

BALINESE CHARACTER

By MARGARET MEAD

Introductory (Plates 1 to 8)

Once every 400 days, Bali is quiet and empty. The whole thickly populated section of the little island lies silent for the New Year, which is spoken of as the "silence." One can traverse the length of Bali, along the excellent roads which the Dutch have built, through village after village, between the long mud walls punctuated every few feet by the high narrow gates built in the distinctive style of that particular village, and see no women squatting before their own or someone else's doorway in front of an ankle-high table covered with soft drinks and tidbits, no group of boys gambling for pennies, no cages of fighting cocks set out in the sun. The roads, at other times, are crowded with people coming and going from the markets, which are held every three days in the larger towns; crowded with people carrying rice, pulling carts loaded high with baskets or mats or pots being brought from a distance for sale; crowded with small boys driving oxen or water buffalo. On feast days, the roads are crowded with processions of people in silks and brocades, walking in easily broken lines behind their orchestras and their gods; gods represented by temporary minute images seated in small sedan chairs; gods represented by images made of leaves and flowers; gods which are masks or bits of old relics. With the processions mingle groups of people grimed from work, hurrying lightly beneath heavy loads; and theatrical troupes, their paint and fine costumes tucked away in little bundles, trudge wearily behind the two-man mask, the patron Dragon (*Barong*) who walks quietly with covered face.

But at the New Year, these same roads are empty, stretching up and down the frequent hills, between terraced fields holding green rice, to another district where the rice is golden, on to a third where the rice is so young that the flooded beds seem filled mostly with reflections from the sky. The air on every other day of the year is filled with sound, high staccato voices shouting the clipped ambiguous words of familiar speech or artificially prolonging the syllables of polite address, quips of passers-by to the vendor girls who make a professional art of repartee, babies squalling on the hips of their child nurses; and over and above and behind all these human sounds, the air on other days carries music from practicing orchestras, from an individual idly *tapping a single metallophone*, from children with *jew's-harps*, and from whirring musical windmills set on narrow standards high against the sky.

But at the New Year every sound is silenced. Even the dogs, which on every other day keep up a sharp, impersonal yapping at every passer-by, sense the need for silence and skulk away into the courtyards where each family, with fires out and offerings set out in the house temple, stays quietly by itself. In many villages a screen set squarely across the gate, a few inches inside it, not only misleads mischievous demons who are unable to negotiate such sharp turns, but also protects the family life from watchful eyes. Inside, there are doors to close between neighboring houseyards, if it happens that close relatives live side by side (and if relatives are to live near each other at all, it had best be side by side or else the unfortunate one who dwells between them will be "pinched" by the outraged ancestral gods). Between the courtyards of non-relatives there are high walls. Each household is a complete unit; in one corner is the house temple, planted with flowers for use in offerings, and set with small shrines where the ancestors and sometimes other special gods are honored.

No one enters lightly the house of another; only beggars whose low estate may be that of the houseowner in another incarnation, peddlers, relatives, and those who have some special errand, enter another's house in the course of everyday affairs. Only if the houseowner gives a shadow-play or a light opera to celebrate the birthday of a child, the validation of a new house temple, or some piece of good fortune, do all who live in the same village, and even those who are merely passing through, or working as the lowest of casual laborers, feel free to enter, to sit down, and enjoy the play until it is over. With this exception the houseyard is closed and for the individual member who wishes to exchange light stylized puns, or easy caricature, or merely stand and chew betel with others — the street lures him out. In the street, people meet and eat casually around the vendors' stalls, two-year-olds come with their pennies — worth a fourteenth of an American cent — and there is gay impersonal interchange, with little enough meat or matter in it.

The roads lead through small villages and large, cities in which the great courts of the ruling caste are conspicuous with their gilded and highly carved gates and their occasional many-tiered pagodas, and where innumerable temples are equally conspicuous. A few roads lead up into the mountain districts, where the terraced rice fields are replaced by fields of dry rice in a landscape that is more like Europe than the tropics. Here oxen replace water buffaloes, bamboo tiles replace the thick plump thatch which roofs the lowland houses. The temples become simpler and simpler, until a structure of only four posts furnished with a shelf and a roof thatched with black sugar-palm fiber is found instead of the elaborate overcarved rococo structures of the plains. In these mountain villages there are greater differences between one

BALINESE CHARACTER

community and the next, but all contain fewer elements of the Hindooism which for centuries has seeped into Bali, carried by word of mouth, by priests, by the palm-leaf books, by pictures on cloth, by carvings. There are few people who have caste in the mountains — for in Bali only a small percentage of the people are spoken of as having caste, the others, "outsiders," simply lack this special hereditary ingredient of personality. But in the lowland villages and in the mountains alike one sees straight streets, walled courtyards, and gates through which, on every day except the New Year, children trickle in and out, and dogs bark at everyone who passes, not sparing the nearest neighbor their comment on his essential strangeness.

The significance of *Njepi*, the Silence, can only be realized against the Balinese preference for anything which is "*rame*," a word which may be translated as "noisily, crowdedly festive." Roads packed with people all going in different directions; temple courts overcrowded with offerings and where three orchestras are playing different pieces within easy earshot of each other and two dramatic performances are going on a few feet apart; market places where gay shoppers can hardly thread their way among the endless trays of carefully sorted and arrayed fruits and foods, and the fresh flowers upon which strong manufactured scent has been put, and the little stands where ready-made offerings to the market gods are sold; a theatrical performance about which the audience packs so tightly that the smallest child cannot worm its way from the front row (where the smaller children sit by well accepted custom) to the outer edge where people break away and wander among the peanut vendors — that is *rame*. No matter if one knows no one in the whole crowd. Pressed tightly against the steaming bodies of strangers, the air heavy with scent and garlic and spices, and many rare forms of dirt, sharing no single emotion with those so close to him, the Balinese watches the play and revels in the occasion, when he can stand completely remote in spirit, yet so close in body to a crowd. Women are believed to love crowds more than men and to be less able to stand the silence of empty fields, while occasionally an overwrought man develops a hatred for crowds and becomes a solitary.

This crowd preference is seen everywhere in Balinese life — in the tendency to crowd too many offerings on an altar shelf, to pack too many flowers in a young girl's hair, or to carve too many scrolls and flowers on a stone gate. Single offerings or designs, lovely in themselves when taken out of context, occur in real life in a scrambled confusion of too many colors, too many intricate, unrelated patterns. But the Balinese, who enjoys the crowd without sharing in it, is not confused by such arrays, nor is he confused by interruptions in his elaborate patterns. When a motor car or a peddler thrusts into a long and stately procession, the European is shocked but the Balinese

does not notice the intrusion. Never attending to the whole, which he wants nevertheless as packed and as rich as possible, the Balinese does not notice when that whole is broken, when the dancer pauses while someone from the crowd pins her sash back on, or when the priest pauses in the middle of a complex stylized gesture of prayer to slap an overeager dog.

All ceremonial work, work for the gods, and work for the village — the preparation of offerings or feast foods, or the roofing of a house — is done in groups in Bali. And there are two principles which run through all organized work; first, that there should be more than enough people for any task, and second, that the task should be simplified and broken down into small units, almost as the construction of a motor car is broken down for a modern assembly line. The club (*sekaa*) is the model for the working group, although the members of a village or the kin of a given household may also form such groups. The club, which may be to plant or harvest or thresh rice, to lay bricks, dance a ballet, or practice as an orchestra, is a formal organization with a recording secretary, no formal leader, and far too many members for any given task. There is no requirement which demands that the man who joins a dance club should be able to dance, or that the girl who becomes the member of a harvesting club should be deft and quick at cutting rice. Those who cannot dance can do other things — roll up the mats, carry the costumes, or help in pinning up the dancers' costumes. Those who cannot cut the rice quickly can be set to counting the bound sheaves. If tasks are broken down into enough simple units, then the smallest and the least skilled can take some part. Only the wise woman who knows a great deal about offerings can tell how many of each kind of colored and specially shaped cakes should be included in a given offering container. But if the containers are laid out — 300 of them — on stands, and each small girl is given a tray with hundreds of one of the proper kinds of cake and bidden to put a certain number in each of the 300 trays, the complex results can be obtained, while each relatively ignorant and completely relaxed participant strolls, dreaming, through the repetitious undemanding task.

Only when genuine skill is required, as when the carver is attending to his chisel or the painter to his brush, or the mother is intent for a fleeting moment on teasing her child, does the Balinese display genuine concentration, and even this can be followed with startling suddenness by a state of complete awayness, in which he stares off into space, vacant faced and bare of all feeling. In the most rapt crowds, when the clowns are performing some fascinating new version of an absolutely reliable joke, one can still see face after face which contains no response to the outside world.

Trance is such an experience, an interval of extremely narrow concentration, and

BALINESE CHARACTER

this is especially true of the trances of those practiced seers whose task it is to let the gods or the ancestors speak through them, giving small, deft turns to the course of events by suggestions spoken when in a state of trance. Such a seer or priestess epitomizes during the trance period all the busy activity which characterizes Balinese ceremonial; and in the trance state exhibits emotions never otherwise appropriate except on the stage — tears and intense expressions of grief and striving. All these are lived through, until again vacancy and awayness supersede.

These trance states are an essential part of Balinese social organization, for without them life would go on forever in a fixed and rigid form, foreordained but unguessed in advance. In reply to questions about future events, e.g., whether a given ceremony will be performed, or who will dance as princess in a given theatrical performance, the Balinese will reply "*doeroeng terang*" — "it is not yet clear" — a phrase which implies that the future is fixed, but that, like the latent image on an exposed photographic plate, it has not yet developed.

This way of thinking is not in any sense a lack of orientation, but is rather an expression of very rigid orientation in time and space based on the articulate recognition of large numbers of permutations and combinations of contingent circumstances. They do not say that "other things being equal" or "*Deo volente*," such and such will occur, but feel a need to specify the necessary circumstances. They will not answer a hypothetical question which envisages contingent circumstances known to be impossible. If, for example, we asked, "If Djero Bae Tekek were the senior citizen of the village, would he retain the duties of calendrical expert?" the reply would always be, "But the Djero Bae has ceased to be a citizen" (because his youngest child has married), and from this position the informant cannot be shifted by any amount of urging or inquiry as to what *would* have happened if the youngest child had not married. The contingent circumstance is past and clear, and the events could not have taken any other form.

This orientation among contingent circumstances is most clearly illustrated by the calendar. This is a complex cyclical system of days, grouped into concurrent weeks. If today is the 3rd day of the five-day week and the 4th day of the seven-day week, then tomorrow will be the 4th day of the five-day week and the 5th day of the seven-day week. And of these weeks they have a complete series from a two-day week to a ten-day week, of which the three-, five-, six-, and seven-day weeks are the most important.

Identical combinations of days in the five- and seven-day weeks recur every 35 days, the Balinese "month"; identical combinations for the three-, five-, and seven-day

weeks recur every 105 days (the occasion for the celebration of a baby's "three-month" birthday); and combinations involving all four of the important weeks recur every 210 days. This 210-day period, the *oton*, defines the recurrence of a very large number of ceremonials, birthdays, temple feasts, the feast of *Galoengan*, etc.*

This calendric system is truly circular in the sense that the Balinese themselves pay almost no attention to the beginnings and ends of the constituent periods. They do not know how many *otons* old a child is, but they do know on what combination of days it was born. The whole emphasis is upon the recombinations of contingent circumstances — a sort of emphasis which only crops up in our own culture when we attend to such matters as "Friday, the thirteenth of March."

Spatial Orientation and Levels (Plates 9 to 14)

Orientation in space, like that in time, is rigid and precise, and the same interest in overlapping contingencies is recognizable. There are two pairs of primary directions, east and west (determined by the rising and setting of the sun) and inland and coastward (determined by reference to the principal mountain on the island, the Goenoeng Agoeng, which is the home of the gods). *Kadja*, the inland direction, is, however, conventionally at right angles to the east-west line, so that in most of North Bali the "inland" direction is due south, and in most of South Bali it is due north. These four cardinal points have their ceremonial characteristics; inland and east are in some sense superior to coastward and west, and the combination inland-east (*kadjakangin*) is the most sacred direction. The village temple is set in the inland-east quadrant of the village crossroads; while the cemetery is down toward the coastward-west. In every houseyard, the family shrines are on the inland or eastern side, while the kitchen and latrine are toward the coast or the west. And inside the house, the superior person should sleep to the east or inland of the inferior, and his head should be inland or east of his feet; for this system of orientation is a part of the code of respect as well as a frame of impersonal reference. The words for the cardinal points are among the first that a child learns and are used even for the geography of the body. A Balinese will tell you that there is a fly on the "west" side of your face.

Among persons, as with time and space, there is a fixed hierarchical plan by which the three castes, Brahmans, Kesatryas, and Vesias stand in order at the top, with the outsiders, the casteless people, below them. A Brahman high priest (*pedanda*) must

* This account of the calendar is necessarily very much simplified and omits, for example, all the complications involved in fitting the *oton* system to the astronomical system of twelve named months of various lengths which define the recurrence of the ceremonies for new and full moon and the ceremonies connected with the agricultural year.

BALINESE CHARACTER

always sit higher than anyone else present and he will, even in a European house, cast his eye about with practiced calculation to select the one chair that has a quarter-inch thicker cushion than any of the others. In the simple mountain village of Bajoeng Gede the hierarchy depends upon order of entry into full citizenship (which usually occurs after marriage). The order can never be altered by promotion of one man over another and the man who happens to stay in until all above him have died or retired becomes the chief priest and ceremonial head of the community. He and the seven who stand below him, and their eight wives, are called the "*doeloe*" or "heads" of the village.

When a man speaks to another whose caste is higher than his, he must use the "polished" language, stretching out and embellishing his sentences and using quite different words, even to the prepositions and adverbs, from those of "rough" speech. Only in talking to intimates or to those of lower caste or status can a man use this "rough" speech, clipping his words and coming straight to the point. Similarly in the mountains a simplified form of the "polished" language must be used in addressing the "heads."

Each man's place in the social scheme of his village is known; the contribution which he must make to the work and ceremonial of the village and the share of the whole which he will receive back again are likewise defined. For failure to receive what is due him, he is fined even more heavily than for failure to give that which is due from him. Just as a man must accept his privileges as well as discharge his duties, so is he also the guardian of his own status and if, as may happen to a high caste, that status is affronted, he himself must perform a ceremony to restore it. Similarly the elder of a village who may not come in contact with birth or death, must himself perform a costly ceremony, if someone enters his house fresh from contact with birth or death. And as order and status are maintained among men, so also, within the man, the head is the highest part of the body and not only must it be placed toward the gods, but a flower which has fallen to the ground may not be picked up and placed in the hair again. Younger brothers may not touch the head of an older brother, and nothing may be taken from above the head of one of higher status without much preliminary apology.

So also the cycle of life is scaled in degrees of sacredness and profanity. The newborn baby is too close to the other world to be quite fit company for men; it is addressed in polished language; and not until its 105th day may its feet touch the ground. On this day a name is given and the child is henceforth permitted to enter a temple. The body of a child who has his milk teeth must be buried in a separate

cemetery. Between the cutting of the adult teeth and marriage, young men are spoken of as "flower youths" as long as they are not publicly known to have had sex experience, and they are especially fitted to serve the gods. With marriage they take a sudden plunge into the profane, from which they gradually recover after years of progressive ceremonial, until with the marriage of their children they begin a slower, but sure descent into social death. The birth of a great-grandchild or the marriage of one's youngest child terminates citizenship.

The strict and formal interrelationships between persons are expressed in the recurrent village ceremonials to which each member of the community contributes and from which each receives back a share. In the mountain villages these procedures constitute a large part of village life, but in the plains they may occur only once every 210 days, and sometimes each alternate occasion is dismissed with a small feast, and only after 420 days is there a big ceremony, in which the sharing of food among the villagers is only a minor part of the entertainment given to the gods. But in the village of Bajoeng Gede the sharing is very important. At the new moon and at the full, every 35 days in each temple and at a series of feasts connected with the agricultural year, the town criers, serving monthly on a rotating system, went through the village announcing: "Every household! Every household! Tomorrow citizens come to chop; the women to sweep; the young girls to lay out offerings; every household one coconut, a measure of rice, etc.," giving a list of the contributions required of every household. Certain households, in turn, would have to provide more substantial items — a pig or a fowl or a duck. In the temple kitchens, for large ceremonies (or in the home of the men whose turn it was, for small ceremonies) the food would be cooked, offerings would be made for the gods, and later, at the ceremony, the food would be spread out in formal order — the banana-leaf plates for the "heads" laid along the inland-cast and those for the members of the temple club or of the village laid out in two lines running downward and west from there. These shares, called *kawes*, are symbols of participation so important that a man can be fined more heavily for refusing his share than for failing to contribute his share to any ceremony. The fines are small (unless payment is delayed and then they rise steeply) but the matter is never a light one, and from the early deliberations of the responsible heads, through the preparation and offering of the food, down to the final distribution when his exact share of the chicken is given to each according to his status, a mild threat of fussy, group pedantry runs through the proceedings. Even the simplest arrangement of offerings or distribution of food is so complicated that numerous small errors are almost inevitable. These small errors — when the neck of the chicken is not given to the special official entitled to it

BALINESE CHARACTER

— are matters of embarrassment, and stimulate a sort of garrulous scuttling of too many people trying to correct them. Failure in the proper arrangements for a feast, where the offerings are concerned, may bring misfortune, supernaturally sent. Yet so slight is the expectation that there will not be errors, that the folk belief grows that the flowers on the headdress of the great serpent, on which a priest rides for special large cremation ceremonies, would stay unwithered if the ceremony had been perfect.

Among the casteless people of the mountains, the preservation of status among those who by birth are equal, is a solemn and humorless business, conducted with a maximum dependence upon such external forms as details of food distribution and small permissions and prohibitions. Every individual must bear in mind a large number of these injunctions, which determine details of his costume and what temples he may enter, what houses he must avoid because they have not been purified since the last death or birth, etc. It cannot be said that any status is more "free" than any other — only that the list of permissions and prohibitions differs as between one status and another.

As in the plains, so also in the mountains, the niceties of language are invoked in the expression of status, with the only difference that the mountain system is simpler than that of the plains. The mountain people have the essential differentiation between the clipped speech addressed to intimates and the long-winded periphrases addressed to superiors; and this long-winded locution they use for all formal occasions, citizens' meetings, marriage negotiations, etc. This polite speech of the mountains is built up of everyday words and has not the complete and separate vocabulary of that used in the plains. But the pronouns are differentiated according to relative status.

Posture and gesture are also used to express status but very much less than in the plains, and expressions of respect lack the exaggeration characteristic of the plains. The gestures of obeisance, the clasped hands, the politely downward-pointing right thumb, all these are absent in the mountains, even when the gods are addressed. The mountain people experience these postures only in the theatricals which traveling companies of plainsmen bring to their villages, but here they learn enough of the overdone gestures of obsequiousness to be able to imitate them, at least for the next few months, when high persons enter their village. "But," say the people of Bajoeng, "high-caste people could never live long in the village of Bajoeng Gede, for the Bajoeng people would not be able to keep on being polite." And those of high caste who are treated without proper respect themselves suffer. Only in occasional instances are they strong enough to make others suffer.

In the mountains there is less use of levels to discriminate between man and man.

but when we look at the relations between men and gods we find the same insistence upon the stratification of vertical space as in the plains. The higher an offering, the more the gods are honored. Shrines tower upward; the little sedan chairs of the gods are carried on the shoulders; little girls in trance are carried on the shoulders; and food may not be placed upon the ground but must be laid at least upon a mat (in the plains it would be stood upon a pedestal), thus raising it above the level where the eaters are seated — for food also is a god.

In the mountain village, space and time and social status form an orderly whole, with little stress or strain, and without a need to skirt or overstate the points of difference. People dress in their best and wash their hair for ceremonies; they speak with respect when they meet the village heads on the street or approach them to ask to be excused from some village obligation. True, in Bajoeng, the exclusive distinction between those born in the village and those who have entered later is never forgotten, for a different first person pronoun is used by the birthright Bajoeng people, but here also there is so little strain that the people make no play with the idea themselves, and only laughed merrily when I would use it: "*Njonjah demen me-oke*" — "The *Njonjah** enjoys using *oke*," they would giggle. Similarly if a baby would pull at my hair, the mother would quickly remove him and apologize, but if I made a point of letting him play on, the people would relax and laugh. A flower that falls to the ground cannot be replaced in the hair, but everyone knows that — it is no great strain to remember. Children have to be watched until they learn the rules, and foreigners admonished lest they break the local regulations, like the vendor woman who became ill because she raised her umbrella too high in front of the village temple, and so was punished by the gods.

But within the village, within the fixed and complicated sets of regulations, obligations, and privileges, the people are relaxed and dreamy. Only occasionally, as when offerings have to be checked, fines counted, or food distributed, do they pay attention for a moment. And when the whole village travels as a unit to take their contributions to a ceremony held by the Rajah, they seem able to take this sense of complete orientation with them, and the simplest peasant sits quiet and relaxed, in a group, in the presence of his prince.

The minute, however, that caste enters the picture in the form of inter-personal relations, we find a different situation. The casteless Balinese man who, at home in his village, made only the necessary obeisances, becomes extravagantly overpolite in greet-

* Third person singular term of respect for a non-Balinese woman.

BALINESE CHARACTER

ing a high caste. Those who actually become servants in the palaces skit their position still further, going about with their clothes at fantastic and grotesque angles, clowning their subordinate role. It is significant that this clowning is always done from below. The superior person, whether a high caste in real life or a prince on the stage, remains aloof and self-contained, giving no sign that the clowning of his subordinate is a continuous warning to him not to diverge too far from his aloof role into assertiveness.

Between those whose status is not known to each other, there is a great chilly distance, the most formal of discourse, and an unsmiling countenance. Each takes the earliest opportunity to ask the questions necessary to place the other. In a strange village, where he does not know the cardinal points or the local customs, and if he does not know what day it is in at least three of the interlocking weeks, nor the caste and order of birth term* for the person with whom he is trying to converse, the Balinese is completely disoriented. To this state they apply the term "*paling*" which is used also for those who are drunk, delirious, or in trance. Orientation in time, space, and status are the essentials of social existence, and the Balinese, although they make very strong spirits for ceremonial occasions, with a few startling exceptions resist alcohol, because if one drinks one loses one's orientation. Orientation is felt as a protection rather than as a strait jacket and its loss provokes extreme anxiety. If one takes a Balinese quickly, in a motor car, away from his native village so that he loses his bearings, the result may be several hours of illness and a tendency to deep sleep.

Virtually the only context in which levels are skitted in *Bajoeng Gede* is in the relationship between elder and younger brother, when the mother borrows a baby to place on the head of her child, or deliberately places a younger sibling over her older child's head. The hierarchical position of brothers, in which the younger is supposed to use self-deprecating pronouns in addressing the elder, is one of the least stable and most uncomfortable points in Balinese inter-personal relations; and in the effort to adjust it Europeanized Balinese even mix Dutch pronouns in their native speech. Between castes, if the high caste wishes to be modern and to treat the casteless man politely, the courtesy language can be assumed, as between strangers. Between brothers, however, two systems cross: that which assumes that the "rough" language is the language of intimacy, and that which declares the younger brother must honor the elder and should use pronouns of polished subordination. The sibling relationship is also characterized by another anomaly; there is a certain insistence upon cherishing, upon

* The Balinese of the plains use four common terms of address (*Wajan, Made, Njoman, Ketoet*) to define order of birth. A fifth child usually starts a new "set" and is addressed as "*Wajan*."

thoughtfulness from the elder to the younger. Now thoughtfulness, implying as it does identification with the other, is extraordinarily out of key with Balinese character. Placating another, teasing another, flirting with another, fending off the approach from another — these are all habitual enough. But cherishing and thoughtfulness are absent even from the mother-child relationship to an astonishing degree, being replaced by titillation and emotional exploitation. Yet, in the comment of parent to elder child, there recurs a sententious, out-of-key admonition — “Take care of your younger sibling,” “Give that to your younger sibling,” usually shortened to a sharp “*Adinne*” — “the younger sibling,” whenever the older child shows signs of aggression or greed.

These various anomalies and points of contradiction in the use of fixed levels, between high-caste and servant, and between brothers, are all skitted in every theatrical performance. The stock theatrical servants are an elder brother, elegant, pompous, and dull, and a younger brother, gauche, mischievous, and hyperactive. The pair of them, after thoroughly confusing their relationship to each other, proceed to overdo and caricature their relationship to their prince, who remains charming and aloof and continues to sing unintelligible archaic words while the two brothers posture around him.

This freedom of theatrical caricature, from which neither the possessed seer nor the Brahman high priest escapes, though running the whole gamut of Balinese life, concentrates on the points of strain in the system, and so provides continual release in laughter for an audience which has learned to count upon the recurrence of just these themes. The very tone of the laughter is a further index of what the caricature does, for it has the unmistakable character of laughter at a pornographic joke. In every other culture in which I have worked, it has been possible to distinguish the sudden roar of pornographic laughter from laughter at themes other than sex. In Bali this cannot be done, the restrictions surrounding personal relationships in terms of seniority, caste, and directions and levels, seem to have the same quality as the restrictions which, in many cultures, surround sex; and the skits upon status, although rooted in inter-personal relationships, have some of their most satisfying expressions in inversions of the human body — dances in which people stand on their heads with feet doing duty as hands and with masks set on their pubes; carvings in which the head is set on a neck so elongated that it can be twisted around to fit between the legs. Probably the tie-up between the position of the head and the position of the older brother and the person of rank, impressed as it is upon the infant so that a child of eighteen months will shriek with rage if another child is held over his head, is responsible for

BALINESE CHARACTER

the bodily ribaldry with which the Balinese can laugh at a joke involving a reversal of pronouns.*

Learning (Plates 15 to 17)

When the Balinese baby is born, the midwife, even at the moment of lifting him in her arms, will put words in his mouth, commenting, "I am just a poor little newborn baby, and I don't know how to talk properly, but I am very grateful to you, honorable people, who have entered this pig sty of a house to see me born." And from that moment, all through babyhood, the child is fitted into a frame of behavior, of imputed speech and imputed thought and complex gesture, far beyond his skill and maturity. The first time that he answers "*Tiang*," the self-subordinating ego pronoun, to a stranger, he will be echoing a word that has already been said, on his behalf and in his hearing, hundreds of times. Where the American mother attempts to get the child to parrot simple courtesy phrases, the Balinese mother simply recites them, glibly, in the first person, and the child finally slips into speech, as into an old garment, worn before, but fitted on by another hand.

As with speech, so with posture and gesture. The right hand must be distinguished from the left; the right hand touches food, and the right thumb may be used in pointing; the left hand is the hand with which one cleanses oneself, or protects one's genitals in bathing, and must never be used to touch food, to point, or to receive a gift. But the Balinese mother or nurse carries a child, either in or out of a sling, on her left hip, thus leaving her own right hand free. In this position, the baby's *left* arm is free, while the right is frequently pinioned in against the breast, or at best extended behind the mother's back. Naturally, when a baby is offered a flower or a bit of cake, it reaches for it with the free left hand, and the mother or the child nurse invariably pulls the left hand back, extricates the baby's right hand — usually limp and motiveless under this interference with the free gesture — and extends the right hand to receive the gift. This training is begun long before the child is able to learn the distinction, begun in fact as soon as the child is able to grasp at a proffered object, and discontinued usually when the child is off the hip. A three-year-old may often err and

* This final paragraph summing up the themes of status joking involves three sets of psychological generalizations which are separately handled in the analytical captions.

1. Generalizations involving the psychological equivalence, for the Balinese, of sex and aggression. These appear in the captions in the form of statements about Balinese climax. It is stated, for example, that the Balinese child is frustrated whenever it tries to achieve *crescendo* and climax in inter-personal relations with the mother, and that this frustration occurs whether it be a *crescendo* of love or of anger.

2. Generalizations about the psychological role which birds on strings and actors on the stage play, for the Balinese, as autocosmic genital symbols.

3. Generalizations about the Balinese fantasies of bodily integration and disintegration.

receive a casual present in his left hand, with no more punishment than to have some older child or nearby adult shout "*Noenas!*" ("Ask!") which means "Cup the right hand in the left," but the baby of four months is permitted no such leeway. Over and over again, the first spontaneous gesture is clipped off, and a passive, plastic gesture is substituted.

Meanwhile, the child in the sling, or supported lightly on the carrier's hip, has learned to accommodate itself passively to the carrier's movements; to sleep, with head swaying groggily from side to side, as the carrier pounds rice; or to hang limp on the hip of a small girl who is playing "crack-the-whip." Surrendering all autonomy, and passively following the words spoken in its name or the rhythm of the person who carries it or the hand which snatches its hand back from a spontaneous gesture, the child's body becomes more waxy flexible as it grows older; and gestures which are all echoes of an experienced pattern replace such spontaneous gestures of infancy as the pounding of the child's silver bracelets on any convenient board. This accommodation to the movements of others, to cues that come from a pattern rather than from a desire, is facilitated by the extent to which a Balinese child is carried. There is a strong objection to letting a child be seen crawling — an animal activity — by any but the family intimates; and babies, even after they are able to crawl and toddle, are still carried most of the time. The position on the hip limits spontaneity to the arms and the carrier's repetitive interference with hand gestures reduces it there.

Even at its 105-day birthday, the infant is dressed in full adult costume. The infant boy is seated in a parent's arms, and a headcloth ten times too large for him is arranged at least for a moment on his head. The infant's hands are put through the gestures of prayer, of receiving holy water, and of wafting the essence of the holy offering toward himself. By the 210-day birthday, the child will repeat these gestures himself, sitting dreamily, after the ceremony, clasping and unclasping his tiny hands, and then speculatively examining them, finger by finger. At this age also, before he can walk, he will be taught simple hand dance gestures, first by manual manipulation, and later he will learn to follow visual cues, as the parent hums the familiar music and gestures before the baby's eyes with his own hand. This situation, the child dancing in the sustaining arm of the parent and that arm vibrating rhythmically to the music, becomes the prototype of Balinese learning in which as he grows older he will learn with his eyes and with his muscles. But the learning with the eyes is never separated from a sort of physical identification with the model. The baby girl climbs down off her mother's hip to lift a bit of an offering to her head, when her mother or elder sister does the same.

BALINESE CHARACTER

Learning to walk, learning the first appropriate gestures of playing musical instruments, learning to eat, and to dance are all accomplished with the teacher behind the pupil, conveying directly by pressure, and almost always with a minimum of words, the gesture to be performed. Under such a system of learning, one can only learn if one is completely relaxed and if will and consciousness as we understand those terms are almost in abeyance. The flexible body of the dancing pupil is twisted and turned in the teacher's hands; teacher and pupil go through the proper gesture, then suddenly the teacher springs aside, leaving the pupil to continue the pattern to which he has surrendered himself, sometimes with the teacher continuing it so that the pupil can watch him as he dances. Learning with the eyes flows directly from learning passively while one's own body is being manipulated by another.

The Balinese learn virtually nothing from verbal instruction and most Balinese adults are incapable of following out the three consecutive orders which we regard as the sign of a normal three-year-old intelligence. The only way in which it is possible to give complex verbal instructions is to pause after each detail and let the listener repeat the detail, feeling his way into the instruction. Thus all orders tend to have a pattern like this. "You know the box?" "What box?" "The black one." "What black one?" "The black one in the east corner of the kitchen." "In the east corner?" "Yes, the black one. Go and get it." "I should go and get the black box in the east corner of the kitchen?" "Yes." Only by such laborious assimilation of words into word gestures made by oneself, do words come to have any meaning for action.

This same peculiarity is found in the pattern of story telling. The Balinese story teller does not continue gaily along through a long tale, as the story tellers of most cultures do, but he makes a simple statement, "There was once a princess," to which his auditors answer, "Where did she live?" or "What was her name?" and so on, until the narrative has been communicated in dialogue. A thread, even a simple verbal thread, in which one's body plays no role, has no continuous meaning.

There is rarely any discernible relationship between the conversation of a group of Balinese and the activity which they are performing. Words must be captured and repeated to have meaning for action, but there is no need at all to translate action into words. One might listen at a spy hole for an hour to a busy group, hearing every word spoken, and be no wiser in the end as to whether they were making offerings, or painting pictures, or cooking a meal. The occasional "Give me that!" is interspersed with bits of comic opera, skits and caricatures, songs and punning and repartee. As Americans doodle on a piece of paper while attending to the words of a lecture, so the Balinese doodles in words, while his body flawlessly and quickly attends to the job in hand.

All learning in Bali depends upon some measure of identification, and we may consider as prototype of such learning, the child's continuous adaptation to movements into which it is guided by the parent who holds it. Lacking such identification, no learning will occur, and this becomes specially conspicuous when one attempts to teach a Balinese some new foreign technique. Most Balinese will balk and make no attempt to copy a European, or to perform any act, no matter how simple, which only a European has been seen to perform. But if once one can persuade one Balinese to master a European skill, then other Balinese of the same or superior caste position will learn it very quickly. So in training our Balinese secretaries, we had no difficulty because I Made Kaler, our secretary, educated in Java, believed that he could do what Europeans did, just as he could speak their language, sit on their chairs and handle their tools. Other Balinese boys, seeing Made Kaler use a typewriter, learned to type accurately and well in a few days.

This particularistic identification with the movement and skill of other bodies, socially comparable to one's own, has undoubtedly served as a conservative element in Bali, maintaining the division of labor between the sexes, and partially limiting certain skills, like writing, to the high castes. Only by invoking some such explanation can we understand the division of labor in Bali. The system works smoothly and accurately but with a total absence of sanctions. In the few cases of women who become scholars or musicians, or men who become skilled in weaving, no one even bothers to comment on the odd circumstance. And those who cross the sex division of labor are not penalized; they are not regarded as more or less masculine or feminine nor confused with the occasional transvestite, although the latter includes the occupations of the opposite sex in his transvesticism. But without sanctions, with freedom to embrace any occupation, ninety-nine out of a hundred Balinese adhere simply to the conventions that spinning, weaving, making most offerings, etc., are women's work, whereas carving, painting, music, making certain other offerings, etc., are men's work.

Combined with this kinaesthetic type of learning and with the continuous insistence upon levels and directions, there is a preoccupation with balance, which expresses itself in various ways. When the young male child is still learning to walk, loss of balance or any other failure evokes a regular response: he immediately clutches at his penis, and often, to be sure of balance, walks holding on to it. Little girls clasp their arms in front of them, and sometimes hold on to their heads. As they grow older, an increased sense of balance makes it possible to stand motionless for quite a long time on one foot; but dancing on one foot, playing too freely with a preciously achieved and highly developed balance is associated with witches and demons. Just as

BALINESE CHARACTER

in witchcraft, right and left are reversed, so also in witchcraft, the decent boundaries of body posture are trespassed upon.

Balinese children, especially little Balinese girls, spend a great deal of time playing with the joints of their fingers, experimenting with bending them back until the finger lies almost parallel with the back of the hand. The more coordinated and disciplined the motion of the body becomes, the smaller the muscle groups with which a Balinese operates. Where an American or a New Guinea native will involve almost every muscle in his body to pick up a pin, the Balinese merely uses the muscles immediately relevant to the act, leaving the rest of the body undisturbed. Total involvement in any activity occurs in trance and in children's tantrums, but for the rest, an act is *not* performed by the whole body. The involved muscle does not draw all the others into a unified act, but smoothly and simply, a few small units are moved — the fingers alone, the hand and forearm alone, or the eyes alone, as in the characteristic Balinese habit of slewing the eyes to one side without turning the head.

Integration and Disintegration of the Body (Plates 18 to 25)

These two habits, that of going waxy limp in the hands of a teacher and permitting the body to be manipulated from without, and that of moving only the minimum of muscles necessary to any act, find expression in the whole puppet complex* on the one hand, and in the fear of decomposition on the other. The animated puppet, the doll which dances on a string, the leather puppets manipulated by the puppeteer, and finally the little girl trance dancers who themselves become exaggeratedly limp and soft as they dance to the commands of the audience, all dramatize this whole picture of involuntary learning, in which it is not the will of the learner, but the pattern of the situation and the manipulation of the teacher which prevail. In the shadow-play, the puppet is set against the screen, and while he stands immobile, the flickering and swinging of the lamp give him a fiction of movement and the puppeteer recites a long speech, imputing it to the puppet. In the *sangiang deling* performance, little puppets with loaded feet are suspended from a slender string supported by sticks held in the hands of two performers. The hands of the performers tremble, set up a harmonic action in the string, and the puppets are said to "be in trance, and to dance uncontrollably," thus dramatizing the confusion which is involved in all Balinese activity — the blending of the teacher and the taught, the model and the copyist.

The fear of disintegration, epitomized in the shuddering horror at the rotting of

* Originally described by Jane Belo (MS on "Trance in Bali," to be published shortly by Columbia University Press).

the body after death, is equally understandable. This body, which moves only in parts and without volition, hardly seems like a unit at all, and may well be composed of a series of separate units, each with a life of its own. Such are the ideas of black magic, and of protection against black magic. Folk beliefs are filled with personified limbs, legs and arms, and heads, each animated by a mischievous will of its own, frequenting the cemetery and existing merely to torment man. And in a special set of *sangiang* performances in the District of Karangasem, there are trances in which only the hand of the performer is put in trance; it trembles independently, while he himself and the rest of his body remain uninvolved.

In the hands, more intensely than in any other part of the body, this disassociation, this independence of each small unit is seen. Balinese hands at rest rarely lie with the fingers in scriated regular flexion as our hands do, but one finger stays at one angle and another at another in a way which would prove infinitely tiring to us. As a Balinese sits watching two children play, or two cocks fighting, it is sometimes possible to see how the two hands become separate symbols of the two who are being watched, the hands twitching slightly as the scene shifts. Even when one of the fighting cocks belongs to the spectator and the other to his rival, still the two hands play out their dramatic counterpoint, and from watching them one can follow the action but not guess the winner. So when a painter was working with one hand, and the other lay on the table unused, it was sometimes found that that second hand provided the more interesting series of postures, as if the neglected hand were playing out a little counterpoint of its own.

Watching a Balinese crowd around a vendor's stall, an audience at play, a group sitting by the roadside, or a religious congregation, one is struck by the continuous fussing with the surface of the skin, the roving of the sensitive fingers, alert and searching over the skin, looking for something, some roughness or imperfection on which to pause. At first this appears to be mere fidgeting, but actually the people are unduly sensitive to skin imperfections. Every break in the surface of the body is a disaster; people with open sores cannot enter the temple and cannot prepare offerings for the gods, nor, if the sore is too bad, can they be buried in the proper cemetery. Imperfections in the skin are associated with loss of a body part, so no one who has lost a fingernail, or has broken an ear lobe, or has lost a finger joint is eligible to full temple membership in Bajoeng Gede. Skin lesions are ceremonially classed with pregnancy in Bajoeng — temporary distortions rendering one unfit for ceremonially pure occasions. And the Balinese skin heals too fast. The whole problem of treating a wound is how to

BALINESE CHARACTER

keep the wound open against too quick healing followed by infection which develops beneath the light scar.

But as one watches these crowds with their fingers playing exploringly over the surface of the face, it becomes apparent also that wherever a rough spot is found, some abrasion sufficient to arrest that straying finger, a sort of closed circuit is set up — finger and point of body surface against which the finger presses, both entering consciousness. This circuit from own hand to own body can be diverted to inter-personal uses, e.g., in lousing, one of the few inter-personal contacts which may unite a whole group of girls and women during some long pause in a ceremony.

Orifices of the Body (Plates 26 to 37)

The Balinese have their fantasies of bodily disintegration, but as one watches an adult Balinese, one is impressed with a sense of the whole body, with the way in which the tip of the finger is an integrated part of the whole. Watching a member of our own culture, one receives quite a different impression; the body appears as a trunk and the arms and legs as appendages which are never quite in unison with it. Peoples differ strikingly in the emphases implicit in their handling of the body; some think of the human body as a trunk, with orifices at both ends, while others think of the trunk as merely a central element in a unified body. But the human infant at birth brings to his cultural experience an almost uncoordinated body and a series of orifices by which he initially meets and interprets the world. What his primary interpretation will be and whether this interpretation will persist, must depend largely upon the way in which those about him handle him.

In Bali, the infant is both suckled and fed from birth on, so that the two experiences of absorbing liquids by sucking and stronger substances by swallowing occur together. But from the start, the two experiences are sharply differentiated; when the infant is suckled, the mother holds it so that its mouth is placed down on the nipple, rather than in the more common fashion in which the nipple is thrust down into a baby's mouth. He learns to draw milk *up* into his mouth. From the very beginning, suckling is a free activity in which the infant is given more freedom of movement than can be the case when the mother thrusts her nipple down into an infant's mouth, and in addition the child is given freedom to determine *when* it shall be suckled.

Exactly the opposite is the case in the method of feeding solids. The mother pre-chews a mixture of rice and banana, and then, either with her lips or her finger, she places a mound of the soft pre-chewed material on the baby's mouth, gradually ma-

nipulating more and more of it into its mouth. The infant splutters and chokes, helpless and almost always resistant to the mountain of mush which is being forced on it. Each feeding becomes a sort of attack, in which the baby instead of being free to draw up sweet milk at will, is forced to swallow against its will. Little children, given their meals in shallow coconut shells, may be seen tipping these saucers over their faces, reproducing the smothering situation in which they learned to eat.

All through life, the Balinese have a sensitivity in regard to open mouths, and Balinese betel chewing contains one special element which is congruent with this. After the bit of areca nut and the little roll of pepper leaf and lime or the bit of spice have been chewed and spat, the Balinese takes a great wad of shredded tobacco and places this in his open mouth. This unsightly wad may remain there for hours, protruding from the wedged-open mouth, reminiscent of the pile of mash on the face of the baby, but also serving a second purpose — closing the mouth of the adult against the world. In gesture, too, the same protectiveness of the mouth is often seen. The palm of the hand is placed over the mouth, and sometimes the cloth shawl, worn by men and women in the colder parts of Bali, is also drawn from the chest to cover the mouth, warding off the outside world.

But during late infancy and early childhood, betel is not yet chewed, and there is no wad of tobacco to stop up the alarmingly open space through which strange things may be forced upon one. The baby teethes — and teething is unusually difficult in Bajoeng Gede, perhaps because of mineral deficiencies in the soil — on a large locket shaped like a box, which is hung about its neck on a necklace of small silver medallions. The baby lifts the necklace and thrusts the box into its mouth, teething as it were on a part of itself. Soon the finger replaces the necklace, and the finger is thrust deep into the mouth, avoiding the lips and exploring deeply in the oral cavity. Once in so often the finger is drawn out of the mouth with a slow swish in which the attention is evidently concentrated on the finger and not on the mouth. Even when own finger is thrust into own mouth, it is not the mouth but the finger which is emphasized, and the onlooker gets the impression that the child enjoys a pleasant sensation — located in the finger.

Meanwhile, habits of eating are developed, and eating again falls into two categories; eating solid food as a meal, and the casual swallowing of snacks and tidbits and drinks; which are usually taken standing. So uncomfortable are the Balinese when eating meals that many observers have come away from Bali insisting that the Balinese will never eat in public if they can avoid it, and that if others are present they turn their backs on each other, and toss the food into their mouths as quickly as possible.

BALINESE CHARACTER

Eat together they must, at feasts, at ceremonies, and as members of work groups who are fed by the host, but always there is the turning away, the search for privacy reminiscent of the search for privacy in defecation which contrasts so sharply with the total disregard of privacy for urination. In every house the place of the pigs, the lowest place in the ground plan, is also a latrine, but only for defecation. Adults as well as children urinate casually, in the midst of a conversation, in the open road, where also they buy and consume snacks with no sign of modesty or embarrassment.

Inasmuch as eating solid food is attended with so much unpleasant emotion and the whole process of intake and elimination of food is so sharply divided between that which is liquid, casual, and a matter of choice, and that which is solid, heavily serious, and socially enjoined, it is not surprising to find an astonishing amount of time devoted to the preparation of food. This is the preliminary reduction of foods from large unwieldy masses to symbolically predigested mash. Every feast, every ceremony, is prefaced by group activity in which the meat is chopped into minute bits, sometimes varied by the construction of ornamental *sate*, in which the pig fat or omentum is refashioned into elaborate and fanciful designs. Most preparation of food, which includes also the preparation of offerings (for offerings are merely ornamentally arranged patterns of food and other decorative elements), involves the elimination of the original form of the food and usually the substitution of some new form. The meat paste may be molded into a new shape, or the little sticks on which the paste is smeared may be shaped to a design, or the food may be placed in containers themselves fancifully shaped. Both meat and meal are forced to lend themselves to this endless recombining, this restructuring of food stuffs into forms delightful to the eye and often symbolic of discarded ceremonial usages. The whole roast pig which occurs in a mountain ceremony is likely to be replaced, in the ceremonies of the plains, by a model made of rice meal and elaborately colored.

While the Balinese feel strongly that eating solid food is embarrassing and that defecation should be done in private, their methods of child training are mild and dilatory, and the child learns his excretory manners without extreme pressure being put upon him. The people have little genuine objection to dirt; they bathe a great deal for the pleasure they receive from sitting in an open stream and cooling their skins, but they cheerfully resume their soiled clothing. Infants are carried in clothes which are interchangeably baby slings and shawls, and the infant's excreta are cleaned up by dogs, wherever they happen to fall. A urinating infant is not jerked quickly aside so as to prevent his wetting his mother's sarong, and only slowly do children learn to ask what is the proper place for defecation. The whole childhood attitude was

summed up in the behavior of three five-year-olds who solemnly reported to me, "Karsa (aged three) has just defecated over there." "Well, don't you defecate?" "Yes, but never in your yard, *Njonjah*." And I have more than once come upon riotous scenes in which groups of children were dancing in taunting delight around some unhappy child who had been unwary and had stepped in feces.

The attitudes toward eating and defecating contain in fact a large element of conventionality and a failure to conform meets with the sanction of mockery, provoking that acute misery which in Bali follows any lapse from conventional propriety. The component of disgust in these attitudes is, however, more difficult to account for. The toilet training is, as we have seen, not stringent, and to understand fully the nature of their feelings and their extension to both food and feces, it is necessary to see them in a wider cultural setting. We have to bear in mind, simultaneously, the choking with pre-chewed food; the pre-chopping of meals; the Balinese notion that witches eat chicken dung and that luminous saliva drips from their mouths; the scavenging role of the dog; and the Balinese horror of all signs of animality in man or woman.

On the ceremonial level, the elimination of such rubbish as the remains of feasts and offerings has a curious hectic quality, reminiscent of the screams of the small child who is being pursued hopefully by a dog. At the end of ceremonies, the *lis*, a ceremonial broom with which various parts of the paraphernalia and courtyard are sprinkled with water, is thrown away, and special offerings are laid on the ground to be eaten by the dogs, representative of the demons, or are scrambled over by human beings for the pennies which they contain. Human beings so scrambling over ceremonial excreta become animal-like, replacing the dogs, and animality is more abhorrent to a Balinese than any other aspect of humanity. Bestiality is a major crime for which people are banished forever, and the punishment for incest is a ritual in which the partners in crime wear pig yokes over their necks and must crawl to a pig trough and eat with their mouths to the trough as animals do. Any situation which thus likens men to animals by giving them a role in the handling of the unclean, particularly in the handling of corpses, is likely to induce this riotous scrambling and lapse from human quality. A human being stands upright, never crawls, is embarrassed by eating, keeps his right hand for his food.

The institution of the food vendor brings out the other side of the feeling about eating. Food vending is done outside the home, and one's own mother becomes a different person when she takes her little table, set with soft drinks and tidbits, and sits down by the roadside to sell food for pennies. The situation becomes gay and frivolous, people cluster together thinking little of caste or status, except in speech. They

BALINESE CHARACTER

eat standing without embarrassment, flirt with the vendor, part of whose stock-in-trade is quick repartee. Eating at the vendor's stall is casual and playful, and it must be compared, not with the baby's forced eating of pre-chewed food, but with the casual and gay suckling. Tiny children, hardly able to talk, are given pennies, wander beyond the confining circle of the home, and turn their pennies into snacks and sweetmeats. The vagrants who wander from village to village, begging a coin here, doing a half-day's work there, may eat almost entirely from these food stalls, living outside all the limitations of citizenship and onerous social participation.

Food eaten standing at a vendor's stall requires no preliminary or final washing of the mouth, but at the end of a real meal each Balinese carefully fills his mouth with water and spews the water forth without swallowing any, thus breaking connection with the food which has just entered his mouth. And it is against this background that the Balinese ceremonial use of water must be understood, whether it is the receiving of holy water, washing one's hair before going to a ceremony, or pouring holy water over a corpse. Water breaks the corrupting tie, not with dirt, but with having had contact with dirt — a very different matter.

It is only when food is actually entering the body that the Balinese feel this way about it. Rice is treated as a god and should be set on a pedestal higher than the seated eater; and there were rules in some villages against speaking to a man who was eating, because it would anger the god that was in him. Food is never laid on the bare ground; when this is done it becomes, psychologically speaking, not food but excreta.

Throughout, the Balinese is preoccupied with the participation of his own body in an act, rather than in a relationship between himself and an outside object. Participation in the act of ingesting and digesting solids is accompanied by repulsion, but the repulsion is not directed toward the food. When the body is seen as a tube through which things pass quickly and relatively unaltered, this idea seems to be pleasant and unembarrassing; while the opposite notion, that substances are taken into the body and there altered, is correspondingly unpleasant and embarrassing.

Autocosmic Play (Plates 38 to 44)

The Balinese treat a baby as something between a toy and a puppet, with a little touch of extra respect if they remember that the baby is recently returned from the other world. Nowhere in all Bali, where people laugh far more readily at a gaff than in response to any direct invocation of their emotions, where tears are disallowed at death and where anger is expressed with greater smoothness of speech, is there any-

thing half as responsive as a baby. The six-month-old baby is carried about continually; if it frets or grows restless there are half a dozen hands stretched out to receive it, and the carrier, piqued at its restlessness, is only too glad to let it go. So a baby passes from hand to hand in a crowd, staying a half-minute in one girl's arms, only to yield to the blandishments of her neighbor with outstretched arms. No one passes a baby without stopping to flick its fingers or flick it under the chin, or utter a teasing, "Where is your mother?" guaranteed to make the baby pucker its lips or to cry outright. A popular baby, from the age of five or six months to a year, is always "wandering about for pleasure" on the hip of some woman or small girl, a relative or a neighbor. Only on the rarest occasions do little girls invent substitute dolls, or play with little carvings, or treat puppies as babies. Most of the time they play with real babies, gay responsive babies, babies which respond to stimulation with tears or laughter as easily as a mechanical doll says "mama" when pressed in the right place. Babies are women's toys, so satisfying as toys that they seldom, even as children, turn to other toys.

Yet there is another side to the attitude toward babies, summed up in the words which are used for them before they are named — "mouse," "caterpillar," "grub" — little crawling things — and significantly some of these terms are also used as scare words to deter a young child from doing anything which his mother doesn't want him to do. These same little creatures occur in paintings of corpses, and a woman who has refused to have children on earth is punished by having to suckle a caterpillar in hell. Mothers of new babies are addressed as "mother of a mouse" or "mother of a caterpillar," and holy persons, priests, and those who have been purified in the hierarchy of *Bajoeng Gede* must not go near young babies.

What a baby is to a woman — something to play with, to toy with, to titillate and tease, to dawdle over, to carry about, to dress up and undress, to stroke and to tickle — a fighting cock is to a man. Balinese men often carry their own babies about, in the mountains even wearing the baby sling and carrying quite young babies tenderly and skillfully, but for grown men these are always their own children or grandchildren. Carrying babies about is an act of kinship more than a form of amusement. Adolescent boys, not yet sure of themselves as grown men, will often spend time carrying and toying with some young relative, but it is doubtful if any boy who was not constrained to the task by being left with a baby to care for, would ever prefer a baby to a fighting cock. The average Balinese man can find no pleasanter way to pass the time than to walk about with a cock, testing it out against the cocks of other men whom he meets on the road, giving it an onion bath, or putting red pepper on its anus or into its beak. Ruffling it up, smoothing it down, ruffling it up again, sitting among other men who

BALINESE CHARACTER

are engaged in similar toying with their cocks — this passes many hours of the long hot afternoons. But if one watches a woman with a baby and a man with a fighting cock, one sees a significant difference: the man is handling the cock as an extension of his own body; the woman is handling the child as something separate, apart from herself, something for which one reaches out and which one seeks to attract. When one man is allowed to handle the cock of another, the men change places rather than the cock changing hands. The newcomer slips into the place behind the cock, and the man who was holding it slips to one side.

Children's first experience of handling live things, which later develops into play with fighting cocks for men and play with babies for girls and women, is provided by baby birds, beetles, grasshoppers, etc., which are tied and given to children as play-things. Baby chicks and puppies are also given to children quite freely as toys. We photographed one scene in which two two-year-old boys were bouncing puppies as if they were rubber balls. The child is taught no identifying attitudes of pity or care toward these live toys on the ends of strings and all his interest is centered on the way in which the small bird flutters and responds to the pull of the string. These living toys have a scrics of overtones which become part of Balinese symbolism. The children playing with them are at the same time learning to experiment with their own bodies: little girls to flick their pliant fingers as far back as possible, little boys to pull and tug at their genitals. The sense of a body-part symbol which is attached, but by a thread, and which has a life and willfulness of its own, becomes strongly developed. In the shadow-play this idea is further developed. Separable weapons, lances, spears, and arrows shower across the stage, and Towalen, the coarse old servant of the heroes, has a weapon spear-shaped at the point which he uses — until the puppeteer draws a roar of laughter from his audience by turning the leather about to show the phallic butt. The arrows and spears when they are flung, dart across the screen, but Towalen's weapon travels with a slow, wavy, and ponderous motion.

Besides live birds and insects there is a variety of other toys, such as pinwheels, whirligigs, rattles, and clappers which are assimilated to this same picture. One of the most vivid dramatizations of the whole idea of a separable and animated phallus is found in the flocks of pigeons with bells tied to their wings, which circle above the city of Den Pasar; and I once witnessed a telling dramatic improvisation in which our casteless houseboys tied a noisy whirring bumblebee to a string and anchored it in the midst of a spread of clothes which the high-caste girls from the next courtyard had laid on the grass to dry.

This sense that own body parts, particularly the phallus, are very loosely attached

and independently animated, is most developed in boys. Girls, although they are occasionally given live birds to play with, usually assimilate such pets to the idea of a baby, so that they become, not parts of the own body, but something live and separate from the self. By the time they are four or five, all little girls have an ample opportunity to play with babies, and more elaborate developments of this preoccupation with an own body which is separate and animated, do not occur. Nevertheless, the attenuated version, which the girls receive from the toys they are given and the models whom they watch, is enough. True, for them the cultural picture lacks the reinforcement which each generation of baby boys must derive from their own bodily sensations. But in later life both sexes, when they watch a dancer at a play, identify not with the character who is being portrayed but with the bodies and movements, skilled or faulty, of the performers.

For the little boy, the handling which he receives from others strongly reinforces the suggestive symbolism of his plaything. A mother dries her baby boy after he has urinated by flicking his genital lightly from side to side, and as he grows older this treatment changes to teasing and ruffling, followed by pulling and stretching. Little boys keep their balance by holding on to their genitals, and learn to stretch the skin as others have stretched it. Against this background of conspicuous attention to the genitals of male children, often with the exclamation "Handsome! Handsome!" — an adjective applicable only to male beauty — the child's body becomes a sort of stage and his body parts the actors on that stage. In many cultures, toys and patterns of adult play with children tend to draw the child's attention away from his own body and into the outside world, but in Bali everything combines to refocus the child's attention back upon himself. His whole body, but especially his genital, is like a toy or a small musical instrument upon which those about him play; they make him toys which tell the same tale and it is not surprising that he develops a bodily consciousness very different from our own.

As children grow older, they withdraw into themselves, away from the overstimulating and unrewarding teasing. Little boys learn to skirt carefully the group of elders who will make casual snatches at their genitals; little girls walk with their abdomens pushed far out in seeming imitation of pregnancy, but they steer clear of the older women who will smack them on their abdomens and ask if they are pregnant, and when the baby they carry will be born. They draw back into themselves, and are thrown back on their own bodies for gratification. The men become narcissistic and uncertain of the power of any woman, no matter how strange and beautiful, to arouse their desire, but the women remain continually receptive to male advances. Strikingly

BALINESE CHARACTER

enough, although female homosexuality did occur in the restricted courts of the rajahs among their many guarded wives and sisters, all the records we have indicate that the woman who played the man's role had to fabricate a complete male anatomy. The Balinese find it impossible to imagine a sexual drama which does not include one male, but they do not find it at all difficult to conceive of one male, left alone with his dramatized body, finding satisfaction within himself. In the most exciting scenes, rioting over a corpse, or at the climax of a cockfight, there are always some who stand aside, curved in upon themselves in the postures typical of schizophrenic dreaming.

It is possible to classify play types as autocosmic, when the own body is the stage as well as the principal actor; microcosmic, when a drama is enacted in miniature and the player merely manipulates the pieces, one of which may represent himself; and macrocosmic, when the play themes are lived out in the real world, as when the would-be cowboy does not content himself with riding up and down on a stick shouting (as in autocosmic play), or in playing out the game with toy cowboys and Indians, but instead seizes a large stick and rushes out to beat his father, suddenly seen as an Indian, or plays truant from school under the spell of his fantasy.*

When Balinese children are offered a mechanical mouse, or a doll or a toy koala, they do not construct scenes with these toys as children in many other cultures do. They take one toy at a time, and handle it as part of own body, if they are boys; or they treat the toy as a baby, or more occasionally as a hand, if they are girls. Very occasionally they project their whole bodies into a play world, as when they become cats chasing the mechanical mouse. Balinese children identify themselves in their drawings, rather than merely drawing mythical figures, or realistic portrayals of the people around them.† I have collected children's drawings in seven cultures, but only the Balinese children do this. It is as if the Balinese scarcely discriminate between the feeling for the own body and the sense of dramatic action. This shows up vividly in the dramatic conventions.

In the Balinese theater, the ordinary division into greenroom, stage, and audience is curiously handled. The audience is a hollow square with the stage inside the square, so that the actors are always seen against a backdrop of human faces instead of against an empty screen. The most delicate gestures, which are incredibly lovely when some accident of groundplan makes it possible to see them etched against a temple wall or

* These three very useful categories of play are based on E. H. Erikson, "Problems of Infancy and Early Childhood," *Cyclopedia of Medicine, Surgery, and Specialties* (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Co., 1940), pp. 715-730. We are also indebted to Dr. Erikson for theoretical clarification of the way in which the Balinese audiences' failure to identify with the characters in a play may be described under the autocosmic heading.

† Characteristic of the interpretations given by the Sajan children whose drawings were collected by Jane Belo.

the empty sky, have to be witnessed, as a rule, in the midst of a crowd, so that only kinaesthetic identification with the movement itself makes it possible to realize it. Except in the modern Chinese-influenced *ardja* in which a curtain is strung up in the open between two poles, hiding nothing except about half of a single actor's body, there is no greenroom. Those actors who are not performing sit relaxed, perhaps asleep, headaddresses taken off for relief, while the audience sits all about them, interested and unsurprised, waiting for the moment when they will resume their roles. In the shadow-play there is a screen of white cloth against which the shadows are thrown, so that the best effects are seen from the outside. In spite of this, as much as half of the audience, especially children and men who hope someday to be puppeteers, sit behind the screen watching the techniques of creating the illusion, rather than ever surrendering to the illusion itself. Each puppet is painted on both sides with elaborate care, although only a black shadow is thrown on the screen. A Balinese audience at any performance is a group of people who are technically interested; they are uncaught by the plight of the princess lost in the forest, blown away on her silken cobwebs, but they are very deeply concerned with the twist of her little finger.

We think of the tendency of drama to spill over into real life, but in Bali, real life, if the audience of everyday persons standing close packed around the stage can be so called, is always spilling over into the play. When a little dancer's sash has come untied, someone from the village is in pinning it up; or when two unmasked witches are chased down to the brook and ducked by other actors, the whole audience suddenly joins in the chase. The Witch play, begun with carefully marked audience lines and highly stylized dancing, may end with many of the audience in trance, or half of them pursuing the Witch who, tranced herself, rushes blindly through the village. In the theatrical performances, there is continual representation and exaggeration of those emotions which no adult Balinese displays: grief at parting and death; broken hearts; riotous aggression, coupled with a freedom of speech and gesture and an amount of horseplay never seen among adults; birth scenes with vivid dramatization of the fear of witchcraft which surrounds every real birth. The members of the audience, playing out the scenes within their own bodies, are drawn into the play, audience and actor alike preoccupied with their own bodies.

It is particularly revealing to watch the group of Balinese men clustered about an orchestra. They are the other members of the club, who will play when any of those now playing relinquish their instruments. Each member of that group is ready to play an instrument, and is waiting for his chance; they are never a passive audience merely listening to music in which their own bodies have no part. As men change places be-

BALINESE CHARACTER

hind the same cock, so also they slip in and out from behind the different instruments, one player taking up where the other has left off. In one of the modern dance forms the dancer in the center of the circle flirts with the musicians and adds piquancy to this flirtation by taking away the mallet from a leading metallophone player. Occasionally a very small boy, a five- or six-year-old whose musical virtuosity has brought him into the front rows of the metallophone players, will bitterly resent this temporary theft of his tool. He is too much absorbed in musical virtuosity to accept the notion that the hammer is also another toy detachable from his body.

Parents and Children (Plates 45 to 68)

In Bali, the gods are thought of as the *children* of the people, not as august parental figures. Speaking through the lips of those in trance, the gods address the villagers as "papa" and "mama," and the people are said to spoil or indulge their gods, the same term being used as that which is used when spoiling or indulging a child or a monarch. Newborn babies, reincarnated and fresh from heaven, are addressed with honorific terms and the babe about to be born is most politely exhorted by the midwife, "Sir, please condescend to emerge, for we are cold and have no more betel nut. We should like to go home if you, Sir, would only consent to be born." During the early months of its life, before it is quite certain that the child will consent to stay and eat rice with its relatives, a slight aura of the sacred and uncanny surrounds the child; it may not yet put foot to the ground or enter a temple, and its willfulness and its first garbled phrases are taken as inspired. This attitude toward children is carried over and ceremonially expressed in the child trances, in which adolescent boys and grown men take great pleasure in addressing and adorning the little trance dancer, who in turn, possessed by a god, acts as a petted or petulant child. When the music begins, the little trancers begin to dance, rhythmically enacting the familiar scene in which elders attempt to dress a fractious and squirming child.

These scenes are very much enjoyed by everyone. The more pettish and unreasonable the little dancer is, the more amused the audience becomes. For the trancer is at once willful and compliant; she is fussy about the music, rejecting a song by the girl members of the club and insisting upon orchestral music from the boys, but at the same time she responds accurately to her cues. When the words of the song say "Sweep the ground with your fan" she sweeps the ground; or when they say "Give me a flower" she takes a flower from her headdress and hands it to a member of the audience. Tranced, relaxed, puppet-like, sacred and yet completely under control, com-

pliant and yet willful, the *sangiang* dancer is the ideal object for Balinese parental attitudes, and the audience, relaxed and gay, both participates and looks on. The big boys address the little trancers with overdone politeness, "See, your sacred ladyship, it is going to rain and you have not yet stood on my shoulders. Are they not good enough for you?" "Surely, your sacred ladyship is now willing to reascend to heaven, for we are bored with this and would like to go home."

The little dancers are put into trance by incense and singing and, in *Bajoeng Gede*, by holding on to vibrating sticks connected by a string from which are suspended puppets. The gods first enter the puppets, setting up a violent commotion of the string. The girls then grasp the sticks and are entered by the same gods. Only after the gods have entered them and they are in trance, may the sacred headdresses and sacred bibs be placed upon them. If, in this sacred state, they go from one temple to another, they are carried on men's shoulders, and part of the dance is danced standing on a man's shoulders. If a piece of the headdress falls to the ground, it must be censed before it can be returned to the dancer's head. The girls, especially their heads, are sacred, and yet, if the playful, overpolite exhortations to return to heaven fail, the small girls are finally picked up, summarily and in spite of themselves, the headdresses are taken off their heads, the bibs untied, and the girls are dumped down facing the incense and subjected to the ritual which will bring them out of trance and transform them back into very ordinary little girls again. So babies — and gods — and princes — appear to the Balinese.

But if the *sangiang* dance sums up the general attitude toward the child, an attitude which all adults and older children share, what is the particular affect which binds mother and child together in Bali? The Balinese child is carried either loosely on the hip, as in most of the plains villages, or in a sling, as in *Bajoeng Gede*, but even where the hand of the mother is substituted for the sling, the child's adaptation is the same, passive, adjusting itself by complete limpness to the movements of the mother's body. It may even sleep with head wobbling to the timing of the mother's rice pestle. The baby receives its cues as to whether the outside world is to be trusted or feared directly from contact with the mother's body, and though the mother may have schooled herself to smile and utter courtesy phrases to the stranger and the high-caste, and may display no timorousness in her artificially grimacing face, the screaming baby in her arms betrays the inward panic. The tendency to take cues directly from the mother's body is increased by the mother's habit of hiding the child's face, placing her hand over its eyes or covering it in her cloth shawl, whenever anything untoward is occurring. Children, surprised in a village lane by strangers, with no time to take to

BALINESE CHARACTER

their heels and not even time to turn their faces to the wall, will stand immobile, the backs of their hands pressed firmly against their eyeballs, shutting out the fear stimulus. The Balinese distinguish clearly between fear and the expression of fear, and it becomes a commonplace to hear people say fiercely to cowering or crying children, "*Da takoet*" ("Do not act afraid"), and this is the only reassurance which is ever attempted. Nobody would say, "*Da djerih*" ("Don't be afraid"). No one even attempts to furnish enough reassurance so that the child's internal fear may be dispelled.

As the child grows old enough to run away, to get into mischief, to meddle with the belongings of others, or to upset food cooking on the fire, the mother pantomimes the fear which the child has already experienced so often in her arms. Like an old hen clucking in panic to call her chicks back under her wing, the mother of the straying child gives a histrionic fear-laden cry, "*Aroh!*" followed by the mention of any one of a dozen scare symbols, chosen at random and without any concern for their relevance — "Fire!" "Snake!" "Feccs!" "Scorpion!" "Witch!" "Elf spirits!" "White man!" "Chinaman!" "Policeman!" "Tiger!" The mother is as likely to exclaim "Fire!" when the baby toddles into a possibly snake-infested banana patch; "Feccs!" when it touches the betel basket of a visitor, and "Tiger!" when it crawls under the bed. There is no reality content in the whole performance. The child responds only to the startled fear in his mother's voice, and to the theatrical embrace in which she holds him when he runs back to her. This is almost the only occasion on which the mother meets the child emotionally, giving him her complete, although theatrical, attention. This practice lays the groundwork for the continuation of fear as a major sanction and stimulus in Balinese life. It lays the groundwork for an ambivalent attitude toward fear, an emotion which the Balinese cultivates as well as yields to, and for the open preference for theatricals and theatrical behavior which is so characteristic of the Balinese. Only in the theater is the overt expression of emotion permitted. In real life, the European is often at a loss to tell when two Balinese are quarreling, but on the stage, emotions are so accurately delineated that no mistake is possible.

During our first months in Bali, before I had learned to understand the Balinese preference for theatrical emotions, I was at a loss to explain why my rapport developed so slowly with the people of Bajoeng Gede. Mothers whose babies I had medicated, although they returned for more medicine, remained so unwon that the babies screamed in terror in their arms whenever the mothers saw me. The few days which it takes to win over the women and children in a New Guinea tribe lengthened into months, and still the mothers smiled false anxious smiles, the babies screamed, and dogs barked. Then I had the opportunity to study the behavior of other Europeans

who had come to Bali as they might go to the theater, and saw how much more easily the Balinese responded to their exaggerated interest than they did to my affection for individual babies. Readjusting my cues, I gave up depending upon the communication of real emotion, upon which I had depended on all my other field trips, and learned to exaggerate and caricature my friendly attitudes until the Balinese could safely accept them as theatrical rather than real. Mothers who had not loosened one tense muscle when I expressed my real feelings for their babies, relaxed with relief when I cooed and gurgled in tones which no longer had any relation to my real attitudes. Their arms relaxed, the babies stopped screaming, the dogs barked less.

Parallel to the development of fear and its theatrical presentation, the Balinese baby is subjected to a peculiarity of the mother-child relationship which is apparent when the child is only five or six months old and which becomes steadily more definite as the child grows older. This is a series of broken sequences, of unreached climaxes. The mother continually stimulates the child to show emotion — love or desire, jealousy or anger — only to turn away, to break the thread, as the child, in rising passion, makes a demand for some emotional response on her part. When the baby fails to nurse, the mother tickles his lips with her nipple, only to look away uninterested, no slightest nerve attending, as soon as the baby's lips close firmly and it begins to suck. She sets her baby in his bath — after six months this is a round tub — and teasingly thrusts her fingers between his lips, only to look away, disassociated, as the baby bites delightedly at her hand. She hands her baby to another woman, and then threatens to leave him, "I'm off home! You I will leave," but when the baby bursts into tears, her attention has already wandered and she takes him without looking at him, as she comments to her sister on the price of beans in the nearest market.

As the child gets older, from about eighteen months on, the teasing, the stimulus to the never realized climax becomes more patterned and more intense. For the little ruffle at his genital, she substitutes a sudden sharp pull; the little girl who was chucked under the chin or patted lightly on the vulva with a gay "Pretty! Pretty!" is now poked in the abdomen. The mother borrows the babies of others with which to tease her own, by setting the stranger, younger baby over the head of her own, or giving it the breast. But she never plays the scene through. If her own child falls into a tantrum, she suddenly hands him the borrowed baby, but then just as he is ready to throw his arms around her neck, she will take it again or start a conversation with a neighbor. And in turn, the baby plays the role of the borrowed baby, finding itself meaninglessly placed in the center of a scene of which it is not the hero — another unwarranted call upon its emotions.

BALINESE CHARACTER

For the first two to three years of their lives, children respond to these stimuli, although perhaps the increasing strength of the stimulus may be taken as a measure of the increasing resistance which they are developing. The mother, and in line with the mother, the aunt, the sister, and the child nurse tease and tantalize, while the child responds with mounting emotion which is invariably undercut before the climax. Later, the child begins to withdraw. This withdrawal may coincide with weaning, it may precede it, or it may follow it. The intensity of the drama is centered about the mother's breast, and a Balinese baby habitually nurses at one breast and grasps firmly at the other nipple, especially when there are any other children about; but weaning itself is not the high point in the conflict. This is partly to be explained by the fact that a child has been nursed by other women than his mother, and given the breasts of young adolescent girls or the worn breasts of a grandmother where there was no milk, and partly by the fact that even after weaning, the child is permitted to steal back for an occasional sip. For this he will at first be reprimanded, but later after his interest has waned, he would hardly be reprimanded at all. The withdrawal, however, which marks the end of early childhood for a Balinese, and which comes anywhere between the ages of three and six, is a withdrawal of all responsiveness. The mother borrows the neighbor's baby, but her child looks on unmoved. He skirts any group in which he thinks there will be someone to reach out a hand toward him. And once established, his unresponsiveness will last through life.

Most children reach this state by the time they are three or four, vacillating at times, falling into deep sulks or violent tempers, only to resume again their newly acquired imperviousness. For girls this change usually coincides with their taking up the role of child nurse, and starting to carry a baby everywhere with them. For boys, it coincides with the beginning of herding — following older boys to the fields with the oxen in Bajoeng Gede, or with the water buffalo in Batocan. A few children make the adjustment very late; characteristically this means for girls a series of violent temper tantrums, while for boys it means long, almost trancelike sulks and attacks of deep physical dependency when they will lie leaning against some other person or even against some inanimate object. Children manifesting such behavior usually are found to have a combination of deviant temperament and sociotic position in the society. They are the children of a home which broke up with unwonted bitterness, or they have been adopted, or they have been nursed longer than any other child, or they are children of women believed to carry the taint of hereditary witchcraft and so are avoided. In New Guinea, mere deviance of temperament was usually enough to insure maladjustment; in Bali, with the much greater dependence upon fear and the

systematic discouragement of inter-personal emotion, temperamental deviance is not enough to bring about maladjustment unless reinforced by some gross distortion in the social framework within which the Balinese individual lives, fearful of the strange but relaxed amid the familiar and the conventional.

While the Balinese child is passing through this first period of responding with passion to his mother's gay, disassociated teasing — teasing which is best illustrated by the audience's treatment of the child trance dancers — he is also the spectator of the drama in which the Balinese express their feeling about such a mother-role. The Witch play, the *Tjalonarang*, the definitive dramatic theme of Balinese parent-child relations, not only expresses the residue in the adults of what they experienced as children, but also is watched by children and shapes their reading of the experiences to which they are subjected daily. It colors the child's appreciation of his mother's behavior, and stylizes his attitude toward her.

The plot of the play, which begins as a simple theatrical performance and usually ends in a series of violent trances with full religious paraphernalia of offerings and ritual, varies in detail from village to village, but is essentially uniform. The Witch is angry at a king because he or his son has rejected her daughter, or married her and then rejected her, or simply because the king has accused her of witchcraft. She summons her disciples — played by the most attractive little girls or by little boys dressed as little girls — and, dressed as an old hag, she schools them in witchcraft. They go forth and spread plague and disaster over the land. People are driven from their homes; babies are born and strangled by the witches and tossed back dead into the parents' laps; corpses fill the land. All of these horrors are in the broadest, slapdash comedy interspersed with exaggerated theatrical emotions. Then the king of the desolated country sends his ambassador, or he may come himself to fight the Witch, now no longer an old and infirm woman, but a masked supernatural being whose tongue is studded with flame, whose nails are many inches long, whose breasts are abhorrently hairy and pendulous, and whose teeth are tusks. Against her the emissary fails. He retires from the stage and is transformed into the Dragon (a two-man mask), who is as friendly and puppyish a beast as the Witch is terrifying. The Dragon confronts the Witch and they hold altercations in ecclesiastical old Javanese. Followers of the Dragon, armed with krisses, enter and approach the Witch ready to attack her. But she waves her magic cloth — the cloth baby sling — and after each attack they crouch down before her, magically cowed. Finally they rush upon her in pairs, stabbing ineffectively at the Witch who has become a half-limp bundle in their tense arms. She is uninvolved and offers no resistance, but one by one they fall on the ground in deep

BALINESE CHARACTER

trance, some limp, some rigid. From this trance they are aroused by the Dragon who claps his jaws over them, or by his priest sprinkling his holy water. Now, able to move again but not returned to normal consciousness, they move about in a somnambulistic state, turning their daggers which were powerless against the Witch, against their own breasts, fixing them against a spot which is said to itch unbearably. Thus symbolically they complete the cycle of the childhood trauma — the approach to the mother, the rejection and the turn-in upon the self. Women participate in these scenes but do not attack the Witch. They merely turn their daggers against themselves. The trancers of both sexes writhe and shriek in ecstasy, intermittently pausing for a blank moment, only to begin pressing their krisses against their breasts with an upward movement if they are men, but hurling themselves in a sharp downward gesture on their krisses if they are women. In this violent scene it is rare for anyone to be injured; priests weave their way in and out, sprinkling holy water, and the Dragon, who revives them from their first deep trance, has returned to give them the support and comfort of his presence. Finally they are disarmed, carried into the temple, and brought out of trance with holy water and incense and an occasional offering of a live chick.*

The participants gather in front of the Dragon for a final prayer, the Witch mask is packed up and taken home, only to be brought out soon again for another enactment. In some of the old written versions of this plot, the Witch is killed, but attempts to introduce this form onto the stage have failed.

The most explicit form of the *Tjalonarang*, and a form which is not always given, includes the appearance of the Dragon at the start of the performance to make a magic circle around the stage. At the height of her power, the Witch, alone and pathetic in spite of her mask, stands within the circle and calls to the witches from all the four points of the compass. But the people stay outside the circle and are safe.

The fascination which the figure of the Witch holds for the Balinese imagination can only be explained when it is recognized that the Witch is not only a fear-inspiring figure, but that she is Fear. Her hands with their long menacing fingernails do not clutch and claw at her victims, although children who play at being witches do curl their hands in just such a gesture. But the Witch herself spreads her arms with palms

* For an extensive description of Balinese trance, the reader is referred to Jane Belo's forthcoming book on "Trance in Bali" (to be published shortly by Columbia University Press). Trance is a Balinese cultural form accessible to most Balinese but occurring in very different proportions in different communities. There are villages where everyone has been a trancer, villages where no one has been in a trance. There are not, as far as I know, any Balinese who have not witnessed trance often. The trance itself approximates closely to the phenomenon of hypnosis, and comparison of our trance films and records, and those of Miss Belo, with materials on hypnotic subjects in this country, has revealed no discrepancies, except for the substitution of a formalized situation for the hypnotist. Examination of various types of Balinese trancers by a psychiatrist revealed markedly disturbed pupillary reflexes.

out and her fingers flexed backward, in the gesture which the Balinese call *kapar*, a term which they apply to the sudden startled reaction of a man who falls from a tree. The Witch reconstitutes the figure of the mother, not only as the teasing, powerful unsatisfying person who aroused one's emotions only to throw one back upon oneself, but also as the person who cried "Snake!" and "Wildcat!" and so drew the child to her bosom by a display of fear. Only when we see the Witch as herself afraid, as well as frightening, is it possible to explain her appeal, and the pathos which surrounds her as she dances, hairy, forbidding, tusked, and alone, giving her occasional high eerie laugh.

This figure reappears in the dance form which symbolizes the Balinese conception of courtship, the *djoget*. Skilled little girl dancers, especially decked out and trained, are taken from village to village by an accompanying orchestra, and dance in the streets, sometimes with partners who have come with them, but more excitingly with members of the crowd. The little *djoget* coquettes and flirts, follows faithfully in pattern and rhythm the leads given by the villager who dances with her, but always fends him off with her fan, always eludes him, approaches, retreats, denies, in a fitful, unrewarding sequence, tantalizing and remote. Sometimes, in the very midst of such a scene, the tune played by the orchestra changes to the music of *Tjalonarang* (the Witch play), a cloth or a doll appears as if by magic, and the little dancer, still looking her part as the cynosure of all male eyes, suddenly becomes the Witch. She strikes the characteristic attitudes, waves her cloth and dances, balanced on one foot, tentatively threatening to step on the baby doll which she has just flung upon the ground — a pantomimic statement that witches feed on newborn babies. And after the Witch scene, the *djoget* will again return to her role of the desirable and remotely lovely girl. The dance sums up the besetting fear, the final knowledge of each Balinese male that he will, after all, no matter how hard he seeks to find the lovely and unknown beyond the confines of his familiar village, marry the Witch, marry a woman whose attitude toward human relations will be exactly that of his own mother.

There is a conflict which recurs in each generation, in which parents try to force the children of brothers to marry each other, to stay within the same family line and to worship the same ancestral gods, while the young people themselves rebel and, if possible, marry strangers. Fathers and brothers may help a boy to carry off a girl who is not kin, but no male relative of a girl, nor the girl herself, can admit complicity in any such scheme. An elopement (to which, as a matter of fact, the girl agrees) is arranged and staged with every appearance of an abduction, and so strong is the feeling against the complicity of any relative, that there is a special punishment in Hell ar-

BALINESE CHARACTER

ranged for men who trade sisters, which is spoken of as "trading human beings." The boy hopes that by marrying outside the family he will find a wife whose charm will not pall and upon whom he can beget many children. He fears that he will not succeed, and this fear is dramatized in the theater in a frequent plot, that of the prince who attempts to abduct a beautiful girl but through accident gets instead her ugly sister, the "Beast" princess, who is always dressed in the distinctive costume worn by mothers and mothers-in-law. It is dramatized again in the marriage ceremonies of Kesatria princes; the bride whom the bridegroom has never seen is wrapped in white cloth like a corpse, carried to his palace so muffled, and alone with her he cuts the cloth with his kris, seeing for the first time what fate has allotted to him. After one has sat for hours with the ladies of the court, around a bed on which such a bride lies motionless, corpse-like, completely shrouded, one begins to believe that she may indeed look like anything at all, and that beauty is unlikely.

Courtship, either for marriage or for a love affair, is a matter of glances and a few stolen words, and the romantic excitement steadily dies down after the first encounter. Once married, a Balinese husband finds that the girl he has married does indeed act like his mother — for she knows no other pattern of personal relationship — his brief, unreal ardor cools and he counts himself lucky if he begets children. But divorce is a serious matter involving much ritual and trouble, and second wives, although permitted in the plains villages, cause quarreling in the family courtyard for co-wives are by definition jealous. For the most part, only accidents of illness or childlessness cause men, other than the rich, to resort to polygamy. All through life, some excitement may be found in quick, casual extramarital relationships, but when his own daughter is grown the father attempts to marry her inside the family, which she in her turn resists. The stupid, the overcompliant, the unfavored are married by parental arrangement, as are the young daughters of high-caste families in many cases. Other young people observe their case, even less glamorous than their own, and place their hope in marriage with an exciting stranger, or at least with someone outside the family. Girls, especially in the plains, make a great effort to conceal menarche from their parents for fear they will be hustled into marriage. Generation after generation, men continue to dream of the princess and find themselves married to the Witch.

But vis-a-vis the Witch there is always the Dragon, and it is interesting that although I have encountered many Dragons in Bali without a Witch, I have never encountered a Witch mask without a Dragon associated with it. The Dragon represents the chief spirit of the underworld; he represents life and health. His hair will insure a child against bad dreams of the Witch and is sold in the streets for a penny, and when

the Dragon roams the village streets, he takes health and safety with him. The sick and unfortunate bring him offerings. When he dances he treats his followers not with the terrorized and terrorizing quality of the Witch, but like a giant, good-natured puppy, he rolls and noses them about. He takes the drum away from the orchestra and playfully beats it with his forelegs (the feet of the man who supports the front end of the animal mask); he riots with the umbrellas which mark the stage entrance. A frenzied trancer has only to rub his face in the Dragon's beard to be calmed. Vis-a-vis the Witch there is always the Dragon; vis-a-vis the teasing, unsatisfying mother, there is the Balinese father, gentle, playful, satisfying.

Though the Balinese mother is always attending to other people's babies, albeit with the desire to tease her own by doing so, a Balinese father attends very little to any children except his own. As we should expect, among a people where neither sex shows any unconscious doubt about sex membership, the father-child ties which are the warmest are father-daughter ties, although both boys and girls may be seen nestled against their fathers' bodies, squirming and wriggling their way back to the relaxation of infancy. When a little baby is fretting, if there is no woman by, the father may give his baby his nipple to suck; and often, in Bajocng Gede, he carries his very young infant in a sling. Although he shares in the teasing which the mother metes out to a child, plays at frightening the child, at hiding and sudden pouncing games, or threatens it jokingly, "*Djoeka!*" "You will be carried off!" — the joking is mellow and ends in reparation rather than in broken climaxes, temper tantrums, and tears. Little children are taught, as soon as they can toddle, to carry the betel tray to their fathers and to take a handful of tobacco and stuff it in their father's mouth. Later, as adults, they will take food to the Dragon, which the priest will place in the mouth of the mask. In any regressive approach to the mother, the child who has been weaned shows trepidation and is expectant of rejection, but no such double-edged emotion surrounds the relationship to the father. Lying back against his father — and significantly these regressive scenes usually take this form, rather than a face-to-face one — the child may relax with a feeling of utter relief, away from the strain of either responding to the mother's teasing or refusing to respond at all.

The security which the father gives is like the security which the Balinese receives from a known scene, in which the date, the directions, the caste of all present are known to him — the scene which is represented by the village temple, where the smallest babies toddle about alone, even under the feet of visiting dancers. The Dragon circles the village and makes it safe against witches and the disease they bring; he circles the stage three times, and the Witch play, now rigorously confined within

BALINESE CHARACTER

safe limits, can go on. If nevertheless, something strange and frightening — and all that is strange and unfamiliar is frightening — enters the life of a Balinese, he takes refuge in relaxation even deeper than that provided when he lies back against his father's body: he goes quietly to sleep. The child who is frightened by the tantrum of his child nurse falls asleep as she shrieks out her unrestrained rage right beside his closed ear. The older child who has lost or broken some valuable thing will be found, when his parents return, not run away, not waiting to confess, but in a deep sleep. Scenes of birth are fearful occasions because newborn babies attract witches. Children learn to be afraid of birth, and if they find themselves in the house — which in Bagoeng Gede means literally in the bed — with a birth, they fall into a deep sleep, and the watching women say, "*Takoet, poeles.*" "In a fright, asleep." People on the scene of an accident sit in a paralyzed semi-stupor, not talking, not looking, but nodding; the thief whose case is being tried slowly falls asleep. The sleep is a perfectly natural one; it is possible to arouse people from it as easily as from any deep sleep and they show no special symptoms of catalepsy or rigidity. But tenseness, expectancy, tautness, lead to the Witch, to paroxysm and to trance; whereas relaxation and trust lead to the father, and sleep is one step farther away from tenseness and trouble, whenever the fright is too great to bear.

Siblings (Plates 69 to 74)

The Balinese have definite, stylized ways of treating not only the baby of the family, but the knee baby, and even the child who is third from the bottom. These are so traditional and so much a part of the Balinese attitude toward children that it is relatively unimportant whether a given child has or has not younger siblings. The treatment meted out to him by his own mother, as well as by others, when he is two or three years old, will assume that he is now in the position of knee baby, and later he will be treated as though he were third from the bottom. Occasional children, whose mothers fail to make the transition from one set of attitudes to another, appear seriously maladjusted.

During the first eighteen months of life, the baby is still the center of attention; it is teased, but lightly; it is dressed up; and its birthdays, recurring every 210 days, are occasions for feasting. It is carried most of the time, suckled lavishly, flirted with by older children, and borrowed to tease other children with. If there is an older brother or sister, the elder child is continually admonished to give in to the younger, while the younger is permitted as much aggression and assertiveness as it wishes. Par-

participation in the dramatic jealousy scenes, in the role of the borrowed baby, has taught it a great many things, and a baby of six or seven months nurses with the spare hand on the mother's other breast, ever ready to push off an intruder. As the baby gets older, he grabs and keeps the mother's breast, paying little attention to strange objects, but anything that the older child has attracts his attention and interest, and he will grab at it. And this applies not only to the immediately older sibling or neighbor's child, but even to the five- or six-year-old child nurse.

The more extreme dramatizations of sibling rivalry, staged by the mother to tantalize the knee baby, are never played out with real siblings, but always with borrowed babies. Toward an own younger sibling the knee baby is required to show solicitude, and so the knee baby, at an age when a youngest child would still clutch and push at a borrowed baby at his mother's breast, is often seen showing demonstrative though not unmixed affection for a younger sibling. But two- to three-year-olds, whether they have younger siblings or not, are heavily teased by their mothers, somewhat teased by their fathers, and teased by those around them. They respond with tantrums and with sulks. They slip back into the mother's lap when the younger sibling or the borrowed baby is missing, and they show assertiveness toward the next older child. They habitually try to steal the clothes at the birthday feast of any younger baby, and are forever trying to pull off their mother's baby sling or to hide their faces in part of it. It is at this period that little boys spend most time anxiously feeling their genitals and little girls walk with pronounced "pregnant" postures.

The knee baby is too old to carry easily and walks, while the smallest child is carried and the next older child is carrying a baby. The knee baby vacillates between father and mother as the mother's overstimulation becomes more and more acute and the father takes more and more care of him. The child often sleeps with the father; and this is the age when the father-child tie is the strongest.

Traditionally American culture only recognizes two positions — those of the new baby and the baby "whose nose is out of joint." But in Bali, for the "third from the bottom" age there is also a stylized position, a formal expectation. This third-place child has passed into the stage of unresponsiveness, of skirting groups and ignoring cues which would have called for tantrums a year ago. Only extreme provocation will make the average child of third-place age cry, although a great increase in crying may occur in the period when the child is moving, either because of age or because of the birth of a new baby, from the knee-baby to the third-place position. Almost all physical contact with the parents ceases. A mother seldom touches her third place child except to louse her, an act which is performed between adults as much as between

BALINESE CHARACTER

adults and children. The knee baby is given his food carefully by the mother, but the third-place child is in an in-between position, half expected to be caring for the younger children, half too young to fend for herself. I say "herself" because this third-place position is more heavily stylized for girls than for boys, and is, in fact, the child-nurse position. Little boys, who need not carry small siblings, start to follow their fathers earlier to the fields, and if they are bolder and more fearless than most they may "*bani ke tegal*," "dare to go to the fields alone," at four rather than at six. Their mothers no longer dress them up for temple feasts, but for the most part they still center their lives at home with their mothers, rather than out in the fields with older boys. They still watch for a chance to creep back, to lie with head against the father's or mother's back, when one of the younger children is away. The death of a child means that the older child, who has been in third place, will slip back into the knee-baby role at once, clinging, hanging on to the mother, reclaiming the physical attention which has been lost.

The third-place period ends when the girl becomes a willing child nurse — she may have been an unwilling one before — and when the boy leaves the family group for the whole day and sometimes at night, going out to herd the oxen or the water buffaloes. Today in the plains this change also coincides with going to school. Such a child no longer makes any physical claims on the parents; he or she is absorbed into a children's group and the ties to younger children now imitate the parental ties; the older boy teaches his younger brother and tumbles him about; the older girl carries the babies, teasing and stimulating them as her mother has done. This transition from the third-place position, still primarily oriented to the parents in a distant, nostalgic fashion, to the position of fourth or more from the bottom where all children are grouped together, is one of which the Balinese are articulately conscious. They regard with concern the little girl of six or seven who still has temper tantrums when her mother won't take her to market and who still wants to snuggle up, and the little boy of the same age who prefers home to the fields. One father in Bajoeng Gede refused to renew permission to a vendor to keep a food stall in front of the house because he thought it encouraged his six-year-old son to stay around the house rather than go out to the fields.

There are frequent lapses from these stylized patterns. One sees four-year-olds carried in slings, three-year-olds unweaned, and five-year-olds who cling like three-year-olds; but always in the behavior of the parents and the onlookers there is the recognition that the behavior is aberrant. In America, although a mother may keep her four-year-old boy in curls, she and her neighbors all know that this is unusual and

vaguely improper behavior. In Bali, the stylization of child age is as definite as is our stylization of sex, and the same sort of self-consciousness on the part of the parent and the child accompanies any inappropriate behavior. Each stage is underlined for the developing child, whether its parent follows the pattern or consciously deviates from it, and whether the child itself moves smoothly from one role to the next or resists the transition. In spite of deviance and lapses, there remain three distinct and highly patterned levels of emotional development before the Balinese child enters latency.

Stages of Child Development (Plates 75 to 83)

Latency, that period when a child has finally given up any hope of an immediately complete relationship to its parents, and has settled down into a period of waiting to grow up in company with other children, is very marked for boys in Bali, and much less marked for girls. Boys become members of ragamuffin gangs, playing group games away from their elders, rioting about in tussles which look violent but in which all attack is really shadow boxing, consisting of feints which never become blows. When they play with girls, it is with girls either younger or older than themselves; otherwise they tend to play alone. They spend most of their time away from the village with their oxen — each ox is tended by a separate small boy — and come into the village for food and occasionally for feasts. They have very slight religious duties to perform, such as carrying the pig at a wedding in Bajoeng Gede, or dancing in certain temple feasts. They hang about men's skilled activities — making puppets out of dead leaves while a craftsman is cutting new puppets, drawing in the sand while an artist paints a picture, hanging about the edges of orchestral rehearsals and often becoming skilled players at seven or eight. They may also be found in gambling groups, scrambling for pennies in discarded offerings, and helping to dismantle a cremation tower. But their relationships with women are very slight, and the occasional boy who is much with his mother does the things which his sister, if he had one, would do — he helps care for a baby or gathers flowers for the offerings. So sure is the Balinese sense of own sex that such boys do not as a rule develop any feminine traits.

For a high-caste boy, marriage may coincide with puberty, but for most Balinese boys there is no special puberty ceremonial. Sometime between puberty and young-manhood his teeth will probably be filed, and this is said to be essential for completeness; parents are said to be in debt to their children until their teeth are filed. If he lives in Bajoeng Gede and he is the eldest son at home, the village will "ask for him," and he will become a member of the young unmarried men's group, owing definite

BALINESE CHARACTER

ceremonial duties to the village. He will spend a little less time out in the field, spend less time in groups and more with one or two friends who will help him arrange rendezvous and watch while he takes the risk of climbing into his sweetheart's courtyard. Finally, at twenty or so he will settle down, perhaps with a wife, perhaps with the help of a mother or sister to make up a complete household, a full unit in the village community. In the plains villages, if he is unmarried and has an unmarried sister, the two may share a house in the paternal courtyard. In Bajoeng Gede, he and his sister would have a household of their own. Adulthood is not definitely associated with marriage, which is probably another reason why occasional women as well as men fail to marry in Bali — a condition unusual in a society which permits polygamy.

Girls, during this period, are torn between two systems of behavior, that of grown women and that of the little boys who are their age mates. Patterning their behavior on that of grown women, they spend a great deal of their time taking care of babies, making offerings, carrying offerings, going for wood and water, and going about in mixed age groups which contain old women and small girls. Because of the ceremonial position of virgins, little girls and older girls spend a great deal of their time with older women who, purified from marriage and past the child-bearing period, can also approach closer to sacred things. Patterned also upon older girls is a sex consciousness, a giggling response to anything male, which has no counterpart in the behavior of boys of their own age.

But running through this imitative acceptance of an adult feminine role there is a streak of rowdyism, strongest in the little girls who are just entering latency, but cropping up periodically all through this period. Sometimes the roughhousing lasts into adolescence for the girl whose many sex affairs begin also in a quick roughhouse exchange with boys near her own age. This behavior seems to be not a rejection of femininity but a rejection of adulthood, an escape from a staid and controlled demeanor and from endless concern with babies and offerings in favor of splashing in the mud, throwing coconut shells of water at other children, or rushing shouting through the village. The rowdiest of such little girls will be found, however, making up or trying to conceal their cropped heads under wigs of grass, practicing, with little bits of leaf instead of fans, the dances which their older sisters dance. Much earlier than the boys, sometimes at eight or nine, the eldest daughter at home will take on ceremonial duties: in Bajoeng Gede she will become a dancer or maker of offerings for the village; in the plains she will perform a hundred small duties in connection with the offerings which are made every day in the house temple, at the gate, and at the water jar.

For a high-caste girl, menarche is marked by a ceremony with many offerings. Before the ceremony, she is kept in a special house and finally she is dressed with the same care as a bride and is specially blessed by a Brahman priest; and even if she has not been betrothed before, she will be married soon after. The low-caste girl may be married by an elopement phrased as an abduction — even before puberty.

Rites de Passage (Plates 84 to 100)

Each Balinese goes through the stages which we have discussed — he is a baby, a knee baby, a third-place child, a latency child, an adolescent, finally an adult who, aging surprisingly little, lives to a beautiful old age, with delicate, lined features and feet that are often still willing to dance. The different periods of life are held together by the thread of consistent personality; Balinese are said to be either "serious" or "naughty" and this dichotomy extends from babyhood to old age; it cuts across sex, caste, and hierarchical lines. Remarkably consistent, the "naughty" old intellectual temple priest will be found to be *au courant* with every love affair in the village, every gambling debt, every scandal, but the very pretty "serious" girl of sixteen will know nothing of such doings. Other personality characteristics are presumed to be just as stable; they are attributed early and continually reinforced by the expectation of the community. Some people are "daring," "poised before those of higher status," "bold" to touch unclean things like corpses or women past menarche; others are "fearful," "shy," "tongue-tied in the face of status," "timorous" in face of the aura of ceremonial uncleanness surrounding birth and death. Some people are "show-offs" seeking the limelight, acting as if they thought "they had lights on the tops of their heads"; others are "embarrassed ones," unwilling to ask a favor, although the Balinese say that "if you want to receive, you must be willing to ask." Some people have a "shining" quality of high birth or special beauty and spirit; they are said to *mebawa*, to glitter, and with this may be joined a high temper, which will make them comparable to a sharp sword whose touch is death. Some love to go among crowds, to watch and participate; others go among crowds only as much as their affairs demand. All such differences are accepted as innate and are recognized early in life. People comment upon them continually, as we might say, "She has blue eyes," or "She is going to be tall." Parents make no attempt to modify such behavior, and sometimes say articulately, "Oh, the one who is incarnated in you must be a great gambler."

For Balinese life is a series of never-ending circles, half of which are spent in life between birth and death, and half in the supernatural world between death and re-

BALINESE CHARACTER

birth. Generation after generation, souls are reborn into their great-grandchildren, direct or collateral. They are greeted with respect as having come from the other world, and pass through the series of ceremonies which bind them more and more to this life. They receive holy water, are sprinkled with sacred meal, and pray as human beings to the ancestors. They set foot on the ground and have their hair cut, have their teeth filed, clope, go through a marriage ceremony, and finally pass out of this body to wait in the next world until the third generation brings them back again, perhaps to a better "turn," perhaps to a worse one, for everyone "takes turns" in having sometimes a good fate, sometimes a poor one. People say philosophically, "I am having bad luck this incarnation." Each of the ceremonies is endlessly like the last; for every new element distinctive of a three-month birthday as compared with a six-month, of a wedding as compared with a tooth-filing, there are a hundred which are similar. Every ceremony stresses the timelessness, the solidity of the ritual frame in which people and gods are caught.

Except death. Death, necessary as it is to the theory of reincarnation, presents a stumbling block to the Balinese of quite a different order from that which we have to face. Among them, parting with loved ones is never emphasized and tears are inappropriate except for a small baby who might as well not have come at all — it stayed such a short while and shared so little food. Individual immortality, both past and future, is affirmed to the point of monotony. A child knows who he is, and a man spends much time trying to stem or avert misfortune by paying up the ceremonial debts which his soul contracted, either during an earlier incarnation or in heaven. When a guilty man drinks the magic water which is used to discover which member of a group is a thief, he calls down leprosy and other horrible deaths upon his own head for a thousand generations. The sense of personal uniqueness in Bali is slight and people are shy at mentioning their own names or the names of others, but each has an impersonal individuality which is completely tough and incontrovertible.

The trouble with death is the body; it is the problem of how to get rid of that body which is of such enormous importance to every Balinese. The body is the stage on which his emotions are played out in isolation, cut off from all close inter-personal ties, endlessly guarded against some disaster which will declare him cut off from the full society of men. The most terrible swearword in Bali is "*Sakit Gede*," the "Great Sickness" — leprosy — and high caste Balinese in a group will turn cold and sick beyond all possibility of breeding to hide their feelings, if one mentions that there is said to be a Brahman priest in the leper colony. They dare not think how many people are living whose birth-feasts and marriages and burials were desecrated by holy water

which that priest consecrated after he was contaminated. The problem is impossible of solution; the body cannot finally be separated from the soul, nor can they finally be united. The decaying body, as it falls to bits and is eaten by worms, typifies the Balinese major fear of witches who eat corpses and young babies; but the souls must be tenderly ushered out of life into heaven. Cremation, a Hindoo importation still not followed in Bajoeng Gede, is not a solution; one finds in the mountains and in the plains the same tendency — to re-create the body of the dead, to dispose of it, to re-create it, to dispose of it, to re-create it again. Cremation, as a means of disposal of the original corpse and of its subsequent surrogates, is dramatic, but it is not a final solution.

Significantly, the Balinese show intense emotion — a riotous, hysterical gaiety — at the burials of other people. When their own relatives and spouses die, they are merely subdued; but when a new corpse which has been kept in the house about ten days is to be carried to the graveyard for cremation, all the repulsion toward the fact of death crops up. Men overcompensate, plunge their arms into the rotting corpse and boast that their skin crawled with maggots; or they suddenly stop dead in the midst of the scene, staring unseeing, only to plunge back into the melee which characterizes the carrying of bodies to be buried, of corpses to be cremated, or of towers which contain bones only.

The first funeral is a comparatively quiet and orderly affair. Neighbors bring food to be cooked for all the guests, offerings are prepared, and the body is washed and adorned with various magical devices to insure beauty in the next incarnation. It is dressed and undressed several times, carried to the cemetery amid a mild amount of rioting — sometimes with none — and buried. The village or caste group, or ward in a large city, is *sebel* (ceremonially unclean) for three days, the household for a longer period, after which the tie with death is ceremonially cut. The spirit is ordered to go away but still invited to watch over the household, and life is resumed. This misleading simplicity, in which a death is treated with no more ritual or fuss than a big birthday or a marriage, belies the real feeling about death, which is expressed in the later ceremonies in which the body is re-created — out of the actual bones in the plains villages, or with rice in a basket in Bajoeng Gede — only to be laboriously disposed of again; and again re-created, and again disposed of.

When there is to be a great cremation in which many casteless people will share in the great ceremonials for a Brahman priest or a member of the prince's household, people prepare for weeks, making thousands of prescribed offerings and selling everything that they have in order to spend more on the ceremony. Because of the great

BALINESE CHARACTER

number of guests who come to cremations, it is impossible to predict the cost, and this weight of rising and unguessable expenditures adds to the anxiety. Cremations are regarded as work by those whose responsibility they are, but they provide a festival for the surrounding villages.

The weeks of laborious preparation culminate in three days of ceremonial. The graves are first dressed in human clothes, then opened, and the bones are dug up and assembled. They are dressed again and laid out in a little town built in the cemetery. Delicate little dolls which represent the souls of the dead are carried home from the cemetery to the houses where they lived on earth, there to receive food and drink, to pray to the ancestors, and finally to ask leave to depart. These little "souls" are then carried back to the cemetery and placed inside the bundles of dressed-up bones. Thus the person is again re-created. On the next day, a new set of "souls" is taken to the priest's house and blessed, and the "bones" are later given a second laying-out as if they were corpses. On the third day the bones are burned in coffins shaped like animals appropriate to each caste, but the cremation fires are no sooner out than the people are poking among the ashes, gathering the small bits of specified bones and again re-creating a body upon which the little cornucopia-shaped prayer leaves are laid, so as to define again all the sacred anatomical points. Representative samples of this re-created body are then ground to dust in a mortar, each close relative taking a hand at the grinding, and the dust is placed in still another human replica and finally carried to the sea. It is thrown into the sea, but only to be re-created again in a new replica at stated periods thereafter. When someone dies, people may insure themselves by buying a special holy water, which permits them to wait twenty-five years before undertaking this elaborate, expensive, and demanding ritual. After each phase in the death ceremonial — after the real death, after the cremation, after the disposal of later re-creations of the body of the dead — comes the ceremony of *mepegat*, in which the souls, carried in the arms of members of the family like the babies which they will again become, ceremonially break the tie which binds them to the living — but only for a little while.

Conclusion

In these various contexts of life the Balinese character is revealed. It is a character based upon fear which, because it is learned in the mother's arms, is a value as well as a threat. It is a character curiously cut off from inter-personal relationships, existing in a state of dreamy-relaxed disassociation, with occasional intervals of non-personal concentration — in trance, in gambling, and in the practice of the arts. The Balinese

carries the memory of his mother's intense theatrical exclamation of fear, "*Aroh*," to deter him from ever venturing on an untrodden path; but he carries also the equally strong memory of his father's protective arm as long as he stays on a trodden one. Fear and absolute confusion will arise if he does not know the day, the directions, and the caste of those whom he addresses, but he has such sureness of movement within a known place that his acts require only a tithe of his attention. He is vulnerable, but deft and gay, and usually content. Always a little frightened of some undefined unknown, always driven to fill the hours, so empty of inter-personal relations, with a rhythmic unattended industriousness, he follows the routines laid down by calendars and the revelations of those in trance, relaxed at the center of any world of which he knows the outlines. No appeal has ever been made to him to achieve in order to validate his humanity, for that is taken as given. From each according to his status — from the poor and the unfortunate the gods expect but small offerings; from the rich and the well-placed they expect much. If a man follows the prescribed forms, he may expect safety — and if that safety is still meager, there will be a different turn to come in another incarnation. Life is without climax, and not the ultimate goal but rather the first impact of experience, the initial ping of startle, is the only stimulus that has real power to arouse one's interest. And there is always the danger that one may not be aroused at all. Between the Death which is symbolized by the Witch's claws and the graveyard orgies, and the death which is sleep into which one retires when frightened, life is a rhythmic, patterned unreality of pleasant, significant movement, centered in one's own body to which all emotion long ago withdrew.

M. M.