Archipel

Études interdisciplinaires sur le monde insulindien

98 | 2019

Varia

Michel Picard, *Kebalian : La construction dialogique de l'identité balinaise*

Peter Worsley

Édition électronique

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/archipel/1463>

DOI : 10.4000/archipel.1463

ISSN : 2104-3655

Éditeur

Association Archipel

Édition imprimée

Date de publication : 3 décembre 2019

Pagination : 257-261

ISBN : 978-2-910513-82-5

ISSN : 0044-8613

Référence électronique

Peter Worsley, « Michel Picard, *Kebalian : La construction dialogique de l'identité balinaise* », *Archipel* [En ligne], 98 | 2019, mis en ligne le 11 décembre 2019, consulté le 21 mars 2021. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/archipel/1463> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/archipel.1463>

Association Archipel

les niveaux et à la question des animaux mystérieux ou disparus souvent mise en doute par les Nage eux-mêmes, comme par exemple un hominoïde à face de singe, robuste créature de petite taille, couverte de poils, ressemblant aux humains mais sans la culture et l'intelligence. Forth se demande jusqu'à quel point cette créature pourrait être un lointain souvenir lié à la récente découverte du *Homo floriensis* (p. 310-311).

La conclusion reprend la discussion amorcée en introduction sur les différentes approches en ethnobiologie, entre celle des relativistes et celle des cognitivistes. L'auteur tente de se situer entre les deux, valorisant surtout la connaissance empirique de terrain de ses interlocuteurs locaux, qui permet de faire des découvertes que les seules classifications scientifiques ne peuvent pas faire et qui peuvent certainement les compléter.

Cet ouvrage, très complet et très précis est indispensable aux scientifiques qui s'intéressent à cette région de l'Est de l'Insulinde par la somme d'informations recueillies et méthodiquement présentées et pour les problèmes théoriques qu'il pose aux recherches ethno-zoologiques, au-delà des questions de taxinomie. Une fois dépassées les difficultés, pour les non zoologues, de la terminologie des taxinomies, le livre se lit avec plaisir, tant il y a de découvertes insoupçonnées, sur les modes de chasse, les odeurs, les goûts et dégoûts (comme par exemple les serpents), les sons, la consommation, et même l'existence de serpents volants, etc. On ne peut qu'admirer ce patient travail de recherche, tant pour sa présentation que pour le recueil et l'organisation d'une masse de données.

L'ouvrage est complété par quatre annexes (termes comparant les spécificités des humains et des animaux, les phases de la croissance de plusieurs animaux sauvages, les catégories d'invertébrés, les usages des noms d'animaux pour les humains), par un index, et une bibliographie très complète qui sera fort utile aux spécialistes comme aux non spécialistes, à condition qu'ils prennent la peine d'entrer dans le monde ardu et complexe des classifications.

Cécile Barraud

Centre Asie du Sud-Est, CNRS-EHESS

Michel Picard, *Kebalian: La construction dialogique de l'identité balinaise*. Paris: Association Archipel – École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2017, [Cahiers d'Archipel 44], 353 pages, ISBN: 978-2-910513-77-1.

The conquest of Bali and its incorporation in the colonial empire of the Dutch East Indies at the beginning of the twentieth century, and its inclusion in the modern independent nation of Indonesian in 1945 in the aftermath of the Second World War have given rise to a self-consciousness amongst Balinese about their identity as Balinese (*kebalian*). The author argues that concerns about what it is to be Balinese have called upon Balinese not just

to be Balinese but also to be worthy representatives of their cultural identity. Michel Picard in his history, *Kebalian: La construction dialogique de l'identité balinaise*, deconstructs the origins and traces the evolution of debates in which the Balinese intelligentsia have been engaged throughout the twentieth century about what it is or should be to be Balinese. Academics, journalists and government officials, activists and students, entrepreneurs and members of the liberal professions, he tells his readers, were all engaged in discussions not just amongst themselves but with others too, tour operators and tourists, artists, orientalist and anthropologists, nationalist Javanese, Muslim clerics, Christian missionaries, and reformist Hindus, as well as Dutch administrators, all of whom at one time or another attempted to fashion Balinese society in their own vision of how it should be. The history of Balinese identity is a history of the power play between these interlocutors.

With the incorporation of Bali within the Dutch East Indies Empire came decisions in the 1920s to restore the privileges of the Balinese nobility (*triwangsa*) and their ascendancy over the general population. The appointment of descendants of the last rulers of each of the former kingdoms as royal administrators, with full titles and their ritual prerogatives, within the power structures of empire and the choice of *brahmana* priests (*pedanda*) as judges of the Kerta Raad in each of the former kingdoms, conferred a rigid legality on the traditional social hierarchy and gave rise to tensions between nobility and commoners (*jaba*). At the same time, a small Balinese intelligentsia, who had access to a European education, formed. They cast a critical eye on their own society and argued that a person's social status should be founded on education and merit and not birthright. They formed organisations and launched periodicals in which they expressed themselves in Malay, a language they shared with Dutch administrators and other peoples of the Dutch East Indies and came to think of themselves as one people (*bangsa Bali*) amongst others. They thought of themselves as an ethnic minority with their own Balinese customs and an identity founded on religion (*agama*) and tradition (*adat*), which was threatened by both Islam and Christianity. Differences concerning the place in society of nobility and commoners were debated, and where once there had been no distinction between religion and tradition, differences of opinion were expressed in just these terms. Organisations and periodicals which gave voice to the views of the nobility emphasised that, once the Balinese had appropriated Hinduism, they had created an indigenous religious tradition of their own, *agama Hindu Bali*, one in which no distinction was to be drawn between *agama* and *adat*. They strove to safeguard this traditional social and religious order. Commoners on the other hand proclaimed their identity as Hindus, referred to their religious tradition as *agama Bali Hindu* and understood their task was to reform their religion and to rid it of those discriminatory customs (*adat*) which they regarded as having no place in a

modern society. It was not until after 1930, that the Balinese conceived of culture (*budaya*) and the arts (*seni*) as an aspect of their identity. Picard explains that there were reasons for this. At a time when Bali was becoming a popular tourist destination renowned for its culture, rituals and arts, the Dutch East Indies government, drawing on an existing orientalist view of Bali as a “living museum” of ancient Indo-Javanese civilization, promoted Balinese cultural particularism as a way of preventing Balinese participating in the rising tide of contemporary nationalist and communist movements in Java and Sumatra. This cultural image of Bali imposed itself on the Balinese imaginary, and culture, along with tradition and religion, became one of the concepts Balinese employed when debating their identity.

The incorporation of Bali in the newly formed Republic of Indonesia brought with it a crisis concerning the status of Balinese religious beliefs and practices in the new Indonesian Republic. The Ministry of Religious Affairs had interpreted the constitution to designate the Balinese as “ethnic” and their religion as tradition (*adat*) and not as religion (*agama*). A religion, based on the model of Islam, had to be monotheistic, revealed by a prophet in a sacred book and universally available and not confined to just one ethnic people. It was this model which informed the program of Balinese religious reformers, who set about establishing the theological and ethical basis of their religious life by turning to the canonical works of Indian Hinduism, translating them into Indonesian and making them available in educational programs in schools. Finally in 1959 their religion was officially recognised as *agama Hindu Bali* and a year later the Parisada Dharma Hindu Bali was founded. The Parisada set about standardising rituals and the training of the priesthood, elaborating the theological canon, writing a catechism and promoting religious education. The envisaged democratisation of religion was destined to completely overturn the idea that religion was the preserve of small well-read priestly elite. In this same period, the presence of Balinese in other parts of the new nation state created the need to attend to their religious needs far from the temples in which they were accustomed to worship their ancestors. There was now a need for a delocalised universalist form of religion. To this end the Parisada, which had established branches in different Indonesian provinces to attend to these different Balinese communities and to strengthen their religion against the threat of Islam and Christianity, voted to drop any reference to ethnic origins and renamed their organisation Parisada Hindu Dharma so that when President Sukarno published a list of officially recognised religions it included reference to *agama Hindu* and not to *agama Hindu Bali*.

The period of the New Order in Indonesia saw further changes in the character of *agama Hindu* and the Parisada Hindu Dharma. The sixties, in the wake of the massacres of 1965–66, saw increasing numbers of Javanese seeking to escape the accusation of atheism and members of other ethnic

minorities turning to *agama Hindu* reputed to be more tolerant of ethnic beliefs and practices than either Islam or Christianity. However, the loss of any ethnic reference now meant that *agama Hindu* was no longer the preserve of Balinese and the leadership of an again renamed Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia, once the preserve of *triwangsa* Balinese, included members who were not Balinese as well as commoner Balinese. In 1996 the head office of the Parisada was moved to Jakarta and placed on an equal footing with other religious groups, which meant that the office in Bali now became a regional branch along with others elsewhere in Indonesia. In this period tensions grew between different groups within the organisation. Urban middle class Indonesians who were adherents of *agama Hindu* and who sought a transnational form of religion turned to neo-Hindu devotionism, arranged pilgrimages to sacred sites in India, promoted Vedic rites and other practices such as vegetarianism. There was a growing minority of Balinese who now sought to universalise their religion and who advocated completely cutting connections between *agama Hindu* and Balinese tradition (*adat*). In the meantime commoner groups such as the Bandesa, Pasek, Pande, Senghuhu and Dukuh, who formed organisations on the basis of presumed genealogical descent from a common ancestor (*warga*), renewed their struggle to abolish the privileges of the *triwangsa* inherited from the colonial period, in particular *brahmana* monopoly over the priesthood in favour of priests drawn from their own ranks. These tensions within the Parisada came at a time, which also saw the secularisation of Balinese tradition as the Indonesian government promoted cultural tourism. The rapid growth in the number of tourists and the infrastructure to provide for them encouraged urban growth in Bali and an increasingly heterogeneous population in Bali.

The fall from power of President Suharto in 1998 opened a period of political reform in Indonesia characterised by regional decentralisation and the reaffirmation of ethnic and religious identities. The author explains that one consequence of this was that in 2001 in Bali a decree was proclaimed establishing *desa pakraman* as self-governing religious communities in which *agama Hindu* was linked to *adat Bali* and all members of *desa pakraman* had the obligation to adhere to local customary regulations. This same period also saw the rise of radical Islam and two devastating terrorist attacks in Bali in 2002 and 2005, which gave added impetus to a movement to rehabilitate the customary village in Bali under the slogan *Ajeg Bali*. The intention was to defend Balinese cultural integrity not only against terrorism but the increasing exploitation of Bali by foreign investors, the growing numbers of immigrant workers and the menace of Islam and Christianity. In these circumstances, Picard informs his readers, tensions within the Parisada Hindu Indonesia caused a major split in the organisation. What began at the eighth national congress in 2001 as differences concerning the appointment

of a lay person to the presidency of the organisation, once the preserve of a *brahmana pedanda*, and the growing influence of non Balinese, members of the commoner organisations (*warga*) and neo-devotional organisations (*sampradaya*), resulted in the formation of two separate Balinese organisations, the breakaway Parisada Hindu Dharma Bali, and the officially recognised branch of the Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia. We are witness now to a situation in which commoner Balinese determined to abolish the monopoly which *brahmana* had over the consecrated priesthood and urban middle class Balinese, who aspired to reform local religious practices by modelling them on a universalist neo-Hinduist form of religion were opposed to a *triwangsa* elite largely in tune with the village population of Bali, who sought to take back control of Balinese religious life, and keenly interested to preserve their own local religious traditions and to put an end to attempts to Indianize and Indonesianize them. Picard concludes that Balinese religion was no longer a field of unified practices and beliefs. It had become the focus of political, ethnic and religious struggle that had far reaching consequences for the way in which Balinese understood their identity as Balinese.

Kabalian: La construction dialogique de l'identité balinaise is an important work of historical scholarship. The story that Michel Picard recounts of the history of changing Balinese understandings of their identity in the twentieth century tells a story that will be familiar to historians of other ethnic minorities who have been incorporated into modern states, whether colonial or independent nation states in Southeast Asia. This makes his book a must read for anyone wanting to understand the history of Bali, Indonesia and Southeast Asia more broadly in the twentieth century. I look forward to translations of this book into English and Indonesian so that this illuminating history might become accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

Peter Worsley
School of Languages and Cultures
University of Sydney

Jennifer Goodlander, *Women in the shadows: Gender, puppets and the power of tradition in Bali*. Athens: Ohio University Press, xv-199 p., 2016, Ohio University Research in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series No. 129. ISBN: hc: 9780896803039, pb: 9780896803046, pdf: 9780896804944.

The Balinese *wayang kulit*, the author informs her readers, is both social event and sacred ritual. Jennifer Goodlander's book is an account of her experience, as a woman and foreigner, learning to perform the Balinese shadow theatre. In it she describes how, under the experienced eye of her teacher, the *dalang* I Wayan Tunjung, she acquired the multiple skills which a *dalang* must