*, his *Rsi Yadnya Sankya dan Yoga* does not bear any specific influence traceable to the latter work and must therefore be regarded as a largely independent endeavour in the panorama of Balinese reformism.

THE JAVANO-BALINESE TUTUR/TATTVA CORPUS AS THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS OF PRE-MODERN ŚAIVISM AND MODERN HINDUISM ON BALI

In my comparative investigation of the sources summarized above, I suggested (Acri 2011a, 2013) that modern Balinese Hindu writers appropriated and restated the main doctrinal items found in the pre-existing scriptural corpus of Old Javanese Śaiva texts, which therefore ought to be regarded as constituting the basis of an Indic-inspired, (Javano-)Balinese Śaiva theology. Their pamphlets and manuals of Hinduism were considered normative, and indeed their doctrines found their way to the curricular textbooks used in Balinese schools.

Annette Hornbacher (2014: 321), discussing the fascinating subject of 'orthographic mysticism' as a medium of esoteric speculation and ritual efficacy on Bali, admits the usefulness of philological research on Tuturs, yet at the same time advances a critique of my view that Old Javano-Balinese Śaiva texts have the same character, and thus have to be treated in the same way, as canonical scriptures—that is, as the basis of religious orthodoxy. She claims that my thesis not only ignores the specifically

Balinese orthographic practices, but also the internal relationship between esoteric orthographic theory and related ritual practices, as well as the local understandings of ritually effective orthography. Hornbacher (*ibid.*: 334) contends that Tuturs convey a mystical theory of written characters that is not the expression of canonical doctrine, but which unfolds—as a mystical manifestation of God in the world, embodying the presence of divine power—ritual significance and efficacy. Further, she regards as anachronistic and ‘politically questionable’ my thesis that the Indonesian religious policy, with its pressure to reach the status of a canonical monotheistic ‘Religion of the Book’, is linked to a much older and genuine Balinese scriptural religion.

Frankly speaking, I fail to see how my thesis could be anachronistic and politically questionable. In fact, the contrary can be said to be true: my thesis actually rehabilitates the Balinese tradition, showing that it is not derived uniquely from the encounter with Abrahamic religions and the pressures of the newly constituted Indonesian state, but represents an orthogenetic development stemming from a pre-existing Śaiva religious discourse and its normative textual canon. Furthermore, I should like to point out that at the basis of Hornbacher’s critique there seems to lay a fundamental misunderstanding of my thesis; that is, a failure on her part to distinguish the Tuttur from the Tattva genres. For my part, I have argued that within the vast and heterogeneous Tuttur corpus there lies an ‘inner core’ of (early) normative texts—the Tattvas—whose nature is mainly speculative and systematic.⁵ It is these texts that inform the basic doctrinal framework of many (later) Tuturs, as well as of modern pamphlets of Hinduism, and therefore may be considered canonical (for a lack of a better term). Furthermore, Hornbacher uses the general term ‘Tuttur’ as if it only referred to the subclass of texts dealing with the theory and practice of the phenomenon of orthographic mysticism, which however forms just a fraction of a much larger and variegated corpus. In my opinion, this phenomenon has little if any relevance to the issues of canonicity and religious orthodoxy. Unlike those Tuturs that treat the topics of orthographic mysticism and ritual (such as the *Aji Saraswati*, the *Tuttur Svava Vyañjana*, etc.),⁶ which are indeed practice-oriented and may still be employed in certain Balinese ritual contexts, Tattvas do not directly play a significant role in the ritual

⁵ See Acri 2011a: 152, 2013: 71–72.

⁶ On which see Rubinstein 2000 and, for an overview of this phenomenon and a description of its South Asian prototypes, Acri forthcoming.

contexts mentioned by Hornbacher. The onus remains on ethnographers to describe the contemporary Balinese practices in which texts, in both their intellectual/intangible and material dimensions, are used as constitutive elements.

Hornbacher claims that, in spite of substantial parallels with Sanskrit original texts, Tuturs (Tattvas?) have to be understood on the basis of their culturally specific integration into a ritual practice that is realized only performatively and orally in the teacher–student relationship and their foregrounding in a local form of knowledge. Although there is certainly a lot truth in her claim, Hornbacher does not produce much concrete evidence besides references to the well-known Balinese beliefs in, and representations around, the supernatural power of these texts: their use in a context of initiation or magical practice (including sorcery), the warnings against their purely intellectual use, and what may be defined as a ‘cult of the book-manuscript’. In fact, my personal experience is that Tattvas on Bali are also *read* and *discussed*, in both restricted/religious and public/secular contexts, as *books*, that is, as media of philosophical and doctrinal truths (*‘tattva’*), which inform many aspects of the Balinese complex ritual edifice insofar that they constitute its ultimate theological and ontological foundations. It is from the Tattvas that the pamphlets and textbooks of modern Balinese Hinduism draw upon. This context hardly constitutes a form of performative/oral teacher-student relationship, and should rather be studied in the framework of modern institutionalized religious education. In spite of this attempt to ‘democratize’ the religious knowledge through the school curriculum, the doctrinal foundations contained in Tattvas are traditionally considered to be the preserve of the highest ritual and religious authorities—the Śaiva Pedandas—and not of the many other categories of lower-status ritual agents and practitioners mentioned by Hornbacher—like Pemangkus, Balian, Leyak, and so on. Those categories are indeed associated with different texts: certain Tuturs, Warigas and ritual manuals dealing with, for example, magic, astrology, medicine and yoga. I basically agree with Hornbacher that the main purpose of many of those texts is—at least nowadays—not to convey theory that can be understood, believed or criticized purely intellectually, but to manifest knowledge as a transformative power to be realized performatively (*ibid.*: 317). Those texts, however, are a far cry—both linguistically, stylistically and in terms of content—from the ‘śāstric’ register and theoretical contents of Tattvas, where we find few if any references to ritual practices.

Clearly, Hornbacher's research is extremely valuable since as it explores the intriguing, chronically understudied and no doubt crucial relationship between texts and ritual practices on Bali. I think, however, that a more careful reading of the sources,⁷ detailed ethnographic descriptions of the actual rituals and 'body-techniques' linked to Tuturs,⁸ and a comparative investigation, from a synchronic and diachronic perspective, of the relationship between these Balinese texts and practices and prototypical texts and practices in the Indian subcontinent are in order before any claims can be made about the nature of these phenomena, let alone about their cultural specificity.

Contrarily to the received view that Balinese religion lacks a proper theological and speculative tradition, let alone a body of sacred canonical scriptures carrying the foundation of its 'orthodoxy', I reiterate the points that (1) the reformed 'rationalized theology' and (allegedly) ensuing 'scripturalization' of Balinese religion is no new (and derivative) phenomenon, but has its root in the sophisticated Old Javano-Balinese corpus of speculative Śaiva scriptures; (2) the 'Tattva' corpus was not an uniquely local, embedded and place- and person-specific Balinese product, but partook of a complex trans-local cultural phenomenon that flourished along the networks of intra-Asian contacts within the geographical and cultural entity called by Pollock (1996, 2006) 'Sanskrit Cosmopolis'; (3) Tattvas present a shared 'minimum common denominator' of Śaiva (monotheistic) theology, which constituted the basis for what we may call an 'orthodoxy' of religion; and, (4) Tattvas share a similar agenda of 'translation' of Sanskrit doctrinal elements into a local linguistic and intellectual framework, displaying a similar degree of faithfulness to the common and prototypical Sanskrit canon—the corpus of South Asian Siddhāntatantras.⁹

⁷Hornbacher (2014: 332, fn. 25), referring to Acri 2011a and 2013 (the latter article does not, however, appear in her bibliography), claims that all the names, designations and personifications of the highest form of Śiva as the Absolute (such as Sañ Hyañ Tuñigal, Sañ Hyañ Nora, etc.) that are found in Tuturs get completely out of sight if one accepts the fact of monism and his sporadic connection with Śiva as a sufficient reason to interpret Tuturs overall as expression of an Indian Śivaite system. This statement over-simplifies the matter; elsewhere (Acri 2011d: 549). I have pointed out that the proliferation of names of God in His various aspects that are rarely found, or altogether unattested, in the Śiva Sanskrit literature from South Asia is a distinctive feature of apparently late, more 'localised' Tuturs, but not of Tattva, which follow Sanskrit prototypes more closely.

⁸Detailed accounts of the death-ritual and the internalized yoga-praxis informed by orthographic mysticism have been published by Stephen (2010, 2014, respectively).

⁹On this corpus of texts, mainly formed by mildly Tantric, dualist scriptures, see Goodall (2004: xii–lvii).

It is important to stress that the Balinese reformers themselves, including Jelantik and Anandakusuma, never claimed to add anything new to their religion but only to find its ‘true’ meaning, which was ‘hidden’ in the body of Old Javanese scriptures. In fact, both *Tattvas* and *Tuturs* constituted, to a great extent, the very object of debate among the various factions of the Balinese intelligentsia who sought to reform their religion: the *Vṛhaspatitattva* and *Tattvajñāna* are listed among the sources used by Jelantik in his *Aji Sangkya*; the *Vṛhaspatitattva*, which is in all respects the most systematic and speculation-oriented treatise to have survived on Bali, constituted the main prototypical source for both Jelantik and Anandakusuma,¹⁰ among other authors. It is those texts that, supplemented with Indonesian translation, have been published again and again on the island since the early twentieth century; it is those texts that find a widespread diffusion in the form of palm-leaf manuscripts in several Brahmanical *griyas* on Bali. It seems thus hardly deniable that those texts formed a sort of canon, to which those in search of Balinese ‘Śaiva orthodoxy’ must turn.

Indeed the idea of orthodoxy, referred to in Old Javanese as ‘true knowledge’ (*samyagjñāna*), as opposed to heterodoxy, ‘false knowledge’ (*mithyājñāna*), is apparently featured in pre-modern *Tattvas*, such as the *Vṛhaspatitattva* and the *Dharma Pātāñjala*. Their exposition is carried out in the form of a debate between the Lord, his divine interlocutor and an adversary (*sañ para*). The latter, usually a follower of materialist doctrines, is a bearer of a ‘false view’, as he negates the existence of (1) God; (2) *karma* and its fruits (*karmaphala*); (3) heaven and hell; (4) *mokṣa*; and (5) the *ātman*.¹¹ These five points can be compared to the so-called *pañcaśraddhā* of orthodox Hinduism, generally acknowledged by scholars to be a recent addition to Balinese Hinduism, where they were supposedly unknown.¹²

¹⁰Anandakusuma in his *Pergolakan Hindu Dharma* (1966) too resorted to the *Vṛhaspatitattva* whenever he sought to explain philosophical and theological concepts. The author’s reliance on that Old Javanese text also results from his interview published by Bakker (1993: 62–64).

¹¹Cf., e.g., *Vṛhaspatitattva* 2 and 52; similar passages are found throughout the *Dharma Pātāñjala*.

¹²Cf. Ramstedt 2004: 14; with regard to *karma* and *mokṣa*, see Bakker 1993: 72–73, and Guernonprez 2001: 278. Howe (2001: 72), by contrast, maintains that ‘though ideas about karma can be found in indigenous Balinese texts, the doctrine has not had much influence among ordinary Balinese until relatively recently’. In agreeing with Howe that these ele-

Balinese intellectuals perceived a close relationship between ideas and rituals, and claimed that ‘their particular form of Hinduism comprises three closely related components, namely philosophy, ritual, and ethics’ (Bakker 1993: 22). Such threefold compartmentalization, which must be considered an indigenous categorization, appears to have already existed in the past, for we find scriptures dealing with different aspects of ‘religion’ such as theology and philosophy (*tattva*), ‘applied’ theology and yoga (*tutur*), conduct for religious people (*śāsana*) and ritual (*kalpa*, etc.). This categorization roughly corresponds to the ideal division into four parts: doctrine (*vidyā*), *yoga*, behaviour (*caryā*) and ritual (*kriyā*) that a scripture within the South Asian Sanskrit Śaiva Saiddhāntika tradition must possess in order to be considered complete and authoritative. Although one rarely notes the presence of ritual elements within speculative texts, it is also true that the two aspects, as the Balinese maintain, are closely related.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has advocated the idea that if we are to do full justice to the intellectual and historical dynamics that have shaped Balinese Hinduism up to the present day we have to study the pre-colonial body of Śaiva literature as well as the modern textbooks of Hinduism, which constitute their natural continuation. In doing so, we need to move beyond a scholarly paradigm focusing uniquely on the context-specific Balinese cultural instances, and realize that Balinese Hinduism was the product of a complex, trans-regional Javano-Balinese discourse having its roots in the South Asian Śaiva tradition (i.e., the wider ‘Sanskrit Cosmopolis’ and ensuing ‘Vernacular Millennium’ theorized by Sheldon Pollock). Anthropologists need to engage with these scriptures and their use in Balinese literate high-culture, thereby ceasing to regard the methods appropriate for pre-literate cultures as sufficient to deal with the former (the ongoing research by Michel Picard and Annette Hornbacher on Balinese written sources goes in the right direction). Conversely, philologists need to pay closer attention to Old Javanese and Sanskrit Śaiva scriptures preserved in Balinese lontars, and at the same time explore the way in which texts are received,

ments already existed in the *Tattva* and *Tutur* literature, I should like to point out that local proverbs widespread among the Balinese of all social classes and ages seem to refer to the law of *karma pala* in prosaic terms, illustrating situations and images understandable to anybody (cf. Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 1984: 6–10, 18–20; etc.).

reproduced and performed in contexts that are not the preserve only of the elites. This will pave the way for an investigation of the multifarious dimensions of ‘specialized’ knowledge and its entanglement in ‘non-specialized’, or lay, milieux. Indeed, in Bali it is often difficult to neatly separate the prescriptive and theoretical dimension of texts from the everyday practice as lay actors in the domains of ritual, belief, folklore, performance, and visual arts all have interiorized elements from the textual tradition of the elites. Such levels of entanglement inevitably call for a wider, multidisciplinary approach.

With an understanding of the basic—yet deep—concepts that structure and give meaning to Balinese ritual, and which may be found in Balinese texts, the mistaken impression of ‘meaninglessness’ of Balinese ritual is revealed. Similarly, with knowledge of Tantric Śaiva literature in Sanskrit, Balinese texts cease to appear ‘disperse tantric fragments’ and ‘place-and-person-specific knowledge’, becoming localized manifestations of a wider Sanskritic cosmopolitan phenomenon.

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