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***Sūrya-Sevana*: A Balinese Tantric Practice²**

Every morning the Balinese *pedanda siwa*,³ who is usually termed in the Western literature a “high priest” or a “Brahmana priest,” performs a series of rituals known to Balinese and to Western scholars alike as “*surya-sevana*”.⁴ These important rituals, which form the basis of the *pedanda*’s practice,⁵ have been interpreted by Western scholars in widely divergent ways. Some scholars have regarded the rites as constituting a cult of sun worship (e.g. Brunner 1967:409-410). They have been judged to be a truncated version of Indian

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2. Acknowledgments: I wish to thank Andrea Acri for his valuable comments on this article and the editor of *Archipel*, Daniel Perret, for his most helpful suggestions. For assistance with translation, interviews and photography, I am indebted to I Gusti Nyoman Mirdiana. For allowing us to photograph him performing *surya-sevana*, and for information concerning the rituals, special thanks is due to Ida Pedanda Wayahan Bun of Griya Sanur, Pejeng.

3. There are two kinds of *pedanda*, the *pedanda siwa* and the *pedanda buddha* (Hooykaas 1973:13-14, 1973a), both of Brahmana status. This article is concerned only with the *pedanda siwa* and his rituals, the *pedanda buddha* have their own liturgy (Hooykaas 1973a).

4. I will refer here to the rituals as “*surya-sevana*” and to Hooykaas’ (1966) text of the practitioner’s manual as “*Sūrya-Sevana*”.

5. I have often heard knowledgeable Balinese say that the *surya-sevana* rituals are the most important of those rites performed by *pedanda*. This importance was impressed upon me during rituals I witnessed in 2010 to install Ida Pedanda Istri Keniten at the Griya Ketewel Sukawati. At the very end of the proceedings as he was leaving, the *nabe* (the initiating guru) stopped in front of the new *pedanda*, and announced “You now have the right to perform *surya-sevana*.” This indicates that the right to perform *surya-sevana* is conferred only through the installation ceremonies, which appropriately are termed *ḍṛkṣā* or initiation.

rituals (ibid.:412). They have even been considered to represent “a classic case of a ritual without religion” (Staal 1995:31). On the other hand, the same rituals are said to achieve a “unity with Paramaśiwa, the deepest ground of existence” (Bakker 1993:27), to involve the incarnation of the Supreme God Siwa on earth (Barth 1993:196), and to induce a trance state enabling the deity to enter the body of the priest and act through it (Covarrubias 1994:300). In this article I argue, primarily on the basis of Hooykaas’ (1966) translation of the priest’s manual,⁶ that the *surya-sevana* rituals can be better understood as part of the daily yogic *sādhana* of a Tantric adept, rather than the recitation of a priestly liturgy or the worship of a deity.

Studies of Balinese ritual in the past have been hampered by an under-developed scholarly interest in Tantrism generally. It is only comparatively recently, partly provoked by popular interest in Western culture in yoga and Eastern mysticism (Urban 2003:203-207), that serious Tantric studies have come to the fore. A little over twenty years ago, Goudriaan (1990:1) observed that Tantric studies were only just coming of age. More recently, Hatley (2010) describes a blossoming of Tantric studies. Now Indologists and philologists (e.g. Aciri 2008, 2011, 2011a; Sanderson 2003-2004; Nihom 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997) are demonstrating that Southeast Asian texts, including those from Java and Bali, have important light to throw on the early history and development of Tantrism in South Asia. Furthermore, new attention to the language used in Balinese and Old Javanese texts indicates that what in the past Western scholars assumed were texts cast in faulty Sanskrit by Indonesian scribes in fact employ Tantric forms of the language (Schoterman 1979; Aciri 2006:116).

6. Although my aim in this article is not to critique Hooykaas’ text, some comments on it seem in order for readers not familiar with his work. Given the regional variations in culture and ritual throughout Bali, and the fact that the text deals with esoteric knowledge, in what sense can it be regarded as representative of such rituals in general? Throughout his extensive oeuvre, Hooykaas was always meticulous in basing his research on as many sources as possible. As he explains in his Introduction (Hooykaas 1966:12, 14-19, tables 34-37), he consulted over a score of manuscripts from different regions of Bali held in the Gedong Kirtya Lontar Library Bali, the Library of the University of Leiden, and his own private collection. His Balinese friend, I Gusti Ngurah Ketut Sangka, from Tabanan assisted him throughout and interviewed *pedanda* for him (ibid.: 7). He explains that the version he offers is a composite constructed from several sources; while recognizing that this is less than ideal (ibid.:14), it serves to show some of the many variations. Given the practical difficulties of dealing with manuscript sources in Bali, I consider his text as rigorous a scholarly production as we can reasonably expect. Until such time as a more satisfactory version becomes available, what it does provide is a basis for discussion from which others might work. With regard to the esoteric nature of the material, in the past under colonial rule some *pedanda* were prepared to allow access to their texts to important international visitors such as French scholar Sylvain Lévi (ibid.:11-12), thus enabling the formation of the collections of manuscripts Hooykaas consulted. An Indonesian translation of *Sūrya-Sevana* (Hooykaas 2002) was published in 2002, making its contents widely available now to Balinese and Indonesians generally. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that Hooykaas’ text represents in no sense any kind of official manual, each *pedanda* possesses texts and knowledge inherited through family ties and can be expected to practice versions that are unique to his or her situation, and to hold their own individual interpretations of the rites.

Yet despite these developments, the prevailing scholarly view concerning Tantric influence in Bali is, I think, clearly stated by well-known anthropologists Boon (1990:xiii), who observes that such influences “are not doctrinal, seldom corporate, not coherent or even necessarily cultic, and possibly contrary to several orthodoxies” and Barth (1993:262), who supports Boon in observing that in Bali “Tantric theory, whatever that might be, does not underwrite a coherent system of knowledge”. The arguments to be presented in this article challenge such well-established opinions.

Traces of Tantric influences on the *pedanda*’s role have been noted by various scholars,⁷ but as yet Tantric aspects of the *surya-sevana* rituals have attracted little systematic commentary, even though Hooykaas’ text of the practitioner’s manual has been available for more than forty years. I have previously identified *Sūrya-Sevana* as a Tantric yoga text, but without examining it in detail (Stephen 2005:109). Rubinstein (1991, 2000) has described mystical and yogic aspects of the *pedanda*’s role, while making only passing references to *Sūrya-Sevana*. Lovric (1987:32, 321) refers to yoga, including *kuṇḍalinī* yoga, performed by *pedanda* but does not refer to the *sūrya-sevana* rituals from this perspective. Zoetmulder (1974:179) briefly identifies *Sūrya-Sevana* as a Tantric yoga text, noting that the study of such works had only just begun. Gonda (1975:52) observed Tantric influence in the mantras of *Sūrya-Sevana* but his comments went little beyond a summary of Hooykaas (1966). More recently Sanskritist Frits Staal (1995) has drawn attention to Tantric aspects of *Sūrya-Sevana* but provides little evidence to support his assertions, as Howe (1997:873) points out in a review of *Mantras between Fire and Water*.⁸ Staal (1995:10) states that Balinese mantras are “typically Tantric”, without providing further clarification or evidence, and observing that the rituals of Tantrism in general remain “only very imperfectly known” (ibid.:40). Yet he further states that “Sūrya Sevana looks like a purely Balinese ceremony, with Indianization and convergence affecting several details” (ibid.:21).

Hooykaas (1966) was presumably not unaware of the Tantric nature of his text, yet he does not comment on it. He always clearly strived to present his material in a manner that avoided prejudicing a particular line of interpretation.⁹

7. Korn’s (1960) detailed study of the rituals to create a new *pedanda*, based on information collected in the 1920s, makes no mention of Tantrism, although many of the features he describes can now be identified as characteristic of Tantric initiation. I have discussed the *pedanda*’s initiation (*dīkṣā*) elsewhere (Stephen n.d.).

8. I share Howe’s view that Staal’s (1995) interpretations offer little of interest to the anthropologist or help to the general reader attempting to penetrate the mysteries of Hooykaas’ text. On the other hand, some, such as Guernonprez (2001:277), see fit to support Staal’s (1995) assertions.

9. Hooykaas was well known for avoiding interpretations of his texts. I can only share the regret expressed by Ricklefs (1975:192) in a review of another work that Hooykaas is “so reluctant to explain his texts to those who know little of Balinese religion, who comprise virtually the whole of his potential readership. ... In giving his readers texts and assuming that they can interpret

Few of the Tantric parallels I discuss here were explicitly identified as such by him. Indologist Brunner (1967: 417), concurred with Hooykaas that the source of the Balinese rituals are the Śaiva *āgamas*, thus revealing their Tantric origins. However, where *Sūrya-Sevana* diverges from the South Indian sources with which she was familiar, Brunner assumed the Balinese text or Hooykaas' translation must be faulty. The literature on Tantrism in Bali in general and questions of definition have been reviewed by me previously (Stephen 2005:81-97).

Recent important work by Aciri (2006, 2011, 2011b) is demonstrating the Tantric nature of the Balinese *tutur* texts generally, of which *Sūrya-Sevana* is one. Aciri (2011b:152) has sought to identify a group of key Balinese texts, while drawing attention to the puzzling, long standing reluctance of philologists and anthropologists alike to engage with the mystical and philosophical works that constitute nothing less than the basis of Balinese scriptural authority (ibid.:143-144, and more recently Aciri 2013). He points out that until such sources are properly understood, much about Balinese ritual and religion will remain an enigma.

I am not a textual scholar and my aim here is not to critique or attempt to revise Hooykaas' text and translation; rather I wish to use the rich data he offers as a means of gaining access to an esoteric ritual still performed daily in Bali.¹⁰ What I hope to do is offer a reading of the text from the perspective of a cultural anthropologist who seeks to understand a conceptual structure within a comparative context of related ideas and practices. My point is that a careful re-reading of Hooykaas' text *as it stands* that places it in the broader context of present understandings of Tantric philosophy and ritual can shed some new light on the *pedanda's* role. The more general point to be made is that texts, if one engages with them, can reveal much about ritual in Bali today.¹¹

The *Surya-sevana* Rituals

The *pedanda siwa's* daily morning rites, "surya-sevana", take approximately 50 minutes to an hour to carry out and are performed in the house-temple of the *pedanda's* residence (*griya*) on a special pavilion called the *bale pawedaan* (see fig.1 to 7). The *pedanda* sits cross-legged in a *padma āsana*, not moving

them as well as he, Hooykaas overestimates his colleagues". Aciri (2011b:note 10) points out that Hooykaas was quite honest in admitting his discomfort in dealing with Indian (especially Śaiva/Tantric) matters, which he felt himself ill-equipped to handle.

10. Like all aspects of Balinese religion, the role of the *pedanda* is undergoing change as it is adapted to the modern world (Stephen n.d.). However the arguments presented here are not concerned with changes but rather continuities. I base my arguments on observations of current ritual practice in Bali today.

11. The notion that the extraordinarily rich ritual life of Bali has little or no connection with textual sources seems to have become firmly entrenched among many anthropologists and Bali scholars, as Aciri (2011b:147-149 and also 2013) has pointed out.

from this position through out, but performing elaborate hand movements (*mudrā*), ringing a hand bell, and manipulating various cult objects and materials, such as flowers, rice, incense and water. The practitioner's eyes are closed, while words are continuously muttered inaudibly under the breath. He, or she,¹² appears to be in a self-absorbed trance state, paying no attention to what is going on around them. The rite culminates with the *pedanda* creating holy water (*tirta amerta*), which he uses first to sprinkle on his own head and face and then gives the container to an assistant, who administers it to others present, or to those who have requested it to take home with them. The *pedanda* then rises and leaves the *bale pawedaan*, the ritual is over. These actions are plainly visible to any visitor who has access to the *griya*, and may be observed today all over Bali.¹³

While the aim of the ritual and how it is achieved are hardly transparent to an outside observer, almost any Balinese present can explain that the aim is to produce holy water and that this is achieved through the mystical power of the *pedanda*'s words and actions (more knowledgeable might say through his "yoga"), although precisely how is not known. Hooykaas (1966:9) notes that the term "surya-sevana" actually means "worship of the sun", and thus is rather misleading since both text and rite are concerned with the production of holy water rather than sun worship.¹⁴ My observations of the rituals in many communities,¹⁵ and my questioning of informants, confirm that providing holy water constitutes the *pedanda*'s most important ritual function in the eyes of ordinary people. Several types of holy water are made by the *pedanda*, the most important of which are *tirta amerta*, *tirta panglukatan* and *tirta pangentas*. The methods of preparing the first two are described in *Sūrya-Sevana*; the third, which is used in the death ceremonies, is not. I will focus my discussion here on *tirta amerta* which is used at temple festivals and many other occasions. *Tirta panglukatan* is used for purification and to remove sickness and misfortune.

12. Women may be initiated and act as *pedanda* in their own right, but more usually husband and wife are initiated together, with the wife acting as her husband's assistant. On her husband's death, however, the *pedanda istri* may act in his stead.

13. Hooykaas (1966:10) gives a description of a public performance which is still recognizable today and tallies with my observations here, although he was writing over forty years ago.

14. Although *Sūrya-Sevana* does not describe a cult of sun worship—Śiva is the principal deity addressed—its references to Śiva as the Sun, Śiva-Āditya, along with the title may be linked to a cult of Śiva as the Sun, the practitioners of which were called Sauras, known from rare Tantric sources from the Subcontinent. I thank Andrea Acri (personal communication) for this information.

15. Most of my field observations, beginning in 1996 and continuing to the present, were made in communities close to Ubud. I have consulted *pedanda* in *griya* in Padang Tegal, Tebasaya, Peliatan, Pejeng, Ketewel, Sukawati, Batuan, Blahbatuh, Payangan, Bangli, Klungkung, Sidemen, Denpasar and Tabanan. I thank the Australian Research Grants Council (1996-1999) and La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia (2001-2004), for funding ethnographic fieldwork on which this article draws.

According to many Balinese I have spoken with, *pedanda* in the past rarely attended public ceremonies in person, but instead provided holy water prepared in the morning rituals to those people who came to the *griya* formally asking for it. Vessels containing the precious liquid were then carried home or to the temple to be used there without the presence of the *pedanda*. In recent years, however, the many Balinese who can afford to hold much larger and more expensive ceremonies than in the past seek the presence of one or more *pedanda*, largely as a matter of status. Many *pedanda* are thus today invited to attend in person to make the holy water that previously was prepared in private. The conducting of these rituals is however little different from that observed in the *griya*, the only obvious difference being the more elaborate costume worn on public occasions which serves to represent the transformation the *pedanda* undergoes during the rite.

Over several years, I have attended many public and private performances. What action there is to observe is confined to hand movements (*mudrā*) and manipulations of the cult instruments and materials.¹⁶ Furthermore, it is hardly possible to question the practitioner, who is lost in deep contemplation. It must also be taken into account that the essence of what is taking place constitutes esoteric knowledge available only to initiated *pedanda*. I have often had my questions to *pedanda* concerning the rites deftly avoided with a polite demur that further information could not be disclosed to uninitiated persons.¹⁷ Without Hooykaas' text, it would be virtually impossible for an observer to gain much idea of the nature or meaning of the rites. No matter how rigorous an anthropological scrutiny they might be subjected to, without knowledge of the text the rites remain impenetrable, or at best a matter of disconnected sense impressions—sight, sound and smell. In these circumstances, the ethnographer, I think, must make use of texts where such are available, or fail to gain any sense of the deeper import of the external actions he or she can observe.

When we turn to the *Sūrya-Sevana* text we find it reveals that while seated in self-absorbed trance for fifty minutes or so, the practitioner is immersed in a complex sequence of visualizations, recitations of mantras and displays of *mudrā* that have strikingly parallels with yogic practices described in South Asian sources. In short, these visualizations involve a yogic transformation of the physical body of the *pedanda* into a mantra body of power identical

16. The hand gestures (*mudrā*) and the cult instruments in use were described and sketched by Tyra de Kleen (n.d.) in the 1920s, more recently Staal (1995) has published a series of Balinese sketches of the *mudra*, but with little explanation. This material provides some basis for connecting the actual performance of the rituals with the manual, but a complete record of the complex sequence could, I think, be obtained only by actually filming the rituals as they take place.

17. Although the rituals of *Sūrya-Sevana* were in the past esoteric knowledge confined to initiated *pedanda*, the publication of Hooykaas' English translation in 1966, and more recently the publishing of an Indonesian translation of Hooykaas' work (Hooykaas 2002), can leave little doubt that an account of the rituals is widely available to all interested, including Balinese.

with that of the god Śiva. The practice begins with a series of extensive purifications, following which the adept removes his own soul from his body and unifies it with Śiva. Then, having transformed his body into a body of mantra power, he conducts the soul, now unified with Śiva, down into his heart. As he meditates on Śiva in the form of *Ardhanareśwarī* (Half lord, half lady/Śiva united in one body with his Śakti),¹⁸ the essence of that union permeates the ordinary water in the holy water container transforming it into *tirta amerta*. Following extensive praising and honoring of the divine *amṛta*, the practice concludes with the deity being dissolved in the heart of the adept, who is thereby returned to a normal human condition. Readers familiar with the Tantric literature from the Subcontinent will recognize many parallels, but such have been largely overlooked by Bali specialists to date.

Hooykaas does provide a detailed comparison with contemporary Śaiva Siddhānta temple ritual in South India, revealing many similarities, even to the extensive use of the same *mudrā*, mantras and hymns of praise (Hooykaas 1966:143-144).¹⁹ Although he points to minor variations between the two, nevertheless the similarities are striking. Furthermore both rites demonstrate a virtually identical structure—that is, up to a certain point. The complex purifications which begin the rituals, the removal of the soul and its unification with Śiva, the creation of the body of mantras, the conducting of the deity to the heart of the worshipper, are all features common to both. Yet despite these many parallels, Hooykaas argues that the South Indian Śaiva Siddhānta rituals have a distinctly different aim, which is to bring down the deity into the heart of the priest and then to transfer it to a specially prepared *linga*, where the god can be served and worshipped. In contrast, the aim of the Balinese rites is to transfer the essence of the union with Śiva to a container of water which thereby becomes “*tirta amerta*.” Although praise and thanks is offered, there is no comparable “worship” of the holy water or comparable service, such as the offerings of food, clothing, and entertainments that are given to the *linga* in the South Indian rite. Furthermore, as already noted, holy water is usually prepared by the *pedanda* in private in his house-temple, and only occasionally at public rituals by invitation, unlike the South Indian rites which take place daily as part of public temple worship.

18. According to Zoetmulder (1982:123), “ardhanāreśwara” means “the lord who is also half female”, while the form “ardhanāreśwari” means “the mistress or queen who is half male”. The Balinese texts, such as *Sūrya-Sevana* invariably seem to use the latter form “ardhanareśwarī”, although why the emphasis on the female aspect prevails is not clear to me. Hooykaas employs various spellings, although always with the “i” ending. See also *Kamus Bali-Indonesia* 1978:54, “arda narēswari”.

19. According to Hooykaas (1966:143-144) the mantras common to both traditions and used repeatedly throughout *Sūrya-Sevana* include the *Mūla* mantra, the *Kūṭa* mantra, the *pañca brahmamantra*, the *sad aṅgamantra* and the formula *utpatti-sthiti-pralaya* (coming forth, maintenance, dissolution). This indicates that the best known and most efficacious Śaiva mantras are employed in this text.

A similar pattern can be discerned in other South Asian examples: I have selected three well-known and easily accessible examples as a basis for comparison. Richard Davis (1991) has described and interpreted a medieval Śaiva-Siddhānta temple ritual which closely resembles the early sections of *Sūrya-Sevana*, with its extensive purifications, the removal of the worshipper's soul, the creation of a mantra body, the union with Śiva and the conducting of the soul unified with the deity down into the heart; but diverges at the point where the deity is transferred to the *liṅga*. Likewise the Tantric Śākta *pūjā* described in detail by Gupta (1979:139-145) follows much the same sequence, with the deity here being transferred from the heart of the practitioner to a *yantra*. Also the well known Tantric text, the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* (Woodroffe 1972:70-87) describes a morning worship resembling all those just described, significantly varying from the Balinese rituals only at the juncture where the deity is transferred from the adept's heart to a *yantra* to be given worship.

Indologist Hélène Brunner (1967), from the perspective of contemporary South Indian practices and texts, argued in a review of the book appearing shortly after its publication that Hooykaas' text was faulty in many respects, especially where it diverged from possible Indian sources. Similarities between rites, she maintained, can provide useful comparisons, but where differences arise it is far safer scholarly practice to follow the better known and more intensively studied Indian texts. She thus offered an alternative reading of Hooykaas' text that would bring Balinese practices into line with Indian models, observing that the Balinese text might have been copied from an incomplete Indian source (ibid.:412), and that the Balinese focus on the preparation of holy water to the exclusion of a proper worship of the cult deity was the result of error.²⁰

The fact that a significant part of the *Sūrya-Sevana* rituals so closely parallels a range of South Asian practices, including medieval Śaiva-Siddhānta texts, Śākta Tantric *pūjā*, and the morning rites described in the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, seems highly significant suggesting that they are closely related; clearly they belong to a common core of Śaiva belief and ritual.²¹ The divergence of the Balinese practice at the point where preparation of holy

20. Brunner's (1963, 1973) seminal work, a multi-volume translation and commentary on an 11th century Śaivasiddhānta ritual manual from South India, the *Somaśambhupaddhati*, especially Parts 1 and 3, provides a rich compendium of information on Śaiva ritual. It demonstrates so many parallels with *Sūrya-Sevana* that it is not difficult to see why Brunner was convinced the Balinese text was misconstrual of an Indian original. However, the precise relationship between the Indian and Balinese texts can only be demonstrated through an extensive philological study beyond the aims of this article.

21. In a recent study of the Tantric body, Flood (2006) has argued that a basically similar ritual structure underlies the varying theology, doctrines and cultural symbolism of the different traditions of Tantrism. He demonstrates his argument by examining the Pāñcarātra, Śaiva-Siddhānta and Trika Traditions. The Balinese rituals conform to his schema up to the point where worship is transferred to an external deity (ibid.: 121).

water commences becomes all that more remarkable and perhaps gives support to Hooykaas' (1965-1966:387) suggestion that it arises from an Indonesian or Balinese innovation that lends a distinctly different cast to the whole. Or it may be that Brunner was right and the so-called innovation is merely the result of faulty textual transmission. I will return to these questions later after examining Hooykaas' text in more detail.

The *Sūrya-Sevana* Text (Part I)

Hooykaas presents his text in two parts: Part I, which he numbers in sections A to Z, culminating in the preparation of *tirta amerta*; and Part II, sections A' to Z', that deals with the releasing of the deity from the body of the adept. For clarity I have added my own subdivisions and headings, but the following discussion will include reference to most of Hooykaas' sections represented by upper case letters, and many of the sub-sections denoted by lower case letters, in order to reveal the narrative progression of the rite as a whole. Hooykaas' sections are identified here by letters in brackets, for example (Ac) to enable the reader to check my interpretations against his text. This close attention to detail makes for somewhat tedious reading, but is essential to my aim of demonstrating that the text constitutes a meaningful whole as it stands.

a) Initial Purifications (Hooykaas' sections A to H)

The first sections (Aa to Ac) of the text are concerned with various purifications, beginning with actual washing and cleansing of the physical body of the practitioner, followed by instructions to sit carefully in the lotus *āsana* in front of the cult instruments and the tray of perishable materials to be used, consisting of rice grains, flowers and incense. The tray is uncovered and various formula are recited to purify them (B). Then the adept's hands are symbolically cleansed twice with mantras and flowers (C and D). Next are purified the cult instruments, consisting of a brazier, a lamp (which represents the fire of Śiva, Agni), a tripod and a vessel (*śivambha*) into which clean water is poured that will later be changed into Holy Water (Ea and Eb).

The initial purifications outlined for morning practice in the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* offer many parallels. They also begin with washing and bathing (Woodroffe 1972:65-66), the practitioner is then instructed to put on two pieces of clean cloth, as is the *pedanda* (Hooykaas 1966:35). Uttering various mantras, the Indian practitioner rinses his mouth and washes his hands (Woodroffe 1972:68). Then attention is turned to the vessel to contain the "oblation". First the vessel is "washed" with the *Astra* mantra; then purified with the heart mantra as it is filled with water, then "throwing flowers and perfume into the water", the "holy rivers are invoked into it"; then "Fire, Sun and Moon" are worshipped in the water, followed by *mudrā* (ibid.:71). This

closely resembles the Balinese *pedanda*'s purifications, where the holy water vessel is purified by reciting the *Astra* mantra and holding it over the lamp (Eb 1-4), then as it is filled the holy rivers are invoked (Eb 19-20). Perfume, flowers and rice grains are offered to the vessel (Eb 24) and the "Three Spheres" are assigned to the vessel – Fire, Sun and Moon (Gb 1-10).

Although the *pedanda*'s purifications of the vessel involve additional steps, the basic sequence is the same and the shared detail seems too rich to be mere coincidence. Gupta (1979:134-136) and Davis (1991:39) describe similar purifications, while Hooykaas (1966:141-144) points to correspondences with contemporary South Indian Śaiva-Siddhānta.

b) Purification by fire and water (I-L)

The next step is to subject the body of the practitioner to a deconstruction by fire and water through a process that resembles *kuṇḍalinī* yoga.²² The adept begins with *prāṇāyāma* (I and J). Instructions are given to employ three steps of yogic breathing, *kumbhaka*, *recaka* and *pūraka*, which are identical with those used in awakening the *kuṇḍalinī* energy in yogic practice (Gupta 1979: 168-169), even to specifying inhaling and exhaling through different nostrils, and then reversing the order (ibid.:169). Following *prāṇāyāma*, the *pedanda* must visualize conducting his soul from the heart to 12 fingers' breadth above the crown of the head, using the Seven *Om* formula (J). With the soul safely removed from the body, the text commands the practitioner to "burn away all corporeal impurities" by visualizing fire rising from the navel and sweeping upwards "through the inward channel *Suṣumnā*" (Hooykaas 1966:61). The connection here with *kuṇḍalinī* yoga is evident as the *suṣumnā* channel is that travelled by the *kuṇḍalinī* energy. In the Balinese text no mention of the term "*kuṇḍalinī*" is made;²³ instead "fire" (San Hyan Agni) is said to be generated by the *prāṇāyāma*. However, the *kuṇḍalinī* energy, as is well known, is virtually synonymous with heat and fire (Eliade 1970:246-247).

Following this conflagration of the body, the adept is instructed to "IMAGINE that evil and impurity have finally turned into ashes" (Ka 17); and is then enjoined to wash away the ashes of the body with the *amṛta* (ambrosia) that flows from a "crystal sphere filled with Ambrosia emanating from Holy Śiva-in-the-Sky" (Hooykaas 1966:63). The ambrosia is visualized as flowing down the adept's throat and extinguishing the ashes of the body (La 4-5). The next three lines of the text (La 6-8) state that the *Om-kāra* is the Supreme Knowledge, the source of ambrosia and is turned downwards, having the color of mother-of-pearl and rock crystal. The adept "should place it at the root of the throat, because from there it sheds Ambrosia, on the joints of all the limbs"

22. Pott (1966:132) observes that this section of *Sūrya-Sevana*, *ngili-atma*, resembles the *ṣaṭcakra* (piercing the six *cakra*) of the Indian esoteric Buddhist master (*vajrācaryā*).

23. Acri (2006) points out that the term *kuṇḍalinī* does not occur in the early Sanskrit *tantra* either.

(Hooykaas 1966:65). This instruction brings to mind the *khecarī mudrā* of *kuṇḍalinī* yoga (Flood 1996:100; White 1996:254) which involves turning the tongue back and inserting it into the throat, the “saliva secretion thus produced is interpreted as celestial ambrosia (*amṛta*)” (Eliade 1970:247). If we were to assume that the Balinese adept is unaware of the Tantric identity of *amṛta* as the combined sexual substances of the Divine pair, the next three lines of *Sūrya-Sevana* (La 9-11), remove any doubt on this point:

What is born from the union of Husband and Wife, is known as Life:
One should know that Agni is Prakṛiti, and that Vāyu is Puruṣa;
their Union produces Life, Death comes through Separation. (Hooykaas 1966:65)

Kuṇḍalinī yoga aims at arousing the *kuṇḍalinī* energy at the base of the spine, equated with fire, and the feminine principle, to unite with Śiva (consciousness) located in the *sahasrāra* cakra in the crown of the head, thus flooding the practitioner with bliss visualized in the form of *amṛta* (Eliade 1970:245-26; Gupta 1979:170-172; Brooks 1990:56-58). Clearly the *Sūrya-Sevana* text, although the term *kuṇḍalinī* is not used, is describing just such a yogic union at this juncture. However this is not the climax or culmination of the ritual, but merely the final stage of the purifications to create a totally pure physical body which can now be transformed into a body of divine power.

The steps just described, from the commencement of the *prāṇāyāma* (I), through the removal of the soul, and then the purifying of the body by burning it into ashes with fire and finally washing the ashes away, are paralleled in the South Asian rituals described earlier, where such practices are termed *bhūtaśuddhi*, or the purification of the elements (Flood 2000:509-511). The purifications by fire and water described in *Sūrya-sevana* precede the construction of the mantra body and the subsequent conducting of the deity into the adept’s heart. Thus their function and their position within the sequence of rites can leave little doubt that they constitute the process of *bhūtaśuddhi*, even though this term is not employed in the Balinese text.²⁴

Bhūtaśuddhi is an essentially Tantric practice, and as Gupta (1979:135) points out, a highly important one. David Gordon White (1996:272) gives a clear idea of its Tantric nature and significance, describing how the body of the practitioner is:

... burned up before being cleansed with water and flooded with “nectar”, processes which, identified with the dissolution of the mundane self, constitute the first step towards the creation of a new divinized self.

Gupta (1979:136) explains that following *bhūtaśuddhi*, the practitioner “now has a body made of pure substance (*sāttvika*) identical with that of the deity’s”.

24. The terms *kara śodhana* and *kara śuddhi* are used (Hooykaas 1966:48, 50).

c) The Nyāsa – The Imposition of the Mantra Body (M-N)

In *Sūrya-sevana* (as in all the South Asian examples so far discussed) the purification by fire and water is followed by *nyāsa*, a process of transforming the body of the practitioner into a body of mantra-power.²⁵ Characteristic of Tantric ritual (Brooks 1990:270), *nyāsa* involves touching with the hands the appropriate parts of the body and investing them with specific mantras. White (1996:179-180) describes *nyāsa* as a means by which the practitioner's "body is divinized" and emphasizes the importance in Tantric practice of the linked processes of *bhūtaśuddhi* and *nyāsa*.

In *Sūrya-Sevana* the *nyāsa* are preceded by the imposition of mantras on the hands, beginning with the thumb of the right hand and *Īśāna*, and ending with the little finger and *Sadyojāta* (Ma), exactly as described by Davis (1991:49) for the medieval Śaiva-Siddhānta practice. By imposing the *brahmamantras* and the *aṅgamantras* on to his hands "the worshipper literally makes them similar to Śiva" (Davis 1991:49). Thus from this point on, the practitioner is using divinized hands to impose the mantra powers on his own body.

The sequence of *nyāsa* in *Sūrya-Sevana* opens with another imposition of the five *brahmamantras* and the six *aṅgamantras* (Na). According to Davis (ibid.:48) these mantras, along with the *Mūla* mantra, constitute "the most frequently employed and efficacious of all Śaiva mantras". They occur repeatedly throughout the Balinese text, so frequently I will not attempt to document them here. The five *brahmamantras*, based on Śiva's five aspects, *Sadyojāta*, *Vāmadeva*, *Tatpuruṣa*, *Aghora* and *Īśāna*, are employed to invest the body of the practitioner with the five cosmic functions of Śiva—emission, maintenance, veiling, reabsorption and grace (ibid.:48). The six *aṅgamantras* encapsulate Śiva's six limbs or instruments of power: *Netra* (eye), *Hṛd* (heart), *Sīras* (head), *Śikhā* (topknot), *Kavaca* (armor) and *Astra* (weapon), and are used in a set to invest the practitioner with all Śiva's powers and capacities. They may also be used individually, for example *Kavaca* (armour) to protect something (ibid.:48-49), as is frequently the case in *Sūrya-Sevana*.²⁶

The assignment of the Three *Tattva* (*Śiva-tattva*, *Vidyā-tattva* and *Ātmā-tattva*) is undertaken next (Nb); and is followed by the construction of the divine throne or seat (Nc, d, and e), a process which again closely resembles that described by Davis (ibid.:124-125). The first stage is the throne of "Ananta" (Nc) where the Balinese text specifies "you make *ANANTĀSANA* in the Holy Water and at the same time in your own body" (Hooykaas 1966:69). The next stage is the square lion throne (*śinhāsana*) (Nd). The four

25. Staal (1995:21-23) identifies the *nyāsa* procedures in *Sūrya-Sevana* as Tantric but reduces them to a meaningless touching of the body "especially with water"; as we find "demonstrated by one of our close associates in the animal world: the cat". This seems an especially disappointing comment coming from a Sanskrit expert.

26. Compare the discussion here with Brunner (1967:412).

powers assigned to the corners of the throne—each of which are stated to be “lion-shaped” (*siṃha-rūpāya*) (Nd 2-5)—are identical with those described by Davis (ibid.:124), namely *dharma*, *jñāna*, *vairāgya* and *aiśvarya*. Davis observes that the *yogāsana*, the yoga throne that follows, is often omitted and the ritual moves directly to the construction of the lotus throne; and such is the case with the Balinese text which moves directly from the lion throne to the lotus throne (*padmāsana*) (Ne).

Although the parallels are striking, the important difference emerges here that the Balinese practitioner constructs the ascending levels of the throne in his own body and in the holy water (Hooykaas 1966:71), whereas the South Asian adept constructs and imposes the same throne on a *liṅga* (Davis 1991:124).²⁷ Nevertheless, the explanation of the significance of the throne given by Davis (ibid.:124), seems equally applicable to the Balinese situation:

The worshipper himself ascends towards Śiva as he prepares the divine throne. Before he can honor Śiva directly, he must first worship the differentiated aspects of Śiva's power, the forms through which Śiva acts upon our cosmos. Following the order of reabsorption, which is always the route to approach Śiva, the ritualist passes through all levels of manifest reality and does homage along the way to all manifestations of Śiva's sovereignty. As each upward stage of the divine throne is constructed, the worshipper reaches closer to the place where the highest Lord can be summoned.

The process of *nyāsa* continues in *Sūrya-sevana* with the assignment of various powers to the lotus throne (*padmāsana*) beginning with the imposition of vowels and consonants on the petals of the lotus (Nf), then the nine *śakti* (Ng), another assignment of the *Brahmāṅga* and the *Śivāṅga* mantras (Nh), assignment of gods, sages and ancestors (Ni), the four *Sandhyā* (Nj), the eight planets (Nk), the *Try-Akṣara* mantra and the imposition of the *Tri-Samaya* (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Īśvara) (Nl). Finally the god's presence is announced with the *Deva-Pratiṣṭhā* mantra (Nm), and the *nyāsa* are brought to a close with the imposition of the *Kūṭa* mantra. Although these lengthy *nyāsa* do not precisely match with those Gupta lists for a Tantric *pūjā* of the goddess, they are close and the aim of the adept, as explained by Gupta (1979:136) “to house the entire cosmos within his body, by conceiving it to be a divine mansion wherein all the attendant deities and the entire galaxy are present” evidently sums up aptly the intent of the Balinese ritual.

The *nyāsa* in *Sūrya-Sevana* culminates with the unification of the adept's soul with Śiva (Nm). Following an offering of water as to a newly arrived guest (O), the soul now unified with the deity is conducted down to the heart of the adept (P). This unification and the placing in the heart also takes place in the four South Asian examples discussed previously,²⁸ but from here on the

27. Brunner (1967:414) sees this as anomalous based on her assumption that the Balinese rituals should focus on the worship of the cult deity, as do the South Indian.

28. The South Indian rituals described by Hooykaas (1966: 144); the Tantric *pūjā* described by Gupta (1979:136-137); the medieval Śaiva Siddhānta texts described by Davis (1991:108) and

Balinese rituals focus on the Holy Water, whereas the Indian rituals transfer the deity either to a *liṅga* if the deity is Śiva, or to a *yantra*, if the goddess, where worship and service is offered.

After very closely following the procedures described in the South Asian examples, so closely that a common or linking group of texts seems only logical regardless of whether such texts have yet been identified, the Balinese rite diverges at this point in a manner that seems sufficiently radical to support the idea of an Indonesian/Balinese innovation or addition. Nevertheless, when examined in detail, the remaining sections of *Sūrya-Sevana* seem just as Tantric in nature, intent and spirit, if not more so, than the earlier parts that so clearly parallel Indian practices.

d) The Preparation of Holy Water (Q to Z)

Having conducted the soul unified with the deity to the heart (P), the next section of *Sūrya-Sevana* (Q) turns attention to the holy water container. The adept is instructed to write the sacred syllable “*Oṃ*” on the surface of the water it contains. Having recited the God’s Presence mantra, the adept is to visualize or meditate on “the united God Śiva and the Goddess Umā” (Hooykaas 1966:85). It is at this point, according to Hooykaas’ (ibid.) Balinese informant, that “Śiva descends into the Holy Water vessel”. It is specified that Śiva united with his consort as “Ardhanareśvarī” (Hooykaas 1966:84) is visualized in the Holy Water container. Following this comes a hymn of praise to the Goddess Gaṅgā as a form of *amṛta* (R).

Amṛta, as is well established in the South Asian Tantric literature, is nothing less than the sexual substances produced by the union of Śiva and the Goddess (White 1996:138). As we noted earlier with respect to section (Lb 8-11), this esoteric understanding is clearly indicated in the Balinese text. Elsewhere Hooykaas (1964:139) discusses in some detail the esoteric significance of *amṛta* as the substances flowing from the union of god and goddess as Ardhanareśvarī. He quotes another text:

Hence a rain of nectar pours down, therefore on all the limbs & junctions, born from the meeting of Husband & Wife, this is proclaimed to be the Real Life.

Hooykaas explains that Husband and Wife refer to Śiva and Umā, who are together referred to as “*amṛta-karaṇī*” or the cause or means of obtaining *amṛta*. Thus the significance of Śiva as Ardhanareśvarī (half lord/half lady)²⁹ being visualized in the holy water container is clear. Śiva as Ardhanareśvarī becomes present in the holy water container (*śivambha*) and the sexual substances, *amṛta*, flowing from the divine pair infuse the water therein

the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* (Woodroffe 1972:87).

29. See Note 18.

with life-giving and purifying powers—powers that the text then goes on to celebrate in the next several sections.

In his extensive study of the use of body substances, especially sexual ones, in Tantric, yogic and Indian alchemical rites, White (2003:135) quotes Hooykaas' description of the Balinese production of holy water as a classic example of Tantric concepts and understandings concerning such substances. Surprisingly it seems for an expert in the Tantric literature, Brunner (1967) gives no indication in her review of Hooykaas' work that the Balinese "holy water" has this esoteric significance, continuing to insist that the proper aim of the ritual is to offer worship to a deity.

The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, although not concerned with the preparation of holy water, refers to the presence of God and Goddess in the ritual wine in a manner strongly resonating with the Balinese *pedanda* contemplating the divine presence in the holy water.

Then, meditating upon the union of Deva and Devī in the wine, and thinking that the same is filled with the ambrosia of such union, japa should be made over it of the Mūla-Mantra twelve times. Then, considering the wine to be the Devatā, handfuls of flowers should be offered with japa of the Mūla-Mantra. Lights and incense-sticks should be waved before it to the accompaniment of the ringing of a bell. (Woodroffe 1972:99-100)

Similarly, the Balinese adept, after visualizing the presence of "the united God Śiva and the Goddess Umā" (Q5) in the water, takes "a flower, perfume, unblemished rice grains" and holds the brazier, while offering praise to the Goddess Gaṅgā as *amṛta*. Then, as in the *Mahānirvāṇa* rite, he takes up the bell, ringing it continuously. The bell, the Balinese text explicitly states, represents the sound *Om* and *nāda*:

The sound of the bell is the utmost good,
It is loudly proclaimed as being the syllable OM;
it represents *ardha-candra*, *bindu* [*nāda* and] and *nādānta*,
it is a spark of fire and it has the quality of Śiva. (Hooykaas 1966:87, S8-9)

The sound of the bell has a special significance in Tantrism. Hoens (1979:93-94) explains that one of the "most essential traits of Tantrism is its conception of a phonic plane of existence parallel to, even basic to, the objective world". The phonic plane represents a very subtle level of cosmic evolution, and it is represented in the mystic syllable *Om*, which is composed of various elements, the first to emerge and most subtle of which is *nāda*. Often translated as "resonance", *nāda* is explained in Tantric texts as emanating "from Śakti as a consequence of her contact with Śiva" (ibid.:94). The resonance of the bell rung after meditating on Śiva and Umā in the wine, and on Śiva and Umā in the water, thus symbolizes, or from the practitioner's point of view realizes, the primordial sound generated by the union of god and goddess. From this point on in *Sūrya-Sevana*, until the preparation of holy water is complete (Z), the bell is rung almost continuously, as I have myself observed at performances of the

ritual; the text mentions the bell at (T2), (Tb), (Xa), (Yb).

The remainder of Part 1 (T-Z) is concerned with praising the divine essence now present in the holy water container. Section (T) and (Tb) implore forgiveness from the god in the water. Section (Tc) identifies the Five Syllables, *Pañcākṣaram*, with the holy water now present in the vessel. Section (Ua) is a consecration of the water. Section (Ub) starts with the Divine Presence mantra and then instructs the adept to imagine/meditate on the deity as “Half Lord-Lady/Śiva-Pārvatī” (for the second time). Then follow lengthy instructions to identify with the deity (Uc1-23). In the next section (Va) the Goddess Gaṅgā is conducted to “the depth of the holy water”, suggesting that the water in the container is now becoming fully infused with *amṛta*. The next three sections (Vb, Vc, and W) seem to relate to imbuing the adept with *amṛta*. The concluding sections (Xa, Xb, Xc, Ya, Yb, Yc) consist of hymns of praise to the holy water as the Goddess Gaṅgā (V, W, X) and to Śiva as Victor over Death (Ya, Yb, Yc). The final lines (Za) and (Zb) announce the end of the preparation of Holy Water and instruct the adept to sprinkle his own body with the newly prepared Holy Water and to sprinkle it in the air towards Sūrya/Āditya (Śiva as the sun).³⁰

The *Sūrya-Sevana* Text (Part II)

The second part of *Sūrya-Sevana* is devoted to releasing Śiva from the adept’s heart. Just as the installation of the deity was a complex undertaking, so He cannot be easily disengaged from the specially prepared body with which He has previously been unified. The process occupies the whole of Part II.

a) Conducting Śiva from the Heart (A’- F’)

Part II begins with instructions to remove the deity from the adept’s heart to the space twelve fingers’ breadth above the fontanel (Section A’). This is to be effected with the Seven *Oṃ* formula. The three thrones—Ananta, Lion and Lotus thrones—are envisaged (B’, C’, D’). The god’s presence is announced (E’) and the *Kūṭa* Mantra recited (Eb’) followed by the *Uṭpatti* and *Sthiti* formulas (F’). On the topmost throne, the *Padmāsana*, the adept must visualize the god and goddess as Ardhanareśwarī, lying together asleep, with their feet to the west and he (the worshipper) at their feet (G’a 2-4). This, I think, is not a naïve or quaint detail, but rather has the Tantric significance that the divine couple lie exhausted after the erotic ecstasy of their union. They must now be awakened and allowed to return to their proper abode.³¹

30. See note 14.

31. Brunner (1967:415) questions this awakening as it makes no sense in her reading of the text.

The removal of the deity from the heart of the adept to the *Śiva-dvāra*, and the construction of the three thrones, mirror the actions in Part I in Sections Nc, d and e. They are enacted here again, I suggest, in order to return to the place where the union of the adept's soul with the Divine Presence first took place.³² The aim now being to separate the soul of the adept from the deity, this needs to be carried out at the point of original unification. It is not clear to me from the text how the separation is effected but it may be that the specific statement that the god and goddess are lying fast asleep on the lotus throne with the adept at their feet serves to announce that the Divine ecstasy of union is over.

b) Awakening and Reabsorption (G'a –T'g)

Now the adept is instructed to awaken the divine pair (G'a). This is achieved via various formula and offerings (H', I', J' K'), especially water offerings (*tarpana*) (Sections L', M', N' and O'), and hymns of praise to Śiva as the Sun and as Ardhanareśwarī (P' and Q'). The next several sections of Hooykaas' text, pages 113 to 119, constitute an interpolation to the main text,³³ which resumes again with Section T'a. This begins with the Five Mountain Formula, referring to the five directions and then offers a hymn of praise to "*Samhāra*", which Hooykaas translated as "contraction" but which might be more meaningfully rendered "reabsorption" (See Davis 1991, glossary).

At this point in the text, it becomes clear that the ritual is following what Davis terms the path of "reabsorption", according to the principles whereby the universe is emitted in orderly stages, and then drawn back into the originating unity. The *Samhāra* (Reabsorption) Mantra occurs at (T'f), line 7. Following this, lines 13 to 19 refer to the goddesses of the nine directions, concluding with an assertion of the contraction (*samhāra*) of "Śrī-Devī", followed by "Divine Contraction Gestures", presumably indicating that the several manifestations of the goddess have been reabsorbed back to the center. The next section (T'g) invokes the *Tri-Puruṣa* mantra, "homage to Brahmā in the south, Viṣṇu in the north, and Īśvara in the east", again suggesting a movement or reabsorption of aspects of the god (Śiva) to the center.

c) Dissolution in the Heart (U"-Z")

The next step is to conduct the "Divine ŚIVA-SUN (-SOUL)" from the Lotus Throne back to the heart of the adept (U'3). As previously, this is achieved by the Seven *Om* Syllable mantra. When completed, homage is given to the heart

32. Brunner (ibid.:415) also questions this return to the Throne as it serves no purpose in her reading.

33. This section describes the method to prepare *tirta panglukatan*, which is used for purification to remove sickness, misfortune and sin.

“containing the Supreme Śiva-Sun” (U”13). Following the Rosary Formula, the adept is instructed to concentrate on the “God’s ONEness” (W”2). The section concludes with the mantra:

om Husband-and-Wife are DISSOLVED, in my heart; homage;
om am homage to Ardhanareśvarī. (Hooykaas 1966:125)

Śiva’s “oneness” is celebrated again with homage to “Ekatvaṃ Parama-Śivah” in Section (X”6) and the essential unity of Parama-Śiva with the god and goddess in union is stated, homage being given:

To the original Union of the God and Goddess,
(to Him Who from the beginning is united with the God and Goddess),
To Supreme Śiva. (Hooykaas 1966:127)

At this point, having dissolved (or reabsorbed) Śiva as Ardhanareśvarī (Śiva and the Goddess united), into Parama-Śiva, one task only remains—the dissolution of this Supreme Śiva. Finally the “Dissolution” (*Pralīna*) of Śiva-Āditya in the heart of the adept is achieved and announced through the appropriate mantras (Z”a). The remaining few lines of the text (Z”b) bring the ritual to closure with the adept being told to sprinkle holy water on himself, beginning with the fontanel, through which the deity entered and left the adept’s body. He sips the holy water from the holy water vessel, and wipes his face with it three times, and then sprinkles it three times again, offering it to the *Ātma*, *Vidyā* and *Śiva-tattvas*. Finally he adorns himself with a flower. In these concluding actions, the holy water, the preparation of which has been the whole reason for the complex ritual, seems to be used as a means of demarcating the boundaries of the adept again as the recipient rather than the agent of the God’s grace, a human being once more.

Sūrya-Sevana’s final dissolution of Śiva in the heart of the adept is paralleled in the Tantric *pūjā* Gupta describes, the deity being removed from the *yantra* where she has been placed during the ritual and then returned to the heart (Gupta 1979:156). Also in the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, the Devī is conducted from the *yantra* to the heart at the end of the worship (Woodroffe 1972:135). The *Jñānasiddhānta* (Soebadio 1971:87-107), an Old Javanese-Sanskrit Śaiva text found in Bali, explains in a chapter on the yogic art of dying that the space in the heart, like the sky, has no boundaries (ibid.:89), and that “in the cavity of the heart it is one with the sky which is visible for all men.” Thus the soul must be conducted to the heart, via the *Om* formula, at the time of death and there dissolved into the divine. The text further explains:

It is indeed like the interior of a split bamboo. The cavity mentioned above [in the heart] is the airy space within (the bamboo), (which then) returns to become one with (the air in) the sky, which is its destination. (Soebadio 1971:89)

The heart is also the place where the resonance (*nāda*) is heard (Gupta

1979:174; Eliade 1970:390-39). Thus the use of the bell at Z'a, the sound of which is understood as *nāda* as noted earlier, signifies the presence of the deity in the heart, from whence he can merge back into the infinite space of the sky/cosmos.

A Tantric *Sādhanā*

The preceding section by section examination of the text can leave little doubt, I think, that *Sūrya-Sevana* describes a Tantric ritual incorporating key Tantric concepts, symbols and practices. These, we have seen, include:

- I. *bhūtaśuddhi/kuṇḍalinī yoga*
- II. *nyāsa*,
- III. the best known Śaiva mantras
- IV. Tantric *prāṇāyāma*,
- V. Tantric concepts concerning divine sexual unions and substances,
- VI. Tantric theories of sound and the significance of *nāda*,
- VII. furthermore, all these elements are organized according to the ritual logic provided by the doctrines of the emission and re-absorption of the cosmos based on Śaiva and Sāṃkhya philosophy (Davis 1991; White 1996:263; Flood 2006:126-128).

We are now able to appreciate that the ritual brings together mantras, hymns of praise, sound, gestures, visualizations, and offerings of flowers, rice, perfume, light, heat, and water, in order to create a powerful *inner* experience wherein the adept achieves union with the Divine. The adept's soul is unified with Śiva in a meeting of divine erotic joy that is the very essence of Tantra. Silburn (1988:6) quotes Abhinavagupta:

Śiva, conscious, free, and of transparent essence is always vibrating, and this supreme energy reaches to the tip of the sense organs: then he is nothing but bliss and like him the entire universe vibrates.

White (1996:138) likewise describes the Tantric universe as nothing other than “the endless cosmic orgasm of the divine”.

Although praise and thanks are given throughout, *Sūrya-Sevana* is not worship or service offered to a god, as a king is served by his courtiers in the manner of Indian temple worship (Hooykaas 1966:153-154). It orchestrates an inner rapture of union with the divine visualized and brought about in specific images, formulas, and symbolic gestures known from the world of Tantra. The mantras are not “prayers”; they are words of power intended to create changes in consciousness and being, the *mudrā* likewise. Hooykaas' text depicts a yogic *sādhanā* of a Tantric adept not a church liturgy or worship of the sun—even though he himself does not explicitly recognize it as such in his commentaries on it.

Even the focus throughout on Śiva-Āditya, Śiva as the Sun, which at first sight might appear anomalous, reflects classic Tantric themes, as the following passage from Woodroffe's introduction to the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* (quoting the *Gāyatrī-Vyākaraṇa* of Yogi Yājñavalkya) indicates:

... the Āditya-devatā ... is to the Sun what our spirit (*ātmā*) is to our body. Though he is in the region of the sun in the outer or material sphere He also dwells in our inner selves. He is the light of the light in the solar circle, and is the light of the lives of all beings. As He is in the outer ether, so also is He in the ethereal region of the heart. In the outer ether He is Sūryya, and in the inner ether He is the wonderful Light which is the Smokeless Fire. In short, that Being whom the *sādhaka* realizes in the region of his heart is the Āditya in the heavenly firmament. The two are one. (Woodroffe 1972:xc1)

In fact this description of the identity of the Sun with the Divine light in the heart of the *sādhaka*, occupying both the outer and inner ethereal regions, might easily serve as a summary statement of the Balinese rituals and text discussed here.³⁴

According to Gupta, the *tāntrika*'s *sāadhanā* consists of two parts: worship and yoga. Both worship and yoga are combined in *Sūrya-Sevana*, but the aim as a whole is clearly a yogic one – union with the divine (Gupta 1979:163).

A Balinese Innovation or a Truncated Text?

The means and the concepts expressed in the *Sūrya-Sevana* text are essentially Tantric, as we have seen. What stands out as differing from Śaiva Siddhānta rituals as described by Hooykaas, Brunner and Davis, the Śākta practice described by Gupta, and the rites of the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, is the creation of *amṛta* (*amerta*) in a form that can be conferred on other people. Here, unlike the Indian examples, Śiva is not invited to enter a *liṅga* or the goddess a *yantra*, where they receive service and worship that is felt to benefit the congregation as a whole. Instead, the essence of the divine union achieved by the Balinese adept in yogic visualization is transferred to the holy water, where the benefits of *amerta* (*amṛta*) then reside.³⁵ Thus ordinary Balinese

34. A reviewer of this article has suggested that the sun as referred to in *Sūrya-Sevana* might represent the igneous principle found in the yoga of the *rwa-bhineda* (Stephen 2005:104-109), while the holy water (*tirta*) it aims to produce might be connected with the "cooling water" referred to in this practice. However, this seems unlikely to me for the following reasons. As explained earlier in this article, the *tirta amṛta* (water of immortality) described in *Sūrya-Sevana* is composed of the mixed sexual fluids resulting from the union of Śiva and Uma. In Bali the feminine principle in such a union is always associated with the element fire, the color red, and the syllable *ANG* and is located in the lower trunk of the body; whereas the masculine principle is linked to water, to the color white, the syllable *AH*, and is located above in the head (ibid.). White (1996:243) notes in Indian alchemical texts the same identification with above "male semen, moon, *soma*, nectar, Śiva, fluidity and coolness ... below, female uterine blood, sun, fire, energy, the Goddess, dessication and heat ..." If the sun is Śiva, then it cannot also represent fire and the syllable *ANG*, which are the characteristics of the Goddess. Yet it must also be acknowledged that there are always many possible permutations of such imagery.

35. At this point the important issue arises: What might be the relationship between the

worshippers, without any knowledge or capacity for rigorous yogic practice of their own, are able to receive through the medium of holy water the blessings of the adept's yoga. The bliss of unification with Śiva becomes *tirta amerta*. That is to say, the divine union, the aim of all Tantric yoga, is here transubstantiated or invested into a physical medium that may be received by others.³⁶

In view of the large number of texts—both Tantric Indian and Balinese (Davis 1991:9-10; Acri 2006)—which have yet to be investigated systematically, it seems too early to assume that a textual prototype for *Sūrya-Sevana* will not be discovered at sometime in the future. Even the continuing absence of such a text would not conclusively prove that such never existed. But more importantly, I think, the whole, including the significant divergences from South Asian prototypes, is so much a part of the conceptual world of Tantrism that if it is Nirartha's invention, as Hooykaas (1965-1966:387) suggests or that of some other Balinese sage, then such involves a variation on well established Tantric themes rather than radical innovation.

It could also be argued that the “divergence” might be a local development in harmony with the “internalized” aniconic mode of worship of Balinese Hinduism/Śaivism, as opposed to the emphasis on image (*mūrti*, *linga*, etc) of (South) Indian Hindu/Śaiva ritual. This may very well not be a local innovation but rather an orthogenetic development from a strand of Indian Śaiva sources that were already gnostic and meta-ritualist in nature, i.e. which emphasized visualization, yoga and internal ritual rather than “gross” forms of worship. Acri (2011) in his introduction to the *tutur/tattva* class of texts in his book, *Dharma Pātañjala*, has argued that the mainstream form of Javanese and Balinese Śaivism derived from a gnostic form of Śaivasiddhānta, which put

rituals described in *Sūrya-Sevana* and those yoga texts I have discussed previously (Stephen 2005:104-109 and 2014) which are based on the *rwa-bhineda* (ANG AH) and the *dasaksara* (SA BA T A I NA MA SI WA YA)? This is a complex question because although there are many similarities, there are also important differences. All these works belong to the group of Javano-Balinese texts that Acri (2006, 2011:8-16, 2013) has identified as “*tuturs*,” and are practice-oriented, assuming knowledge of abstract, philosophical concepts to be found in the *tattva* texts (ibid.). All are concerned with inner, meditative visualizations that I have described as “yoga”. All draw upon concepts familiar from Indian Tantric texts, such as *Kuṇḍalinī* yoga. All aim to produce holy water (*tirta*) of various kinds. Yet *Sūrya-Sevana* is much longer, more complex, and employs many more Sanskrit mantras and other Sanskritic elements than any of the other texts known to me. The most significant difference is that practices based on the *rwa-bhineda* and the *dasaksara* focus on visualizing the meeting of mystical elements (fire and water) present in the body of the practitioner, whereas *Sūrya-Sevana* involves a total transformation of the adept into Śiva in the form of Ardhanareśwari (Śiva and Śakti combined in one body). As knowledgeable Balinese have commented to me, “The *pedanda* becomes Siwa (Śiva).” Since nothing less than an apotheosis is involved, it is perhaps not surprising that *surya-sevana* is a practice restricted to fully initiated *pedanda*. A more comprehensive comparison of these different practices must await future work.

36. As White (1996:272) has shown, this capacity of the *yogin* to transfer his powers to other beings, and to exert magical powers over others, is found in classic South Asian Tantric texts and is by no means confined to Bali.

less emphasis on ritual than its Indian counterpart (that is, the one we know from Saidhāntika manuals and present-day ritual worship).³⁷

Despite the garbled or obscure passages, many of which are pointed out by Brunner (1967:418ff), the reading I have offered here of *Sūrya-Sevana* demonstrates that the text possesses its own sense, purpose, and coherence—all of which are quintessentially Tantric in nature. Brunner (ibid.:412) based her reading of the Balinese text on the assumption that it should match the South Indian manuals which it closely follows in the initial stages. She assumed that the purpose of the Balinese ritual must be to worship and serve the cult deity, since that is the purpose of the South Indian rituals—and we might add, an aim readily accommodated with Western understandings in general concerning the nature of religious ritual. She passes over Hooykaas' explanations that the Balinese *pedanda* is not a temple priest and usually performs his rituals in private at his house temple and thus plays a role in society very different from that of the South Indian priest. She also makes no reference to the role of Ardhanareśwarī in the Balinese text, which as we have seen occurs at the climatic junctures. Nor does she seem to recognize that it is not Śiva in the holy water but rather the mystical sexual effusions of Śiva and Śakti.³⁸

Conclusion

The *surya-sevana* rituals cannot usefully be regarded as truncated versions of South Asian rituals based on flawed texts, as I have argued above. Nor can they be described as “rituals without religion”—not unless one totally ignores the text of the practitioner's manual which reveals a complex Tantric philosophy, theology and symbolism, as I have shown. Despite the title, *Sūrya-Sevana* is primarily concerned with the production of holy water, not sun worship.³⁹ Furthermore, the text reveals that this “holy water” possesses a deep Tantric significance, being composed of the sexual fluids of Siva and Uma in mystical union. Views quoted earlier that the intention is to bring about unity with Paramaśiwa, or the incarnation of the Supreme God Siwa on earth, or to induce a trance state enabling the deity to enter the body of the priest, seem closer to the mark in that they recognize that the central aim

37. Lovric (1987:321) notes that according to certain Balinese traditions, Nirartha is believed to have acquired while in Bali special esoteric yogic knowledge leading to the preparation of *tirta amerta*. For this reason I have not assumed the innovation is Javanese in origin, although it may well be. The Balinese traditions seem to recognize the unique nature of the preparation of holy water by presenting it as Nirartha's innovation based on yogic revelation. Thus *Sūrya-Sevana* may represent a compilation based on textual sources drawn from the existing Javanese-Balinese *tutur* corpus but refashioned in the light of a Balinese sage's unique inner revelations via a process I have elsewhere described as ‘autonomous imagination’ (Stephen 1989, 1995).

38. Indeed Brunner's commentary on *Sūrya-Sevana* as a whole seems to provide a classic example of the very negative attitudes of philologists and anthropologists towards the Balinese *tutur* texts that Aciri (2011b:144-147) documents.

39. See Note 14.

is to achieve a temporary union with the divine, but are nevertheless subtly misleading in that they fail to recognize the distinctively Tantric nature of this conjunction and of the means used to achieve it.⁴⁰

The rituals to make *tirta amerta*, as Hooykaas (1964; 1966:9; 1973:10-11) often stated, are the central mystery of Balinese religion. The outward, observable forms of the rites, however, reveal little or nothing of the inner mystery that is taking place—the unification of the adept with Śiva in a mystic union wherein Śiva and Śakti meet, and the divine *amerta* (*amṛta*) flows from their contact.⁴¹ Such one might say is a central mystery of Tantric Śaivism in general. Here we find Tantric philosophy and yogic ritual at the very heart of the Balinese *pedanda siwa's* practice, one might even say—at the heart of Balinese orthodoxy.⁴²

The Tantrism revealed in *Surya-Sevana*, however, is one of internalized, symbolic sexual unions, symbolized sexual substances and a refined aestheticism. The latter characteristic has been independently evidenced in Zoetmulder's (1974) and Rubinstein's (2000) extensive studies of Balinese *kakawin* poetry composition. Indeed the aesthetic theories and refined philosophy of Abhinavagupta's Tantrism (Sanderson 1988; Flood 2006:165-168) are brought to mind, rather than the coarsely sexual, grotesque, violent and antinomian features that have in the past been identified as Tantric by writers on Bali (e.g. Boon 1990; Barth 1993:261-262; Ramseyer 2002:36, 38).⁴³ The evidence presented here shows that Tantrism in Bali needs to be

40. Bakker's (1993:27) view that the union is with Paramaśiwa is not convincing because no union can take place with the highest form of the deity except *mokṣa*—i.e. complete and final liberation from worldly existence and rebirth. The union described in the text is with Ardhanaresvaraī, or Sadāśiva, that is Śiva and Śakti. It is the mystical sexual co-joining of the divine pair that produces the divine *amṛta* sought by the adept. This is a quintessential Tantric notion, as has been pointed out often here, but is obscured by Bakker's interpretation. Likewise Barth's (1993:196) idea of "an incarnation of the Supreme God Siwa on earth" does not acknowledge or recognize the Tantric significance, thus interpreting the rites in a way that makes them appear more comprehensible in terms of Western and Christian notions. Finally Covarrubias' (1994:300) statement that the *pedanda* is in a trance state allowing the deity to enter his body and act through it not only misses the Tantric union which is the crux of the rite, but also fails to take account of the classic Tantric rituals the practitioner undertakes to transform himself limb by limb into Śiva; he is not a mere vehicle for the deity, as in trance-possession. Covarrubias' description thus tends to link the *pedanda's* ritual with other well-known examples of trance possession in Bali (e.g. Belo 1960), which made good sense at the time—he was writing of what he observed in the 1930s, long before Hooykaas' text was available, and before present understandings of Tantrism had emerged.

41. In my opinion this does remain a key esoteric secret not divulged to the uninitiated. Even despite the availability of the Indonesian translation of Hooykaas' book, no ordinary Balinese person I have spoken with seems aware of the mystical nature of the *amerta* as divine sexual substances. Indeed, only a very close reading of Hooykaas' text, such as I give here, is likely to reveal this inner mystery.

42. In a previous article (Stephen 2010) I have shown the extent to which Tantric ritual and philosophy provide the conceptual underpinning of the Balinese mortuary rituals (*pitra yadnya*).

43. Future historical research may be able to identify in these extreme features remnants of earlier

appreciated as a more broadly defined and more subtle phenomenon,⁴⁴ and not, as in the past, reduced to a mere concatenation of a few notorious elements such as the “five Ms.”⁴⁵

While they challenge prevailing views on Tantrism in Bali, my conclusions are in keeping with philologist Acri’s (2006, 2011, 2013) recent findings concerning the essentially Tantric basis of the Balinese *tutur* literature as a whole. Future research by textual scholars will hopefully expand and fill out details of the resemblances I trace here but in outline. If up to the present Tantrism has been perceived by most Western scholars as inhering in mere fragments or remnants, I believe that in the future it might well come to be understood as a unifying principle underlying the apparent disorder and bewildering diversity of Balinese ritual.

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Bhairava or *vāma-mārga* (left hand path) cults, which may well have been in opposition to or contrary to the established Tantric orthodoxies such as that represented in the *pedanda*’s practice.

44. Such as indicated in the nuanced definitional summaries provided by Brooks (1990:55-72) and Goudriaan (1979:7-9), the “working definition” given by David Gordon White (2000:7-9), and in Flood’s recent study (2006) of the Tantric body. I also have discussed definitional issues concerning Tantrism in Bali and the need for a broader view (Stephen 2005:73-97).

45. The five forbidden substances said to be used in Tantric rites (Urban 2003:40): meat (*māṃsa*), fish (*matsya*), wine (*madya*), parched grain (*mudrā*), and sexual intercourse (*maithuna*).

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**Scenes from a *surya-sevana* ritual performed on 17/12/2014
at the Griya Sanur, Pejeng by Ida Pedanda Wayahan Bun**

Fig. 1 – The *pedanda*, fresh from his bath, approaches the *bale pawedaan* from the west, where he finds two clean rectangular pieces of white cloth which he wraps around the upper and lower parts of his body (See Hooykaas 1966:35).

Fig. 2 – Next the *pedanda* sits on the edge of the *bale* facing the west and washes his feet, his hands and rinses his mouth (ibid.).

Fig. 3 –He then turns to the east and sits in the lotus *āsana*, facing his tray of cult implements and begins to recite mantras and display *mudrā* (symbolic hand gestures). The circular tray immediately in front of him contains the lamp, bell, brazier and water vessels he will need, as well as rice grains, flowers and incense (ibid.). The practitioner will remain seated in this position throughout the ritual, while deeply immersed in mantras, visualizations and *mudrā*.

Fig. 4 – The practitioner begins *prāṇāyāma* (breath control), closing one nostril and breathing through the other in turn (ibid.:36).

Fig. 5 – Approximately half way through the rituals, the practitioner takes up the bell (*ghaṇṭā*), which is rung almost continuously from this point onwards (ibid.:87, S 8-9).

Fig. 6 – The bell and lamp (*dīpa*) are manipulated in unison.

Fig. 7 – Finally, the practitioner touches the holy water vessel (*śivambha* or *argha*), which now contains *tirta amerta*, and the rituals are brought to a close.