VALUES AND HIERARCHY
IN THE STUDY OF BALINESE FORMS OF LIFE:
ON THE APPLICABILITY OF DUMONTIAN PERSPECTIVES
AND THE RANKING OF CONTEXTS

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Elèves, I salute you! . . .
Continue your annotations, continue your questionings.

Walt Whitman

I

DUMONT's *Homo Hierarchicus* (1966; transl. e.g. 1980) is about India and the system of castes. It has, however, been employed over the past fifteen years or so to discuss values and hierarchy in many forms of life outside the subcontinent. Dumont's theory of hierarchical opposition and the 'encompassment of the contrary' (henceforth, Dumont's theory) has been adduced to explicate forms of

life in Africa and South America, in the Rif (Jamous 1981), in Melanesia (e.g. de Coppet 1978, Iteanu 1983) and in eastern Indonesia (e.g. Barraud 1979, Platen-kamp 1988), as well as in the comparison of Melanesian and other ideologies (Barraud, De Coppet, Iteanu and Jamous 1984) and of Indonesian ideologies (Barraud and Platenkamp 1990). Most recently, the following have appeared: an article about the Lio of Flores (Howell 1989); two consecutive issues of the Leiden journal, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, edited by Barraud and Platenkamp (Vol. CXLV, no. 4, and Vol. CXLVI, no. 1); an essay by Barraud (1990a); and a special double issue of *Ethnos* (Vol. LV, nos. 3-4), edited by Howell, including essays by de Coppet (1990), Iteanu (1990), Barraud (1990b) and Howell (1990b). All these publications include more or less laudatory references to Dumont's theory, demonstrating that, in spite of the many difficulties that have been seen with it, both middle-career and younger social anthropologists take Dumont's theory of hierarchicized idea-values to be a helpful heuristic resource (and perhaps more) in the analysis of varied forms of life from different parts of the world.

Dumont's influence has been less marked and direct on studies about Balinese forms of life. Boon (e.g. 1977: 92, 120, 148-9; 1990: 137, 161-8 *passim*) refers to Dumont's work, but generally either to illustrate a point that he himself wants to make that has no direct bearing on Dumont's theory, or to take Dumont's part against such of his critics as Appadurai (e.g. 1988). Clifford Geertz acknowledges (1980: 238 n., 125-31, 239) that his views about Indian Brahmins and kings, as well as his developing line of thought, derive from Dumont's 'seminal work' in *Homo Hierarchicus* and elsewhere. Such other writers about Balinese forms of life as Charras, Gerdin, Hinzler, Angela Hobart, Mark Hobart, Hooykaas, Ramseyer and Schaareman do not invoke Dumont's theory to explicate their materials. I have repudiated (1987: 196) an earlier reference to it (1985a: 245) as being unnecessary; while Howe (1989: 53 n.3) 'on the whole' accepts the criticism of *Homo Hierarchicus* that it overemphasizes one set of values (hierarchy) and 'the fixed and static nature of the "traditional" caste system'.

The contrast between the employment of Dumont's theory demonstrated above and its almost total disregard by writers about the Balinese is arresting. Since at least 1914, Bali has repeatedly been asserted or argued to bear marked resem-blances to, or to be comparable with, forms of life both of the Pacific (e.g. van Kol 1914: 343; Chegaray 1955: 196-8; Boon 1977: 111, 238 n.6) and of eastern Indonesia (e.g. Esser 1938: map 9; Schaareman 1986: 142; Boon 1990: chs. 5, 6; Duff-Cooper 1990a: ch. 2);[1] while its system of the four estates (*catur bangsa*), under some aspects, is rather akin to representations of the Indian caste system. Perhaps the contrast is, at least partly, explicable by writers about the Balinese not

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1. Guermonprez (1987: 211 n. 14) is therefore inexact in ascribing to Boon the distinction of being the first in Balinese studies to draw the parallel. But perhaps Guermonprez has a restricted understanding of 'Balinese studies', since he credits (ibid.: ix) their real inception to the Geertzes.

having had the close institutional contact that forms part of the professional biographies of very many of those who espouse Dumont's theory in their work. By 'institutional' is meant the research team Équipe de Recherche de l'Anthropo- logie Sociale: Morphologie, Échanges (Erasme), of the CNRS in Paris, of which Dumont was the founding director and de Coppet is the present director, and to which Dumont seems still to be very close.

One writer about an aspect of Balinese life, though, has had contact with Erasme, and he, Guermonprez, indeed espouses Dumont's theory, in a conclusion to his book about the Balinese Pandé that, one understands (Guermonprez 1987: 198), was the only part of his thesis (1984) to be rewritten before it went to the printers. In section II below I outline parts of Guermonprez's new conclusion, in which 'the "discovery" in Bali of Hierarchy in Louis Dumont's sense' (see Guermonprez 1987: xiii) is explicated. In section III I consider how far Guermonprez follows Dumont's theory, and whether and in what regards it was novel (see ibid.: 200) and useful for him to do so. In section IV I address the question, raised by the matters addressed in sections II and III: 'Are (Balinese) contexts ranked?'

II

Guermonprez's first conclusion to his study about the Pandé employed the notion of 'social space' borrowed from Condominas. This notion, though, suggests a multi-dimensional space without levels and underestimates the social fact that Balinese society is also an ordered, hierarchicized whole, in line with Dumont's assertion (1966: 14) that hierarchy is the fundamental social principle (Guermon- prez 1987: 199, xiii).

In Guermonprez's view, the Maussian total social fact that is significant above all others in Balinese society is the temple. Furthermore, it is the only obvious order of the society that does not evince such immediately observable structural features as the prestations and counterprestations and the exchange of women by men that are manifest in many eastern Indonesian societies (ibid.: 200). However, to appreciate the significance of temples it is necessary to recognize that religious values impose themselves in all Balinese relationships and that they define a level and an order that are not reducible to one component, among others, of the social system (ibid.: 199).

Guermonprez, then, introduces the notion of hierarchy as the order that (necessarily) results from the putting into play of value (Dumont 1983a: 263). And he explains that the relationship to gods and ancestors (a totalizing expression, like gods/ancestors, justified by the way in which shrines, everywhere in Bali, always refer to a founding ancestral core and to what can be called the gods of the universe, including such elements of the geography of the island as mountains and

lakes (Guermonprez 1987: 202)) is absolutely central to an understanding of Bali. It is the pivot around which are ordered the values of the society and the levels that follow from them. With the idea of gods/ancestors is associated a value. The putting into play of this produces an order, hierarchy and levels (ibid.: 199-200). Thus there is a level of (Guermonprez calls it) the autochthonous, to which kinship and the village belong. This level is hierarchically integrated into the ultimate whole of the universe by its encompassment by the society of castes. At the former level, the idea-value, gods/ancestors, is put into play with an emphasis on ancestors; at the latter, the idea-value is also put into play, but the basic idea-value is separated into two poles: one, an ancestral pole, Majapahit; the other, a more explicitly divine pole, Siwa (ibid.: 203). The castes (*bangsa*), understood as the encompassing unities of concrete kin groups, derive from Majapahit. This is the master symbol upon which is based a totalizing theory of Balinese society as a unified social body of which the four castes are the hierarchically articulated limbs. But there also exist groups known as *soroh*, the members of which are all taken by their classification as such to be symmetrically related. *Soroh* (and the people who comprise them *qua* their constituent members) simply differ one from another, as mangoes, say, are all alike and just differ from papaya, which are also all alike (ibid.: 54). *Soroh* stand at the summit of the order of kinship. Hierarchy, though, imposes itself on *soroh* through titles. From *soroh* to *bangsa*—from a whole in itself, a Leibnizian monad, to elements only conceivable in their relationships to an encompassing whole—is the move from the level of the autochthonous to that of the castes. There is, moreover, a tension between *soroh* and *bangsa* that has a cosmic dimension to which the polemic (discussed earlier in Guermonprez's book) over holy water (*tirtha*) draws attention (ibid.: 203-5).

Holy water (ibid.: 207) gives direct or indirect access to the universal whole. *Pedanda*, Brahmana priests, who in their daily meditation called *Suryaséwana* make holy water and who, of course, are at the head of the society of castes, evidence the ultimate encompassing order of which the god Siwa (*pedanda* may also be called *siwa*) is the pre-eminent figure, the second master symbol subsuming all the levels of the gods/ancestors idea-value (ibid.: 205). So origin-points (*kawitan*), which can be symbolized as house compound and other group temples, culminate in Majapahit, while Siwa, the apical deity, is the integral figure of all the gods/ancestors. At this point, Guermonprez introduces the lotus seat (*padmasana*), the place of the god Siwa as Surya, the sun god, usually located in the north-east corner of temples—the strategic angle where the shrines of the ancestors, which have 'the head to the mountain', and those of the gods, which have 'the head to the rising sun', converge. This seat objectifies the universal whole that designates the level of the society of castes (ibid.: 204).

The holy water that *pedanda* make is superior to that had from the gods/ancestors in temples. *Pedanda* are the purest and most direct descendants of Majapahit. They have access to the highest level of the values of the society of castes. Similarly, the holy water they make (or rather, that Siwa makes through them) has a universal value; that made by the gods/ancestors in temples does not.

But these two kinds of holy water are not incompatible; they are superposable, just as the ritual of the Brahminical priest can be superposed on that which the *pemangku*, the priest of a temple who is usually Sudra, orchestrates (ibid.: 205-7).

At the level of the society of castes, Siwa integrates the whole, gods/ancestors. From here come the world and holy water of the highest quality, a truly nourishing liquid. Below this level is found the deified ancestral core of Majapahit, constituted by the Javanese *mpu*, semi-divine beings who engendered the diversity of '"the people of Majapahit" (*wong* Majapahit)' hierarchicized in castes and title groups, and from where derives in particular the division between the Triwangsa (the three finest 'castes': Brahmana, Ksatrya, Vésia) and Sudra. This level exposes and orders the encompassment of humankind in the superior whole of the society of castes. Similarly, the idea-value Siwa exposes and orders the encompassment of the society of castes in the ultimate whole of the universe. Both Siwa and Majapahit are origin-points, but at different levels. The idea-value gods/ancestors traverses Balinese society from the domestic temples legitimating houses to the construction of the highest sky where Siwa is found; and it allows more and more inclusive levels to be distinguished. Three principal levels may be distinguished thus in Balinese ideology: the level of the autochthonous, that of the society of castes, and the level of the universe or cosmos (ibid.: 208).

III

Anyone familiar with Dumont's theory will grant that Guermonprez appears to be very faithful to it. Thus he stresses that Balinese society is a unity (1987: 199, cf. viii, ix, x, 66 n.22), a whole, just as Dumont emphasizes that 'sociologically, India is *one*' (e.g. 1957: 9, original emphasis; 1983b: 106). Of course, the wholeness is a precondition for the application of Dumont's theory (Dumont 1978: 105). The whole (*globalité*) is ordered and hierarchical (Guermonprez 1987: 199). This order results from '"the putting into play of value"' (Guermonprez 1987: 199, quoting Dumont 1983a: 263).

Hierarchy, in Dumont's sense, consists of 'two contradictory aspects of different level: distinction within an identity [and] encompassment of the contrary' (Dumont 1983a: 263; see also 1980: 239). The part, that is, is identical to the whole, *and* the part is not only the whole which is not necessarily a part: A is evaluated as superior to B, and A stands for and includes B. An example from Guermonprez's conclusion is as follows. The gods (ancestors) in a compound temple are identical, at the autochthonous level, with the apical god Siwa, but they are not only Siwa, and Siwa is not necessarily the gods in a compound temple. Siwa is valued as superior to the gods in a compound temple, and Siwa includes and stands for them. Siwa is positioned at the level of the total society and the cosmos. Between this level and that of the autochthonous there is the level of the

society of castes. Majapahit stands in a relation to this and to the autochthonous level that is analogous to the relation of Siwa to them. The relations, though, hold at different levels. These levels are created by the putting into play of the idea-value gods/ancestors.

Towards the end of his conclusion, Guermonprez gives various reasons why the 'discovery' in Bali of hierarchy in Dumont's sense is important. Among these are that it permits the identification of idea-values and that these, Guermonprez suggests (1987: 210, 211), will release Bali from being a sociological curiosity, and will also introduce Bali to a comparative dialogue both with India and the Pacific and with societies in eastern Indonesia, from which it has hitherto been excluded. Things seem not to have turned out as Guermonprez hoped, however. While, for instance, both Barraud (1990b: 216) and de Coppet (1990: 149) refer to studies that reveal a more or less clear or explicit appreciation of the heuristic value of Dumont's theory, neither Guermonprez's study in general nor his conclusion (nor any of his other publications) are mentioned by them, nor are they cited in any of the post-1987 articles mentioned in section I above. When Bali *is* mentioned, a piece by Howe is referred to.

This ignoring of the only interpretation of aspects of Balinese ideology in terms of Dumont's theory might seem odd, were it not that in three main respects (at least), Guermonprez renders his conclusion in a way that makes it unlikely to appeal to such writers as de Coppet and Barraud (and Platenkamp). First, Guermonprez employs an etic idiom when writing about his materials, by employing, without qualification, such categories as 'kinship', 'caste', 'history' and 'religion'. The stance that this employment evinces is unlikely in the extreme to be acceptable to members of Erasme, or their associates, who are extremely careful in their use of such pairs of labels as 'sacred/profane' and 'soul/body' (see e.g. Iteanu 1990, Barraud 1990b). Indeed, one has written: 'every society possesses a different conception of what is real and consequently develops a different and probably unique categorisation of its experience; how then can we understand society by imposing on it the Western conceptions of reality and Western society's system of values?' (de Coppet 1981: 198); to which is footnoted: 'which categorises observed phenomena as "psychological", "political", "economic"' (ibid.: 202 n.15).

Secondly, in spite of Guermonprez's employment of the idiom of Dumont's theory, and especially its references to levels, the division of Balinese ideology into three principal levels is not accompanied by the description and analysis of any reversals or inversions. These operations, which are largely equivalents (Needham 1983: 96), are inseparable from the notion of levels—Dumont has it (1982: 224) that the ranking of idea-values 'includes reversal as one of its properties'—and they are evidences of changes of levels (Dumont 1978: 106; cf. de Coppet 1981: 198-9, 202 n.16). Any analysis that employs Dumont's theory with its references to levels but does not point to and then analyse reversals (inversions) as indicating changes of levels must, it would seem, be unfaithful to

a main plank of the theory. Perhaps Barraud (and Platenkamp) and other members of Erasme have taken the same view.[2]

Finally, in spite of the idiom that Guermonprez adopts, the division of Balinese life into three is in fact rather conventional. It was adopted by Korn in *Het Adatrecht van Bali* (1932), still 'a standard work for every researcher concerned with (the) Balinese' (Schaareman 1986: 1). In Korn's view (1932: 76-9, 227-8), Bali consisted of an 'Old Balinese' region and an 'apanage' region, the latter being divided into two zones. Later, Howe (1989), in a remodelling of Korn's thesis, divides the island into three contiguous zones: the mountains, an intermediary zone and the southern plains zone.

This latter attempt to classify forms of Balinese social organization is, of course, subsequent to Guermonprez's and at points it relies on the latter, though not on his rendering of his materials into the terms of Dumont's theory. But both are conventional in this sense: from at least the 1880s until the recent past (see e.g. Jacobs 1883: 52; Hilda Geertz and Clifford Geertz 1975: 198; Clifford Geertz 1980: 45-7), writers have divided Bali into a Bali Aga ('Original' Balinese) and a 'Hindu–Bali' zone. Korn (1932: 2-3) had already criticized this overly simple division; and, if it was not inevitable, it is not very surprising that when he (and later Guermonprez and Howe) should have reconsidered it, because it was unsatisfactory, the division should have been expanded to a tripartition, the next more numerically complex mode of classification by division. Korn splits one of his two basic components into two. Howe interposes a medial type, that combines attributes of the original two, between them. Each is a familiar way of expanding a bi- into a tri-partition (Hocart 1970: 289; Needham 1979: 9). Guermonprez does not adopt either of these strategies: he adds a level, that of the cosmos, to his two more basic principal levels. This approach is dictated by Dumont's theory, as explicated by, for instance, de Coppet: 'the whole, to which all social actions are geared, is society and universe combined'; 'the cosmos...cannot [should not?] be separated from the society on which it relies for its existence' (1990: 148). Or, as Barraud (1990b: 216) suggests, a non-modern society is a 'socio-cosmic whole'.[3] The strategy might also be thought consonant with the view that many writers about Balinese ideology have held to, namely, that it is a whole every aspect of which is pervaded by 'religious values'.

2. In fairness it should be said that Guermonprez (1987: 198, cf. 210-11) starts by saying that his 'new' conclusion is an introduction to further studies. It may be, also, that the refusal of Pandé to accept holy water from *pedanda* while accepting the supremacy of the god Siwa and using the Brahmanical ritual to make it for themselves, thus annulling an essential hierarchical relationship, is a reversal (ibid.: 206), perhaps Needham's type 12, 'abstention from normal practice' (1983: 100, 116). But it seems not to evidence a change of level, or at least Guermonprez does not say it does.

3. The distinction between 'modern' and 'non-modern' is from Dumont (e.g. 1982: *passsim*). On difficulties with this aspect of Dumont's theory, see e.g. Needham 1987: 104-6.

I do not want to disparage these schemes because they employ tripartition. But although triality is a very common mode of classification by division in Balinese ideology, it is far from being the only or indeed the main one. Bipartition is also common and important, and so, more or less, are the divisions of an entity into from four to eleven constituent aspects. These aspects may be related one to another in various ways. They may be related symmetrically and/or asymmetrically, and by one of the modes of reflexivity and of transitivity. These may be dynamically expressed as periodic modes, and they may be reversed (inverted).[4] Past analyses (see references in note 4, especially 1988a) show that these principles in different combinations order aspects of the contexts of Balinese ideology. The same combinations are evinced in different contexts, and different combinations are evinced by the same contexts.[5]

Mention of contexts brings us to a further, and for the present purpose the last, major divergence between Guermonprez and Dumont's theory. Although Dumont (1978: 108 n.23) alludes to a 'variety of contexts and the conceptual differences that go with them', he later (1982: 225) came down heavily against contexts, because 'they are foreseen, inscribed or implied in the ideology [under study] itself', his preference being for 'different "levels" hierarchicized together with the corresponding entities'. None the less, Guermonprez refers to '*registres ou...contextes*', i.e. 'levels or...contexts' (1987: 208). This is not permissible within Dumont's theory. But Guermonprez's elision of levels and contexts does make his reference (ibid.: 208) to levels that are 'more and more inclusive' intelligible. Levels, in Dumont's theory, are strata-like, standing one above another like the strata of a geological formation (see Needham 1987: 185, 144), or they are positions within a hierarchy. Neither strata nor such positions can have extension, and thus levels cannot be 'inclusive' to any degree. But contexts, of course, do so and may be. Guermonprez's equation of levels and contexts also lends support to the view that '"level" stands for nothing in particular [in Tcherkézoff 1983]. Whenever the word is used, in relation to ethnographic data, it can be replaced by "context"' (ibid.: 182).

Howell mentions (1990a: 137-8) that the members of Erasme maintain that 'complementary oppositions'—a phrase that has 'a more or less adventitious use as a term of expository rhetoric', but not one that is 'suitable for employment in comparative analysis' (Needham 1987: 101; see also Duff-Cooper 1991a)—'can always be replaced by hierarchical oppositions whereby one of the pair stands for the whole and thereby encompasses its opposite'. This, though, is an empirical and not a theoretical matter. Recourse to Balinese ideology and the opposites

4. For definitions of these relations and for discussion of their places in Balinese ideology see respectively e.g. Duff-Cooper 1985b and 1991a; 1988a; 1990a: ch. 4; 1986a; 1986b.

5. I have elsewhere (1990d) suggested that these combinations of principles are probably the most satisfactory criteria by which to order forms of Balinese life, and I have done some of the preparatory work (1991c). The method is not new; in its essentials it is that proposed by Lowie (1917).

sun/moon and high/low, for instance, in which neither 'sun' nor 'high' can stand for the wholes 'sun/moon' and 'high/low' and therefore does not encompass its opposite, shows that what the members of Erasme maintain, as Howell describes it, is wrong. However, Barraud and Platenkamp (1990) have analysed comparatively the rituals of three of the societies written about in the issues of *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde* they edited, by authors who do not refer to Dumont's theory, and say (ibid.: 106) that although their analyses 'do not always coincide with those by the authors themselves', who [it might be thought consequential] collected the data they analyse, they 'do not question their [the original authors'] interpretation'. My attitude to Guermonprez's second conclusion is similar: I do not question his interpretation, which of course was written from a particular point of view, that of Dumont's theory. Allowing that it can be given an exact meaning, a point of view cannot be wrong. I do maintain, though, that it is unnecessary to invoke Dumont's theory to understand Balinese ideology, especially when Guermonprez's apparent attitude to holistic analysis is to disregard in his analysis almost everything that constitutes the whole as a way of life for Balinese people.

Had he paid more analytical attention to these other aspects, which include sex, rice-growing, and eating and defecation, among many more, he would perhaps have discovered that there is not one representation, physical or ideational, that is conventional among the Balinese that looks anything like encompassment (as depicted in Dumont's second figure (1980: 242) of a rectangle in the centre of which there is a second rectangle): whenever pairs of opposites are represented, they are juxtaposed (like the half-male, right side, and half-female, left side, icon Ardhanārīśvara (and see also e.g. Hooykaas 1973: 232-3, 236)) as depicted in Dumont's first figure of a rectangle cut vertically into two.[6]

Furthermore, while Guermonprez suggests, in line with many writers about the Balinese, that 'religious values' pervade their lives, his view of these values is very impoverished. *Everything* that constitutes Balinese ideology comes from the gods, and *everything*, and not just what a particular sociological theory suggests, is to be

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6. The first figure is supposed to represent complementary opposition, though the equality of the halves into which the rectangle is divided subverts it: most writers about such opposites maintain that they are unequally valued (e.g. Barnes 1985: 14). *Pipis bolong*, old Chinese coins with a hole at the centre that are used in Balinese offerings look somewhat like a Venn diagram, which is ideally suited to illustrate encompassment (Needham 1987: 134, fig. 2). But these are *Chinese* coins, and China is precisely an example of a society where 'encompassment of the contrary' is *not* the kind of opposition evinced (Dumont 1978: 108). This seeming divergence can be explained in at least two ways: representations like these coins do not reflect the kind of opposition the culture they derive from employs, or perhaps the interpretation of the form of the coins here is faulty. Given Leenhardt's authoritative insistence (1975: xv) on the help that the plastic arts of a people can give in understanding their form(s) of life, I should say that the coins do not represent encompassment, which does not appear in China. Similarly, they do not do so in Balinese ideology which, to labour the point perhaps, seems not to discriminate this kind of opposition.

interpreted by reference to those values. Different writers have done this in different and more or less compellingly cogent ways. My attitude has been, and remains, that because everything derives from, is pervaded by, and is contained in Ida Sang Hyang Vidhi, the high or highest Balinese god, everything is to be interpreted by reference to Vidhi in various guises.[7] Because of this derivation, and because everything is therefore pervaded by Vidhi, Balinese ideology, I have often maintained, is a sacred whole of which every aspect is ritual; or, it is a whole that is, so to say, taken for granted by Balinese in the middle world (*madyapada*), the realm of material human beings, and completely ordinary (cf. Jeremy and Robinson 1989: 185). Either way, it can be seen as consisting in various contexts. This is expectable: the strategy or style of 'contextualizing' (*nganutang*, literally 'fitting') is not 'an analyst's importation', but one adopted by Balinese (cf. Hobart 1986b: 151).

Dumont complains (e.g. 1978: 108, cf. 102) that a certain style of symbolic analysis confuses or elides contexts. Needham has shown (1987: 112-19) that Dumont's complaint, as he expresses it, makes no sense. But perhaps there is a point worth considering, to which we have not been brought (cf. Duff-Cooper 1991a: 58 n.3) but have been further nudged by Guermonprez and his elision of 'level' and 'context': 'Are contexts in Balinese ideology ranked?' Considering this question will once again emphasize a *pons asinorum* in the study of symbolic classification, namely, 'the importance of keeping the context...perpetually in view' (Needham 1973: xxvii). It will also advance understanding of the analysis of (Balinese) forms of life.

IV

The *OED* gives various meanings for 'context'. The most relevant is: 'the parts which immediately precede or follow (something) and determine its meaning'. More generally, and usefully, I take 'context' to be that 'which environs the subject of our interest and helps by its relevance to explain it' (Scharfstein 1989: 1).

Mark Hobart has written most extensively about 'context' in Balinese ideology, and about the relationships of contexts to meaning and to power (1986b); and he has discussed problems involved with making a theory of context in the light of

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7. Guermonprez rejects this possibility with some superior and in places inexact remarks about Vidhi (1987: vi-vii) and about those who take seriously what is said about Vidhi by, for example, Brahmana *pedanda* and villagers, young and old, 'educated' (*scolarisé*) or not. For references to studies that do take seriously what is said, and written, about Vidhi by Balinese people, see Duff-Cooper 1991d. See also Hooykaas (1973: 19): Vidhi is 'the highest principle' and 'a generally used word'. One widely respected writer about aspects of Balinese life equates Siwa (cf. sec. II above) with Vidhi (Ramseyer 1977: 131).

Dumont's theory (Hobart 1985). In the course of the former study, he makes a cogent argument, first, for denying that contexts can be identified as 'marriage', for instance, or as pertaining to the 'village' (*désa*). Thus he argues that it is arbitrary to conclude that 'one feature of an institution is essential and the others ancillary', especially when 'which feature is to the fore' for Balinese depends upon 'interpretative style, context, and personal perspective' (1986b: 132, 133, 135). Hobart's arguments are even more persuasive when they are read in conjunction with Needham's demonstrations that 'marriage', 'incest' and 'kinship', among others, are 'odd-job' words, 'very handy in all sorts of descriptive sentences, but worse than misleading in comparison and of no real use at all in analysis' (1974: ch. 1, esp. 44); and with Hocart's assessment (1952: 25) that the result of forcing the customs of alien forms of life into the familiar categories of religion, the state, the family, medicine, and such like, has been 'disastrous'.

Secondly, Hobart makes the persuasive case, after an examination of a situation that arose where he was doing fieldwork, that 'hierarchies were referred to.... All [involved] seemed to operate on the assumption that a correct hierarchy existed.... But...hierarchy did not exist as a fixed system of reference; various elements in it were variably invoked to interpret the situation' (1986b: 138). Let us concentrate here on the report that all involved seemed to operate on the assumption that a correct hierarchy existed. Adopting this line (in accord with Traube's remark (1986: 93) that Mambai do not hold to a uniform dogma about conception and birth, but that 'what individuals share are certain classificatory principles, from which they construct variant representations') will allow us to make headway with answering the question posed at the end of section III.

In an essay entitled 'Language Strata', Waismann (1968: 119, 120) says that we can look at things, pragmatically speaking, 'from within' by 'formalizing' the enquiry. The approach is akin to that of Needham (e.g. 1978: 57) in his analysis, to begin with, of myths: 'we are not after types, but properties. If we can isolate significant features, then we shall try to see what they are properties of.' It is also consonant with the approach adopted in my analysis of Balinese rice-growing, and less explicitly in other studies, where the definition of 'aspect' adopted is, '"the way in which the planets, from their relative positions, look upon each other," not, it should be emphasized, "their joint look upon the earth"' (Duff-Cooper 1989: 127). That is, it is probably preferable not to try to isolate this, that, and other contexts and to establish their relative evaluation, which would always be open to dispute by Balinese and non-Balinese alike. I suggest, rather, that we return to the findings of analyses of social facts that constitute 'aspects', as just defined, of Balinese ideology. These social facts were not defined in advance as pertaining to this or that context. They were adduced as was found appropriate to establish the associative settings (Scharfstein's 'environs') of the matters being analysed. These were defined, in a blurred way, by employing odd-job words.

The principles mentioned above (sec. III) that order Balinese ideology all derive from Vidhi—'Divinity *as* order, what orders' (Hobart 1986c: 11; cf. Swellengrebel 1960: 53)—construable in the guise of Sunya, the Void, as perfect

bilateral symmetry. Here, the two constituent aspects of Vidhi are identical one with another, and with the whole that they constitute (Duff-Cooper 1990c). Vidhi as Sunya also evinces perfectly reflexive and transitive relations. Other combinations have been arrived at through other analyses. These combinations have all been ranked (Duff-Cooper 1991c) by various criteria, among which are, summarily, (1) what more closely approximates Vidhi is evaluated as superior to what does so less closely; (2) a negated principle (e.g. irreflexivity, intransitivity) is evaluated as inferior to the principle of which it is a negation; (3) these negated principles are evaluated as superior to the third mode of each: the former implicate necessity, the latter only contingency;[8] and (4) the modes of transitivity are prior, for aesthetic reasons, to the modes of reflexivity.[9] The resulting ranking is shown in Table 1, which leaves out, because they are not directly germane to the present exercise, the concatenating relations, analogy and homology, and the operations—dynamic modes and reversal/inversion—that may be performed on the social facts in which the combinations were discerned (the latter operations, incidentally, not indicating changes of level or anything of that kind but contexts where misfortunes and/or deaths (see e.g. Weck 1937: 42-3) predominate).

TABLE 1. Ordering Principles of Balinese Ideology in a Cline of Priority

modes of partition:	division of an entity into from two to eleven aspects
relations in combination:	perfectly symmetrical, totally reflexive, transitive
	symmetrical, reflexive, transitive
	symmetrical, reflexive, none
	symmetrical, non-reflexive, in- or non-transitive
	symmetrical, non-reflexive, non-transitive
	asymmetrical, reflexive, transitive
	asymmetrical, irreflexive, transitive
	asymmetrical, non-reflexive, transitive
	asymmetrical, irreflexive, intransitive
	asymmetrical, reflexive, intransitive

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8.   Vidhi is also Sang Hyang Tuduh; '*tuduh*' meaning 'what fate brings, lot, destiny' (Swellengrebel 1960: 52).

9.   In an earlier study (Duff-Cooper 1990b: 293), the modes of reflexivity are judged prior to the modes of transitivity, on the ground that 'a mode of reflexivity is built into "simple" duality while the modes of transitivity necessarily implicate three entities'. This divergence shows that even when an analysis employs such notions as these principles, which have a surety that substantive matters of social fact generally do not possess, context can have a marked impact on the decisions the analyst makes and the findings (if any) to which s/he comes.

These combinations of principles, and, it may be presumed, others still to be discerned, give Balinese ideology its order. By 'order' is meant that aspects of Balinese ideology correspond more or less closely to Vidhi. They also render the present and earlier representations of it in order, in the sense that they attain their envisaged ends. These are: first, an enhanced appreciation of Balinese ideology as a totality; second, a way of comparing aspects of Balinese life with aspects of such other forms of life as the Japanese (e.g. Yoshida and Duff-Cooper 1989; Duff-Cooper 1992); and third, to pave the way for an ordering of Balinese forms of life anywhere (and, indeed, at any time). I have suggested, also, that 'the appearance and reappearance of these principles determine the texture (as it were) of each aspect of Balinese ideology' (Duff-Cooper 1991e: 201).[10] A question with which to conclude the present section should now be considered: 'What is meant by "texture"?'

It is tempting, in trying to answer this question, to try to construct a typology by reference, say, to a combination, or to combinations, of principles and the types of situation, e.g. harmonious or acrimonious, in which they are discernible. This approach, though, would at once subvert the formality of the method adopted and would push us back towards definition, with all its attendant disputability, and the questions of power that such disputes implicate. It is therefore preferable to look at things as follows. An analyst, for his or her own purposes, more or less imprecisely defines an aspect of, say, Balinese ideology and its 'environs' to consider. As Frake puts it (1969: 132), when the appropriate changes have been made, 'there is no one way to separate the conceptual structure of a people into a finite number of discrete, clearly delimited domains'. Rather, and for preference taking our directions from Balinese people who know what they are talking about, we move about the form of life by a variety of paths (as it were), that are all more or less directly interconnected. In doing so, the analyst who employs the formal notions shown in Table 1, for instance, shines light on the interior of the whole from different angles.[11] Doing so enables him or her to establish the various ways in which order—by which is here meant correspondence in transformation with Vidhi—is procured. What can then be maintained is that the order procured has different aspects, which are themselves finer or coarser approximations to, or which have finer or coarser correspondences with, Vidhi. These aspects can all be brought together and expressed synchronically and diachronically by a three-dimensional model (though not simultaneously unless more than one model is made) (see Duff-Cooper 1990b).

None of this precludes other approaches, of course. Indeed, they are to be encouraged because, as Mark Hobart puts it (1985: 50), knowledge is built up from

10. 'Context' and 'texture' are, of course, etymological cognates.

11. The verb 'to argue' is derived from Indo-European *arg-*, to be white or bright, so that 'the outcome of a convincing argument is a proposition that throws light on whatever is at issue' (Needham 1983: 19).

a plurality of perspectives; though not *any* perspective—some are incoherent (e.g. Howe 1989), others are unnecessarily complicating and/or impoverished (e.g. the conclusion to Guermonprez 1987), and others again may bear so distant a relationship to social facts that it is hard to make out what they are supposed to be about (e.g. Boon 1990) (see respectively Duff-Cooper 1990d; sec. III, above; 1991f).

So it can no longer be accepted that the appearance and reappearance of the principles in combinations 'determine' the texture of aspects of Balinese life. Rather, they are themselves an aspect of those textures, now understood as the formative elements or constituents of contexts. These, and what for instance Rössler (1990: 293) refers to as 'specific cultural themes as well as specific patterns in religion, world view, ethos, and norms and values', which in some cases may be transformations, or the direct employment, of themes and the rest, that have a more or less wide incidence, contribute to us being able to say, 'this is Balinese, and fine', for instance, as Balinese people themselves do.[12]

V

Dumont's work about India, from which has come what I have been referring to here as Dumont's theory, is a contribution to the debate about what Appadurai (1986a: 357) refers to as the 'gatekeeping concepts' that 'define the quintessential and dominant questions of interest', such as, in India, hierarchy (ibid.: 360).

Dumont, of course, and according to Howell the Erasme team in general, privileges theory. Such privileging may in general be earmarked by hierarchy and essentiality (Ryan 1982: 130). It is certainly so in Dumont's work. Not only is it based on the hierarchical relationship between parts and whole, and between one part and its opposite; but his work also distinguishes 'levels' of professional social anthropological tendencies, which are implicitly ranked in a hierarchy, conventionally speaking. It is to the highest level of these tendencies—'the true nature of anthropology'—that he and his congeners in Erasme, we may assume, hold (Dumont 1978: 84-5). Furthermore, it has been suggested that Dumont is personally committed to hierarchy and totality, and that he is 'clearly against egalitarianism and individuality' (Needham 1987: 144). Moreover, Dumont

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12. Cf. Boon 1990: 210 n.2: '"the Balinese" hypostatize themselves (and others)'. On many of these formative elements or constituents, see e.g. Duff-Cooper 1988b, 1990c. These analyses, incidentally, show that Hobart's view that context 'is not an object but sets of relations' is too partial. But the relations among the relations and the more substantive things, pragmatically speaking, that combine to form contexts are indeed 'complex' (Hobart 1985: 48). On the complexity of the concatenating relations, analogy and homology, in the Balinese case, see Duff-Cooper 1991a.

explicitly states (1980: 219) that he believes that hierarchy is *'essentially*...a relation that can succinctly be called the "encompassing of the contrary"' (emphasis added).

Appadurai points out that in the study of South Asian society, the tropological hegemony of hierarchy is being loosened in two main ways, namely by 'explicit critiques' and by a 'proliferation of anthropologies' (1986b: 757)—what Dumont would perhaps refer to as 'pseudoanthropologies' or 'antianthropologies' (see Dumont 1978: 84-5), subverting the position of 'the true...anthropology'. The flurry of papers from Erasme, and the special issues of *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde* and *Ethnos,* and the rest, can be seen in part at least as an attempt both to reduce the impact of those proliferating anthropologies on the hegemony of 'hierarchy' in South Asia and to extend Erasme's gatekeeping role to other parts of the world.

Guermonprez's view of his work on the Balinese Pandé in his second conclusion is an explicit attempt to bring Bali (and of course his work and, it follows, himself) into the comparative arenas of India and eastern Indonesia and the Pacific. This attempt seems so far to have been unsuccessful. But more interesting questions are suggested by Appadurai. While, he grants, most routine ethnographies profit from those 'summarizing metonyms' like 'hierarchy' that provide a point of orientation for the non-specialist reader, does such an attempt as that of Guermonprez and the reanalyses conducted by Barraud and Platenkamp (1990), for instance, reveal a relatively arbitrary imposition of the whims of anthropological fashion on particular places? Do these impositions 'cost us more in terms of the richness of our understanding of places than they benefit us in rhetorical or comparative convenience'? (Appadurai 1988: 45; 1986a: 358).

Readers must of course judge and answer these questions for themselves; but I think that my answers to these questions will come as no surprise. In making Bali look like India, as seen through Dumont's eyes, and like the parts of Melanesia and eastern Indonesia, and elsewhere, that the members of Erasme and their collaborators have studied and/or reanalysed, I do indeed judge that the employment of Dumont's theory costs more in terms of the possible richness that understanding of Balinese, and other, forms of life can attain, and gives us very little, if any, theoretical and/or comparative benefit in recompense. This paucity, in the main, derives from the theoretical and/or comparative propositions arrived at (e.g. Barraud, de Coppet, Iteanu and Jamous 1984: 514-18; Barraud and Plakenkamp 1990: 117-21) being premised upon and couched in the idiom of Dumont's theory.

Nevertheless, Guermonprez's employment of Dumont's theory brought us, again, to consider 'context' in anthropological analysis and to the question, 'Are contexts ranked in Balinese ideology?' Put this way, the question seemed to ask for an answer through, at first, the construction of a typology. But this, like any typology, would in principle be disputable, and I do not wish to get embroiled in the matters of power which, Mark Hobart has shown (1986a: 15), 'the definition of context in Bali turns on'. But I do want to try to understand forms of Balinese

life in a way that does not privilege theory and that helps advance along the lines of approach that have been adopted before. The approach through the combination of those principles listed in Table 1 at once evades the problems with definitions and power that a typology of contexts would inevitably bring upon us,[13] combines theory and social facts in such a way that the social facts are privileged, and through the approach 'from within' allows us to see at once both that the question 'Are Balinese contexts ranked?' is ill-framed and just what the relationship of the principles, in combinations, is to the aspects of a Balinese life in which they have been discerned (or by which they are evinced), namely an aspect of the formative elements or constituents of indigenously defined contexts of the form of life.

13. Boon is clearly incorrect when he asserts, in the sentence ending his note cited in note 12 above, that 'typology cannot be escaped'.

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