PERSONHOOD, PROCREATIVE FLUIDS, AND POWER: RE-THINKING HIERARCHY IN BALI

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Introduction

Carol Delaney, referring to her work on the intricacies and specificities of Turkish village society, states that her work is "concerned with the relationship between gender and cosmology or religion" and "is an attempt to direct attention away from the physical and social, where it has primarily been riveted, to the cosmological systems within which both gender and the study of gender have been constructed" (1991:15). I suggest we extend this attention to cosmology to caste, while retaining a focus on gender and by association sexuality. In suggesting that caste should be viewed within a cosmological framework, I do not seek to diminish the importance of political issues raised within post-colonial theories, specifically, the contention that colonial authorities contributed to the definition and solidification of caste in both India and Bali (see Dirks 2001; Schulte Nordholt 1986, 1996). Rather, I suggest both matters require attention simultaneously—that is, we must understand the political exigencies surrounding caste, both from the perspectives of British or Dutch colonial authorities as well as the from the perspectives of colonial subjects in India and Bali.

Previous theories of caste in Hindu India (Dumont 1970; Hocart 1968), which have been applied in a qualified manner to Hindu Bali (see, for example, Boon 1977; Howe 2001), have varied considerably in their attention to the cosmological issues Delaney emphasizes. Dumont (1970) concentrates on underlying principles of Indian caste hierarchy, which he identifies as deriving from ideas of purity and pollution. Yet despite the assertion that caste is a religious system, Dumont does not link caste position to an understanding of the cosmology. This link between caste categories and hierarchy and ideas about cosmology and the power and individuality of Hindu

gods is what Hocart (1968) attempts to address in his essay on caste. Hocart (1968:29–31) examines the relationship between caste, hierarchy, power, and the cosmology, which he explores through a discussion of *varna*, that is colours, as they relate to particular Hindu gods and their associated attributes. These colours correlate not only to the Hindu gods but also to the four caste divisions of Kshatriya, Brahman, Vaisya, and Sudra. In teasing out some of the complexities of the relationship of caste, colour, divinity, and the cardinal directions of the compass, Hocart situates the members of different castes in relation to a hierarchically ordered, or at least spatially ordered and differentiated, universe (1968:35–40). In so doing, Hocart not only takes stock of the fact that the hierarchical order of groups of people and individuals is conceived as part of the cosmology and its order, but he simultaneously lays the groundwork for an understanding of the efficacy of ritual, magic, and religious practice. Here I am not concerned with the relevance of the specifics of Hocart's analysis of caste in India. I suggest, however, that his theoretical approach can be fruitfully applied to caste in Hindu Bali.

When we take Hocart's attention to cosmology in explicating caste together with Yanagisako and Delaney's (1995) discussion of how power is naturalized and appears given in the contours of the universe and in creation and procreation, then an interrogation of the meanings and mechanisms surrounding human sex becomes a means for understanding hierarchy and power. In this paper, I engage in a close reading of Balinese cosmology as a way into a discussion of caste, hierarchy and power. This re-thinking of caste, hierarchy and power demands we reconsider previous scholars' analyses of Balinese personhood. Central to all of these issues—person, caste, hierarchy, and power, is an understanding of cosmology that implicates the body, sex, and procreation and how these relate to the universe.

In Bali, the cosmos and the human body are conceived as analogous "worlds" (B. *buana*) that are the same in content but differ in scale.[1] The human body is a "small world" (B. *buana alit*) in relation to the "big world" (*buana agung*) of the universe. This analogy is perhaps most vividly conveyed through a description of the gendered positions of the Sky and Earth, expressed as the relationship of a cosmic Father and Mother, or as the relationship between the gendered aspects of the Hindu deity Siwa. In a cosmic model of generation, rain is Father Sky's semen falling on/in the body of the Mother Earth. Despite an apparent similarity here between the male generative quality of the divine in Christian theology in which the male "seed" is creative while the female "soil" is receptive and nutritive (Delaney 1991:8–9), in a Balinese cosmology, there is no single God who "created the world and everything in it . . . by himself" with "no partner" (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995:3).

Instead, Mother Earth and human women have generative substance (water in the universe; *kama*, literally "love" or "desire" and translatable as female "semen" in women) as do Sky and men, a realization that requires us radically to reconceptualize theories of power, caste, kinship, and hierarchy that have assumed only men possess generative, seminal substance. In Bali, the divine, and generativity generally, is always dependent on a male/female pairing (Old Javanese (hereafter OJ): *rwa bhineda; purusa pradana*) in which both partners contribute (procreative) substance. While Father Sky contributes a fecund rain to fertilize Mother Earth, Mother Earth

produces fecund flows of spring water, river water, and lakes. Out of the mixings of fluids and earth—cooked by the heat of the male sun and cooled by female moon—come all things alive: the pairing of differently potent male and female elements in the universe generates life.

The pairing of Father Sky and Mother Earth in addition to expressing an indigenous model of generation, articulates a hierarchical order reflected in the ranking of human men and women in Balinese society according to gender, age, and caste. By pointing to the spatial relationship of earth and sky as a model for the organization of human society hierarchically, there are two crucial points to be made. The relationship of earth and sky is conceived as a sexual coupling. To the extent that this generative pairing is a model for the (hierarchical) ordering of human society, sex between men and women has cosmic implications that are fundamentally hierarchical. What is more, as Yanagisako and Delaney (1995) point out, the "natural" order of Father Sky and Mother Earth as a model for human social/sexual relations embeds power relations in the very form of the universe. To change the social order by challenging the hierarchical order of gender or caste—through "new" sexual practices that invert the positions of Sky and Earth through sexual position, sexual transgression against custom (*adat*), or violate rules of caste-hypergamous marriage (and sex) for women—not only threatens a societal order, "for new beliefs and practices are not just about the private, domestic domain, but challenge the entire cosmological order" (Bellows 2003; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995:9).

Cultural preservation, sex, and the exigencies of maintaining caste

Near the end of the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia, a nationalist movement developed in the 1920s and 1930s in Bali and Java. What distinguished this movement in Hindu Bali from that in Muslim Java was the way it drew both on European values of democracy and equality as well as Hindu-nationalist ideas from India. Schulte Nordholt points out that the Dutch colonial response to this nationalist movement was the "re-traditionalizing" of Balinese society, later intensified as the conservative, educational *Baliseering*, or "Balinization" programme (Schulte Nordholt 2000:74). Implicit in Schulte Nordholt's discussion of the political developments and the colonial policies of the Dutch during the 1920s and 1930s, which included a "restoration" of political power to historical nobility and "Balinization", is the notion that the principal threat to Dutch control was Balinese incorporation of a Western modernity, parts of which entailed an interest in rational democracy and political equality.

Recent scholarship shows that Balinese were (and are) also influenced by Indian nationalism (Bakker 1993; Howe 2001; Ramstedt 2002a, 2002b; Schulte Nordholt 2000). At the heart of Indian nationalist ideology was (and is) Hindu religion as a locus of national unity and racial strength. This Hindu nationalism was (and is) anti-Western and entailed the notion of an alternative, quintessentially Hindu spiritual modernity as against the threat of a Western material modernity (Hansen 1999; McKean 1996; Prakash 1999; Sarkar 1996; see also essays in Sangari and Vaid 1990). It was during this nationalist movement that caste-conflict emerged visibly

within Balinese society, spurred by commoner interest in meritocratic ideals gleaned from Western philosophy. Commoners, in dramatic contrast to nobles, sought a leveling of caste-based privilege, access to education, land, and power, and a liberalization or abolition of caste-based marriage strictures in favour of marriage for love. Nobles disparaged commoners' efforts to engineer changes in practices that affect caste, decrying such attempts as threats to a "natural order". This early twentieth century debate set the stage for caste-conflict played out in terms of "modernity" and "tradition", particularly in the realm of marriage and love, and by association sex and the body.

Similar debates emerged again in the 1950s when many nobles feared the dissolution of caste-based privilege largely through the adoption of relatively status-neutral Indonesian language in favour of status-laden Balinese speech levels and caste and clan titles (Boon 1977:180; Howe 2001:85–87). As in the 1920s and 1930s, anxieties about caste, I contend, largely took the form of debate about the deleterious impact, for "traditional", Balinese culture, of "modern", Western styles of dress, consumption, and social interaction, particularly Western modes of dating and marriage for love (instead of according to caste). Similar arguments are deployed by contemporary Balinese nationalists and conservative cultural preservationists, who articulate a strongly anti-Western, "traditional(izing)" stance to counter the contaminations they claim result from mixing with cultural others and consuming new media and products associated with globalization (*globalisasi*) and modernization (*modernisasi*) (Bellows 2003). The "threats" posed by these new cultural forms and products are touted as particularly dangerous to young people who cannot, or do not, "control" themselves and their desires, seduced to subvert cultural and religious mores by consumption and imitation of pornographic videos, Western films, and through "interaction" (*pergaulan*) with foreign tourists (*turis*).

What appears on the surface to be a discourse about foreign influence and cultural integrity emerges as something more complex when we view these contemporary social phenomena in cosmological context. Indeed, the threats, expressed through a language of sexual "appetite" and "desire" (*nafsu*, which refers simultaneously to "desire" and to male and female procreative fluids), echo the terms of an indigenous epistemology of sex in which gods and refined humans control their appetites for generative purposes and animals and coarse humans indulge theirs in promiscuous couplings, intent on pleasure rather than offspring. In this context, sex for pleasure disrupts and fragments while sex for procreation fosters continuity. The association with the animalistic, unsurprisingly, has a caste valence. Conflict over caste, however, is articulated in contemporary discourse not as a conflict between commoners and nobles, but as a conflict between "modernity" and "tradition", construed as an acquiescence to Westernization and a consequent loss of Balinese-ness. Balinese-ness, in this view, depends on the sexual conservatism of Balinese women, their disavowal of desire, control of "animal" appetite, and preservation of virginity until marriage (Bellows 2003). Their marriages, ideally, are ethnically endogamous and caste-hypergamous, marriages that stand to reinscribe the hierarchical positions of Father Sky and Mother Earth, and in so doing reproduce the caste and gender hierarchy posed as a "natural" order.

Flows of water, streams of power

How does our view of power change when we view hierarchy from a cosmological perspective by pursuing further the implications of a dually gendered and embodied logic of generative substances for both humans and the universe? Benedict Anderson's (1990) essay on a Javanese notion of power, in which he sought to outline an indigenous political theory, goes far toward integrating a cosmological framework with an understanding of power. What is most salient for applications of Anderson's essay to Bali is his focus on power as "generation and regeneration" (1990:22). He notes that for Javanese, sexuality and power are linked and that "the human seed, and especially the seed of a man of Power, is itself a concentration of Power and a means of its transmission" (1990:40). I argue that as Anderson describes for Java, power in Bali is carried through procreative fluids. What makes my argument novel is not the suggestion that semen is a power substance. Indeed, Schulte Nordholt's (1996) model of hierarchy in Bali makes such an assertion and has much in common with Anderson's depiction of hierarchy and power in Java, perhaps most notably its emphasis on men's seminal flows. In his account, men's semen, principally that of the raja, is conceived as "water", along with holy water and irrigation water, the flows of which are formative of the cone-shape of the pre-colonial hierarchical polity (1996:151–155).

What I add to these accounts is a nuanced look at the human body as it articulates with the universe. By augmenting our understanding of Balinese hierarchy and power in light of an indigenous epistemology of sex, the body, and the cosmos, I suggest we are able to analyze aspects of caste and hierarchy that have heretofore lacked adequate explanation for the ontological force of Balinese codes for conduct. I argue that the power-laden quality of procreative fluid in a Balinese cosmological framework, is not confined to men. As Yanagisako and Delaney remind us, Western models of divine creation as well as bio-medical models of human reproduction locate generative power in men. Men alone have "seed". In a Balinese epistemology, however, women, too, have "seed;" indeed, male and female procreative fluids are invariably referred to using the same terms meaning "desire", "water", or "semen".

The notion that women and men have procreative fluids, both of which might be accurately glossed as "semen" or "water", necessarily changes the way we conceive not only of sex and procreation, but also of the accumulation and diffusion of power Anderson describes occurring through ascesis and passionate indulgence respectively. I argue we should view power as a substance that is not only accumulated by (high caste) men, but also by women. Further, sex takes on a new significance as a means by which Balinese men and women at all levels of the hierarchy have the potential to accumulate, transmit, and diffuse power through asescis, procreation, or promiscuity.

Scholarship that attends to the potency and religious significance of men's and women's bodily substances like semen, milk, blood in Indian Tantric, Vedic, and Ayurvedic texts and ideology informs the present work (O'Flaherty 1989; White 1996). In drawing on texts that delve into Indian Hindu cosmology, I navigate

potentially fraught intellectual territory, particularly given the fierce debates surrounding the impact of Orientalist scholarship on contemporary Indian society and religion (Chakravarti 1990; Dharwadker 1993; Dirks 1992, 2001; Prakash 1999), and further the impact on Balinese society and religion of Dutch ethnographers sympathetic to Orientalist thinking (Robinson 1995; Schulte Nordholt 1986, 1996, 1999; Vickers 1989). I come at this comparison, however, not through an *a priori* assumption that Balinese and Indian Hinduisms and caste hierarchy must resemble one another. Rather, a sensitivity to certain similarities emerged much later, after I had already developed an understanding of Balinese conceptions of the body and procreation. I should state at the outset that I do not conceive of Balinese understandings of these matters as neat articulations of a pure and pre-colonial, "traditional" cosmology. The accounts of the Balinese I know are much less neat, more synthetic and syncretic, mixing terminology and ideas from both Western medical models and indigenous Balinese models.

Yet even if we find the social engineering of the Dutch colonial authorities highly problematic, based as it was on their Orientalist-inspired preconceptions of a deteriorated Indian, Hindu socio-religious relic in Bali, the fact remains that Balinese have been interested in Hindu religious thought from India for centuries. This interest continues to the present day and should not be elided by Western scholarly interest in post-colonial theories that locate the present shape of former colonies in the ethnographic work and administrative policies of former colonizers (Gupta 2002; Ramstedt 2002a, 2002b).

What investigations of Tantric and Vedic traditions in India inspire is a series of questions with which to approach previous models of hierarchy and power in Bali and, more broadly, areas of Indic influence in other parts of Indonesia. Anderson's influential model of power in Javanese culture focuses nearly exclusively on the figure of the king, the Javanese raja and the problem of his accumulation or diffusion of power, which Anderson links to control of desire or uncontrolled passion respectively. In Anderson's account, power takes the shape of a cone of light, intense at its apex and diffuse at its periphery (cf. Errington 1989). Schulte Nordholt's (1986, 1996) model of Balinese hierarchy echoes this cone-shape, but is focused on three flows of water—irrigation water, holy water, and semen, which Schulte Nordholt suggests organize hierarchy and power in Bali, and over which the king had ultimate control.

In these accounts of hierarchy, power belongs to noble men and kings. How, then, did the rest of these polities relate to these men of power? When men lost their power, where did it go? If, as Anderson suggests, power was finite in quantity, when the king lost power, someone must have gained it. How did such transfers of power work? Anderson can only really account for the loss of power to the king, which he explains through sexual dissipation with women. But women, as possessors of power themselves, do not figure in his account nor in Schulte Nordholt's.

Substances like semen, milk, and blood, as they are articulated in Indian textual sources and Tantric and Vedic religious practice, carry power. Thus, what becomes clear in the Indian sources is that these power substances are not the sole purview of men. They are substances possessed by and exchanged between men and

women of all ranked levels, between parents and children, between men and other men, amongst women. These power substances, in short, are exchanged socially and sexually, through sharing food, mixing fluids during intercourse, nourishment of children in utero, and the nursing of babies by their mothers. These social and sexual exchanges are not limited to noble men or kings.

I suggest this broader conceptualization of power substances as gendered fluids generated and exchanged by both men and women is crucial for understanding rank and power in Balinese society, both historically and in contemporary society. By using the Indian material to stretch the limits of Anderson's and Schulte Nordholt's models, we can revise not only a conceptualization of Balinese power and hierarchy, but of Balinese gender, person, and kinship as well.

I describe the social difference(s) that sexual method and practice make as a grammar of sexuality. I use the term "grammar" because this ordering of sexual meanings bears a relationship to Balinese speech levels. I articulate the intricacies of this grammar in more detail elsewhere, as the specifics of the relationship of speech levels to sexual practice is not the primary focus of this paper. Suffice it to say here that what Balinese words are used to talk about sex not only matters but also engenders status difference. At the same time, however, Indonesianized English terms appropriated from Western sexology articulate racial, moral, and gender differences that resonate with caste. With this idea I come to the notion that how one has sex evokes categories of people definable as god-like, human-like, or animal-like. Moreover, how one has sex articulates gender and caste difference.

Gendering the person and sexing the hierarchy

Every aspect of person Geertz (1973) describes in his essay "Person, Time, and Conduct" comes into being through sex and birth, but Geertz does not mention gender as important to Balinese personhood. He discusses Balinese personal names, birth order names, kinship terms, teknonyms, status titles, and public titles but not male and female. Nor does he mention terms referring to androgynous or dually-gendered people such as *banci* or *kedi* categories that denote people with ambiguous genitalia, abnormalities of sexual maturation, or people who are genitally of one sex but do the work and assume the social role of the opposite sex. Because Geertz does not discuss gender—and with it sex and birth—his discussion does not tell us how categories of persons come into being and what relationship these categories bear to the Balinese self he de-emphasizes in his work.

Howe's (1984) essay starts with Geertz' categorizations but seeks to develop the symbolic logic behind the differential valuation of caste levels in terms of purity and pollution. Howe plots what he calls a hierarchy of different classes of beings—gods, humans, demons, witches, and animals—differentiated by refinement or baseness, distinctions that ultimately equate with the control or indulgence of desires or appetites. Further, Howe argues that these different classes of beings stand for different categories of humans, differences that should correspond, similarly, to differing levels of refinement or baseness, control or indulgence.

Using Howe as a starting point, we can more fully explore the transformative power of desire or appetite. Howe argues that Balinese gods stop being gods and

become demons (B: *buta kala*) or ogres (B: *raksasa*) when they are overcome with anger or desire, which they periodically are. He suggests that they remain in these altered states for the duration of their unrefined emotion or uncontrolled action and then they change back into gods. Rather than seeing power as in a constant state of flux, as my Balinese interlocutors described it, able to assume various forms, now god, now demon, Howe seeks to maintain the integrity of a fixed hierarchy of categories. Yet, the shape-shifting of the "gods", in response to fluctuations of emotion and differing levels of refinement, and the workings of magic that entail human internalization and manipulation of divine bodies and powers, belies this fixity. Rather, the mutability of the forms power takes—god, human, or demon—is tied to the control or expression of appetite.[2]

Howe, in his discussion of witches (B: *leyak*) and left-handed magic (B: *pangiwa*) states that practitioners who seek to become a witch (*leyak*) must "imagine the almost unimaginable. For example, he should shut off all outside influences and concentrate on his inner body and its functions. He should strive to imagine what it would feel like if the "water" and "fire" in his body mixed together" (Howe 1984:215).[3] What Howe is describing, however, are a series of yogic meditation processes that are not unique to left-handed magic. The logic behind such meditations relies on an understanding of the directional locations of the Hindu gods on a compass and at the same time knowledge of these gods' locations within the body itself. According to palm-leaf anatomies, to which texts detailing the processes of becoming a witch (*leyak*) are related, the gods have preferred orifices or doors (OJ: *dwara*) by which to enter and exit the body. Further, the gods have habitual roads (OJ: *marga*) by which they prefer to travel within the body. Finally, each god has a preferred seat (OJ: *stana*) within the body, generally one of the major organs within the abdomen.

By closing the orifices of the body, the meditator is closing the doors by which the gods might exit the body. By focusing on the organs of the body, the meditator is concentrating on the presence of the gods there. Visualizing the mixing of fire (associated with Brahma but also with a female principle, located in the abdomen of living people) and water (associated with Wisnu but also with a male principle located at the fontanel), the meditator is effecting a ritual purification of the soul (OJ: *atma*) required for containing and controlling ritual power by uniting male and female elements within the body of the self that are conceived to burn up impurities and then wash them away.[4]

I dwell on Howe's misrecognition of magical processes to suggest that the categories of beings Howe articulates as discrete in fact merge in practice. The distinctions he makes between gods, humans, demons, and animals are far more blurred than he represents. Such blurry edges do not show up at the level of ranked conceptual categories, however, but only at the level of practice, the body, and emotion. For example, Howe, in his discussion of the differences between animals and humans, states that

> animals . . . are grossly self-indulgent, desiring only to satiate their bodily appetites, and this accounts for the detestation the Balinese have for any type of behaviour which smacks of animality. Specific animal-like behaviour is

> expressly forbidden . . . The main difference between men and animals is conceived in terms of the possession of culture . . . and also in the fact that men and women do not mate indiscriminately. In other words, men distinguish themselves from animals and all other non-humans (except the gods, of course) in that they live by rules and conventions and thus have to restrain their natural impulses in order to create social harmony. (1984:205)

Yet the Balinese do behave in ways they define as animalistic. Indeed, the language of animal behaviour, quite literally, is precisely how Balinese articulate the notion of indulging appetites that violate custom and social "harmony", that venture to excess in such a way that individual desire takes precedence over collective order. Howe goes on to state that

> it is not simply animal behaviour which is abominated, but anything which approaches a rejection of the rules and customs by which the Balinese live. . . . It is possibly in the light of these ideas that inter-caste . . . relations should be viewed. Although all human beings are at one level the same, at a less inclusive level they are creatures of a different kind, and interaction between them is bound to reflect this. Thus hypogamy, and even hypergamy, are to some extent abhorred because they both entail the fusion of fundamentally different classes. (1984:206)

Rather than view prohibitions on inter-caste marriage as "reflections" of the notion that different castes are different types of beings, I suggest prohibitions on inter-caste marriage (and by association sex) bring caste into being. Further, differentiation of sexual methods as god-like and refined or animal-like and base *creates* the sense that these are fundamentally different types of creatures rather than reflects an *a priori* difference. Following this logic, to have sex outside of custom (*adat*) makes one like an animal. That is, sexual method has an inherent transformative power—just as the sexual relations of earth and sky bring the middle world into being, so too do the sexual relations of people in different ways and with different partners, bring different social realities into being.

Hierarchy and the downward flow of semen

Howe's articulation of a Balinese system of person-definition, like Geertz's, does not account for gender difference as an aspect of personhood and only briefly mentions the possibility that sex may be important. By contrast, Schulte Nordholt's (1986) concept of Balinese hierarchy elaborates on Hobart's (1978) work relating a symbolism of space and direction to flows of water, including semen, and ultimately caste. Though he concentrates on "control" of the "downward flow" of semen, which presupposes conjugal sex, he does not discuss precisely how this "control" occurs. Sex only figures in his discussion by association with marriage and sexual method does not figure in his discussion at all, a point to which I return below. Yet, the implications of a hierarchical model that takes the flow of water—most notably semen—as its organizational principle are worth exploring here in some detail.

Hobart, citing Weck (1937:45), notes that the Balinese regard semen as water and makes the point that "just as water flowing uphill is unnatural, so is semen ascending from a lower to a higher caste" (Hobart 1978:21). Using Hobart's

reference as his inspiration, in his 1986 essay Schulte Nordholt offers what he calls a "speculative model" of hierarchical order based on the downward flow of three types of water—semen, holy water, and irrigation water, the speculative nature of which he appears to revise later (Schulte Nordholt 1996:151–158). Schulte Nordholt's principal point here is that "flow of water ordered the hierarchy of the negara [kingdom]. It was the ruler who was responsible for this order and he was the only one to grant titles or to put persons in a lower position" (1986:22), an ordering he sees extending to holy water and irrigation water. I wish to take Schulte Nordholt's discussion of water a step further, filling out the implications of his model by looking at water as what Schneider (1984) calls a unit within Balinese society.

I take only one of these kinds of water as my main focus—*kama putih*, or semen. It is the movement of *kama putih* that brings into view groups that have previously been dealt with under the rubric of kinship in Bali (Boon 1977, 1990; Geertz and Geertz 1975). Following this discussion of water as a unit organizing kinship, I argue that when the movement of semen is linked to the Balinese concern with the control or indulgence of desire, which in turn points to issues around the concentration or diffusion of power (*sakti*) (Anderson 1990), we can begin to appreciate the importance of sex in person definition.

Taking water as a unit leads the discussion to other units, namely the analogous terrains of rice plants, the land, houses, and human bodies within and between which these waters flow. Previous scholarship has established that all of these terrains are arranged similarly—hierarchically ordered both vertically, in three levels, and horizontally, concentrically in terms of areas deemed relatively more inside or outside.[5] Additionally, therefore, I will map the terrain relevant to the discussion of semen, that is *kama putih*, and how it flows within and between them. The three categories of water in Bali as Schulte Nordholt discusses them are *kama putih* (semen); *toya* or *tirtha* (holy water—of which there are seven different varieties of differing purities) (Duff-Cooper 1990); and *yeh* (includes irrigation water, river water, amniotic fluid (Hobart 1978) and may include other bodily substances like saliva) (Schulte Nordholt 1986). Schulte Nordholt, following Hobart, states that all three of these categories of water are said to flow downwards.

Hierarchy, as Schulte Nordholt describes it in Bali, is implicit in this movement—waters flow from high to low; centre to periphery; unity to duality and diversity; inside to outside, and from purity to pollution. Indeed, the orienting directions used in Bali—*kaja* and *kelod*—often glossed simply as north and south, or more accurately as mountainward and seaward (Howe 1983), are probably best translated as upstream and downstream respectively (Boon 1990; Hobart 1978). This translation takes stock of the shifting cardinal directions to which *kaja* and *kelod* refer, the relative purity and pollution of these spatial metaphorical positions, and actual upstream and downstream waters. According to Howe this flow of water is not simply directional but must be unimpeded and continuous. Flow may not be blocked (B: *embet*) or stopped lest death occur. For Howe, the continuity of flow implies certain necessary forms of bodies and landscapes through which water moves. Bodies, houses, and the land must have orifices or "doors" to allow flow and these must be properly aligned with reference to *kaja* and *kelod* (Howe 1983).

In his discussion of domestic architecture in Bali, Howe (1983) emphasizes the importance of flow through a house conceptualized as a human body; different parts of the house correspond to different parts of the body.[6] However, instead of talking about flow in terms of water or other substances, Howe talks about flow in terms of gods' and evil spirits' respective abilities to enter and be expelled from the house through "doors", or orifices, and through its corners, or joints. Howe tells us that if a house is incorrectly measured and constructed it will be as "without any doors" and that such a house, being blocked (*embet*) and unable to permit the proper flow through it of spirits and gods, is dead and like a person without a soul. Not surprisingly houses, like humans, are said to be alive (B: *urip*) and to have souls (*jiwa*) (Howe 1983).

Howe and others have noted that the state of *embet* (blockage) suffered by a house is analogous to the state of a sick human body for which the body's five elements—wind, water, fire, earth, and space—have been unbalanced either through a physical or spiritual cause, the latter including presence in the body of a spirit, or witchcraft (Howe 1983; Lovric 1990; McCauley 1984). During illness, neither evil spirits nor the polluting substances responsible for the body's imbalance have been properly expelled from the body due to an inhibition of flow. I suggest that we must take Howe's idea of flow to indicate the passage of water and other substances in addition to gods and spirits and that just as the house and the body must permit gods to enter and evil spirits to be expelled, so too they must permit pure water and substances to enter and polluted water and substances to be expelled. In support of this interpretation, Howe (1983) notes that the good health of humans is likened to the flow of cool water.

To return to the spatial ordering along the axis *kaja* and *kelod*—mountainward and seaward—Howe (1983) explains the relative purity and pollution of these directions with reference to the purity of the mountains as opposed to the pollution of the sea. If, however, we keep in mind the necessity of flow, further, downward flow—the inflow of pure water and the outflow of polluted water—the orientation along the axis *kaja/kelod* (mountainward/seaward) with the head of the body, the house, and the land toward *kaja* and the anus of the body, the house and the land toward *kelod*, the proper *downward* flow of substance through bodies, houses and lands is encouraged.

A downward flow is evident in all three categories of water—semen (B: *kama putih*), holy water (B: *toya/tirtha*), and irrigation water (B: *yeh*)—though the specific details of these downward flows differ. Two other qualities apply equally to all three waters. Each of these waters is relatively more pure "upstream" than "downstream". This upstream purity and downstream pollution is not absolute. In his discussion of Hobart's (1978) essay on spatial patterning, Boon (1990:78–80) points out that upstream purity and downstream pollution are always relative even at the top of the system; the most pure upstream water has always come from a relatively polluted downstream location. Additionally, each category of water is subject to certain control, which entails a division from unity into duality or diversity.

With reference to *yeh*, Lansing states that "the weir [is] where free-flowing river water becomes controlled irrigation water. . . . It is only controlled water that

can cause growth or bear away impurities” (1991:54–55). By control, Lansing is referring to the division of the river that occurs at the weir, where a specific quantity of water is diverted from the main flow of water. This control entails both this division of the main river as well as the strict management of water once it is within the irrigation society (B: *subak*); water must be directed to all the fields within the irrigation society (*subak*), and extra water must be diverted back into the river. Further, water must be controlled within the fields of an individual landowner. Thus, within the context of river water, control entails the division of the main flow of water into irrigation societies, that is into *subak*, and the division of the irrigation society’s allotment of water into individual fields. I suggest we think of the river, the *subak*, and the fields as different bodies that river water, transformed into irrigation water, flows between and within. This control of water, both between and within bodies, is similar for all three categories of water.

By looking at this matter from another perspective, once water is controlled—that is, divided in a process that is explicitly a movement from unity to duality or unity to diversity—certain Balinese institutions come into focus. These institutions include the *subak*, already mentioned within the context of *yeh*, the priesthood and temples with reference to *toya/tirtha*, and caste, title-groups such as *dadias*, and houses, with reference to semen, or *kama putih*. All of these institutions have jurisdiction over the control of water within them on both a large and small scale. That is, while the irrigation society, or *subak*, controls the movement of irrigation water (*yeh*) into the *subak* as a whole, water (*yeh*) is also divided to enter the fields of individual landowners. Similarly, while the division and control of *kama putih* engenders caste, title-groups, and houses, the flow of *kama putih* must also be controlled within marriages, and individual human bodies. It is in this control of *kama putih* that sexual method and the control of carnal desire are absolutely crucial, a point to which I return below. All of these institutions, and the smaller units that make them up, have strict rules for controlling the movement and distribution of the waters that define them, though admittedly these rules are flouted in all cases.[7]

In Schulte Nordholt’s account, *kama putih* like other forms of water in Bali, is differentiated and divided, and thereby controlled, in terms of marriage prescriptions whereby men must marry women of the same or lower status, by which he implicitly refers to caste levels Brahmana, Kesatriya, Wesia, and Sudra. This division and hierarchical differentiation of *kama putih* is most clear in the model for Balinese marriage that Boon describes in some detail. According to Boon, at the apex of the hierarchy are androgynous gods who, however, may split themselves into a complementary male and female spousal pair. In this sense gods marry themselves, or aspects of themselves (1990:106–107, 1977:138). Here, the downward flow of semen occurs only at the level of gender (rather than gender and caste), for semen must flow down from the man to the woman. This downward flow is not simply conceptual, but is maintained physically within the norms that govern sexual intercourse, according to which men should be above women during sexual acts: for women to be on top would reverse the proper downward flow of semen to the detriment of any resulting child (Duff-Cooper 1985).

Situated beneath these gods are divine, opposite-sex twins who marry, thereby realizing as close to a unity as possible without sacrificing a duality. Before the dissolution of the courts in Bali, divine kings were the gods' counterparts and descendants who, like gods, married their opposite-sex twins or, barring such fortuitous unions, their sisters (Covarrubias 1937). The fact that royal Balinese are considered descendants of gods places the conjugal union of humans and gods somewhere in the past—the stuff of genealogies, maintained in the forms of palm-leaf manuscripts (*lontar*) or *Babad* chronicles that detail genealogies and group affiliation in the form of epic tales.[8] These unions would have to have been comprised of the male manifestation of a god and a female human to ensure the downward flow of semen. In the unions of royal opposite-sex twins, on the other hand, there is again no flow of *kama putih* between caste levels. Downward flow of semen occurs at the level of gender and age. The brother should be older than his sister. For everyone else, marriage preferences were (and are) first patriparallel cousin marriage, second patriparallel cousin marriage, and marriage by capture (Boon 1977, 1990).

According to Boon, these latter three forms of marriage tend to be enacted according to rank, with higher-caste people preferring closer marriages and lower-caste people engaging in more distant marriages and marriage by capture. These preferences are in keeping with the shape of a hierarchy that puts unity at the top/centre and diversity at the bottom/periphery.[9] In all of these types, however, the man is supposed to be higher status and older (though within the same generation) than the woman. These rules are at times violated and in these instances, the status of the man may be reassessed and a high-caste ancestor "remembered" or "discovered" (Boon 1977; Geertz and Geertz 1975) otherwise the woman loses her caste and falls to the level of the man. In this account of Balinese marriage practices it is evident that marriages are often endogamous to caste (Boon 1977).

In addition to caste, the control of semen's (*kama putih*) flow takes the shape of title-groups that form around genealogical origin points, called *dadia* for commoners and *mrajan* and *batur* for low and high *triwangsa* caste groups, respectively, and house-compounds (that could become title-groups), also built around genealogical origin points and headed by male elders (Geertz and Geertz 1975). The difference between *dadia/mrajan/batur* and house-compounds seems to be a matter of scale rather than form.

The Geertzes define a *dadia* as "an agnatic, preferentially endogamous, highly corporate group of people who are convinced, with whatever reason, that they are all descendants of one common ancestor" (1975:5). With reference to *mrajan* and *batur*, the Geertzes state that

> among the gentry, the dadia takes the form of a nonlocalized corporate group, which is held together by an explicit table of father-to-son successions linking numerous people into a broad, region-wide web. . . . The gentry do not call their kingroups 'dadia', but use other more elevated terms—*batur* is one of the most common—in keeping with their higher social status. (1975:7)

In an endnote the Geertzes state, citing Lansing's insight, that in Balinese, *dadia* means "'in' or 'at' the direction 'toward-the-mountain center of the island'" (1975:199), which means Mount Agung and Lake Batur. The purest, most potent, holy water is gathered from water condensed on the rocks at the volcanic opening of Mount Agung while Lake Batur is considered the source of all spring and river, and by extension irrigation, water in Bali (Lansing 1991:59). This meaning of *dadia* supports my suspicion that rather than being the amorphous groups the Geertzes represent—difficult to define, based on dubious genealogies—*dadias/mrajan/batur* are a tracery, not of blood lines branching from a single ancestor, but a divided and differentiated downward flow of semen (*kama putih*), like a flow of irrigation water (*yeh*) or holy water (*toya/tirtha*). This account has all water—holy water (*toya/tirtha*), irrigation water (*yeh*) and semen (*kama putih*)—coming from the same central mountain/lake source.[10]

Within the dividing and differentiating institutions of caste, title-group (*dadia/mrajan/batur*), and house-compound, marriage prescriptions and sexual method ensure semen's (*kama putih*) downward flow. And as one moves from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy of categories of beings—from gods to commoners and even to demons (see Howe 1984)—one moves from purity to pollution, from refinement (*alus*) to coarseness (*kasar*). In order precisely to understand why this downward flow of *kama putih* entails such a correlative movement from purity to pollution and refinement (*alus*) to coarseness (*kasar*), it is instructive to evoke briefly a Balinese model of procreation. Taken together with marriage prescriptions that men marry down and women up, or in the terms I have engaged here, that *kama putih* flow downward and maternal blood and milk—considered a derivative of blood—be drawn up (Ruddick 1986:108), a Balinese procreative model helps make sense of why these oppositional movements of substance should be embodied in institutions like caste, title-groups and house-compounds.[11]

According to Weck (1937), Balinese understand conception to occur when the *kama putih* from the man combines with *kama bang*, red procreative substance, of the woman. This explanation is consistent with the accounts of my older interlocutors in Karangasem, although their *kama bang* and *kama putih* are for the most part considered to be alike in kind, though different in colour. Indeed, when my interlocutors translated the terms for male and female procreative substances into Western medical terms, they used the terms male and female "sperm". Further, many of my neighbours asserted that women's monthly menstrual periods and men's night emissions are both "menstruation" (*mens*) or the emission of "dirt" (*kotoran* or *kotor kain*).[12] Duff-Cooper (1985) states that the resulting embryo is called a *manik* in Balinese, a reference also used by people in Karangasem.[13] In addition to referring to an embryo, *manik* can refer to a precious gem or the cotyledon of a seed.

The sex act that enables this combination of male and female substance necessarily entails a physical downward flow of *kama putih*, controlled by the norms surrounding the erotic behaviour of men and women (Duff-Cooper 1985). The relative quantities of these substances determine the sex of the child with a greater proportion of *kama putih* or *kama bang* producing a boy or girl respectively (Hobart 1995:125; Ruddick 1986).[14] Several of my interlocutors in Karangasem used the

same logic to account for the resemblance of children; a greater quantity or "strength" of *kama* from one parent or the other determined which parent the child would favour in appearance. According to Duff-Cooper, within the child "what is hard is constituted by semen, what soft by women's blood" (1990:66). More specifically, he states that the body[15] "is made up of *pertiwi* [earth] (bones, skin, flesh), *apah* [water] (blood, fat, glands, body fluids), *teja* [light] (body, head, and "radiance"), *bayu* [air] (breath and air), and *akasa* [often translated as "ether" but more accurately rendered as "space"] (body hair)" (Duff-Cooper 1990:66).[16]

Thus, from the perspective of the individual body, *kama putih* and *kama bang* are transmitted from parents to create the physical body of a child and to determine the child's sex and physical appearance. Seen from the perspective of caste, *dadias/mrajan/batur*, and house-compounds, when a child is produced from a caste-endogamous union—Kesatria, for example—the child in turn will be Kesatria, caste being inherited from the father. But if this same man has a second commoner wife, the children of this union, while still inheriting the caste of the father will be of lower status than their half siblings (Boon 1977:129–130; Geertz and Geertz 1975; Rubinstein 1991:58–59).

This pattern of inheritance is not unlike the movement of holy water down the network of temples in Bali from pan-Bali temples like Besakih to smaller, less inclusive local temples. The most pure and potent holy water, as mentioned previously, is obtained by gathering the tiny droplets of condensed water on the rocks around the crater mouth of Mount Agung. Lansing implies that these droplets are conceived of as the semen of Siwa (1991:59). Indeed, the holy water sprinkler, called a *lis* in its most elaborate, three-foot-long form, is considered a phallus (*lingga*) (Hooykaas 1962, 1964; Geertz 1980:106). Interestingly, according to Hooykaas, the *lis*' components represent the parts of a human body, with two bellies pressed together—a representation of sexual intercourse—dressed in particular garments and surrounded by a temple and landscape complete with trees and birds (Hooykaas 1962).

In my own study of the holy water sprinkler (B: *lis*), I have come to see it somewhat differently. Indeed, the large *lis* that Hooykaas describes, as it is constructed in Karangasem (and *lis* components and conventions vary from region to region), contains two bundles, each of which is conceived as a body, one male and one female. Each bundle has "hair", which are the ends of the bundle once it has been unbound, akin to letting the hair loose. Each bundle has internal organs, the limbs of the body, etc. in addition to the various plants and architectural features that surround the body and which Hooykaas mentions. So too, each bundle has "nipples", "feet", and genitals, either male or female. The two bundles when tied together are a male–female pair in coitus, which taken together become the *lis* which is indeed conceived as a *lingga*. What is interesting here is that the *lingga* has an explicitly male and female part, rather as Siwa is regarded to have a male and female aspect.

In Lansing's (1991) description, the holy water collected at the rim of Mount Agung is augmented by adding holy water from the eleven springs that surround Lake Batur. This holy water is distributed to other temples and augmented again with local waters. Just as the high-caste father bestows his caste on his child even

when the mother is a commoner, so river or spring water is transformed when holy water is added to it. Holy water may be made directly from river or spring water through a process whereby a Brahmana priest, or *pedanda*, becomes one with Siwa and sacralizes the water; the water that is transformed into holy water in this way must always be collected from a relatively upstream source (Lansing 1991).[17]

Here again, there are similarities between holy water and *kama putih* as they have both been described in the literature. The holy water collected on Mount Agung is considered more pure (*suci*) and potent than holy water made from relatively downstream sources just as Brahmana are supposed to be more pure (*suci*) than Kesatria, who are in turn supposed to be more pure than Wesia and so on.[18] Further holy water is divided, distributed, and augmented as it flows down from its high, singular source to its diverse destinations. When holy water is distributed to worshippers, it is always sprinkled down, never splashed up. And when worshippers drink holy water they often do so in such a way that the water is allowed to flow down into their mouths from the base of their palms rather than being sipped up (see photographs in Bateson and Mead 1942:128, plate 1).[19]

The Geertzes (1975) take pains to describe in detail the form, formation, and expansion of *dadia/majran/batur*, so I will not summarize their description here. Rather, it should suffice to say that these groups, as the Geertzes point out, are organized around a documented or "alleged" genealogical line from an original male ancestor. In looking again at the Geertzes' definitions of *dadia/majran/batur* and at caste, we may begin to see the flow of *kama putih* as defining the branching, expanding cone-shape of both the caste hierarchy and the individual title-group (Anderson 1990; Boon 1977, 1990; Geertz 1980; Geertz and Geertz 1975). Caste divides the general flow of *kama putih* from the origin point. Within the divisions engendered through caste, the flow of *kama putih* is further differentiated into title-groups, within which, particular lines of *kama putih* are maintained unbroken. Houses are about the continuous flow of water from a source, the flow of *kama putih* through a series of males.

In this model, then, inheritance and *dadias* are decidedly not about bloodlines, but rather about semen lines. Previous scholars have suggested that when these lines are blocked or stopped the members of the affected title-group begin to fall sick and die as a result (Connor 1982; McCauley 1984; Wikan 1987). It is interesting to note that when illness and death befall a house-compound, it is assumed that the original ancestor has been "forgotten" or mistakenly identified, or that ancestors' bones (the part of the person made of semen and contributed by the male) have been left too long uncremated or that an origin point shrine has been allowed to fall into disrepair or offerings have not been presented (Connor 1982; Geertz and Geertz 1975; McCauley 1984; Wikan 1987). Just as the child of a marriage in which semen is forced upward is expected to be deformed or die, so the inhabitants of a house that does not recognize its male predecessors are expected to fall sick and sometimes die. It is clear, in the instance of the child, that deformity or death should result from an improper flow of *kama putih*. I suggest that in the instance of forgotten ancestors and genealogical origin points, the deaths and disease that result are also the results of a blocked or wrongly directed flow of *kama putih*.

Conversely, when deaths and disease begin to afflict a certain house, the cause that is discovered is often forgotten or mistreated ancestors (Conner 1982; Wikan 1987).

Schulte Nordholt suggests that the movement of souls is similar to the movement of *yeh*. According to Lansing, *yeh* is pure, like fire, closest to its source. According to Lansing (1991:73), this source—Lake Batur—is considered to feed all rivers, through underground tunnels, without ever diminishing.[20] As *yeh* moves out of rivers, into and through fields and is shunted back into rivers, it is bathed in, has cremation ashes thrown into it, is defecated and urinated in, and has offerings disposed in it for carriage to the sea. In this way, the river becomes laden with impurities and pollution that dumps into the sea. As Hobart (1978) describes it, the ocean is, in a sense, a sink for impurities: all pollution is absorbed or neutralized there. But the sea is more than that, as it, too, is considered holy water. Once water reaches the ocean where its pollution is dumped and absorbed, it returns to its source at the top of the island, recycled to Lake Batur, also deemed an "ocean" (*segara*) (Lansing 1991:71).[21] In the passage below the life cycle is linked to the circulation of *yeh*:

> In Bali water is believed to circulate for it flows from the holy mountains to the sea from where it returns to the mountains. In the same ways the souls of the Balinese are believed to circulate for they descend from the mountains into man and after death and cremation they are brought to the sea from where they reunite with the divine ancestors in the mountains. (Schulte Nordholt 1986:23)

In the movement of water from the sea back to Lake Batur, the sea becomes the relatively upstream, and therefore more pure, source of Lake Batur.

Schulte Nordholt (1986) describes the circulation of souls in terms of ocean and mountain. We may see this as a metaphor for what is happening in more specific material ways elsewhere. The divine ancestor's route to reincarnation as divine child is through the copulative act of a living man and woman. More specifically, this route is through the woman's womb and vagina at the level of the human body and through the kitchen (*metén* or *paibon*) at the level of the house, which Howe describes as a "symbolic womb" (Howe 1983:142) Therefore, while we may consider the route of the disembodied soul one of sea to mountain, we must consider the route of the physical body of the unborn child to be one from sex act to birth through the woman's body.

In teasing out the implications of Schulte Nordholt's model of hierarchy for caste and Balinese kinship, I have suggested that caste, title-group, and household divide and differentiate *kama putih* from its divine source to its diverse manifestations. I argue that this division and differentiation come through sex, specifically differentiation of sexual method and expectation regarding control of desire, both of which are conceptually linked to fertility and ritual power (B: *sakti*), a connection that is most explicit in accounts of the fecundity of the gods:

> When the gods Wisnu and Dewi Sri were making love, his sperm spilled into a river, and many animals of the forest, tigers, monkeys, lions and so on, came forth and drank some of it. The females became pregnant and their

> offspring were born as *wanaras*, some of them taking on part of the form of the human body, animal heads. With the *taksu* 'divine power' acquired through *Wisnu*, they were then able to drive away the forms of kala from the world. (Herbst 1990:144)

In this passage, power and efficacy are directly linked to Wisnu's semen, which transforms the river utterly, impregnating the female animals that drink from it. Indeed, the god's power is transmitted through his semen. The relative purity and potency supposed to accrue to those people occupying positions at the top of the hierarchy, as Schulte Nordholt describes it, suggest that this notion of potency transmitted through semen holds true for human beings as well as gods. In his discussion of power in Java, Benedict Anderson connects a king's ritual power (*sakti*) to his semen, particularly the concentration of power, and by association semen, through ascetic exercise (Anderson 1990:24, 40).[22] At the same time, he acknowledges a contradiction between the importance of ascesis—that is control of desire or "animal" appetite—for the accumulation of ritual power and the Javanese emphasis on sexual prowess as a barometer of a king's ritual potency. Anderson addresses this contradiction in a footnote to his discussion of royal succession:

> One should note here that at least one reason for the stress on sexual abstinence for the accumulation of Power is that a man thereby retains his seed within himself, and does not permit its wasteful outflow. It may be asked how the Javanese reconciled this stress on sexual abstinence with their emphasis on the sexuality of the ruler as a sign of the vitality of the kingdom and society. There are various possible answers. One is that they are not fully reconcilable, but derive from the orthodox and heterodox traditions about the acquisition of Power, discussed previously. Another is that the ruler has such an extraordinary superabundance of Power within himself that he can 'afford' to dispense some of it in extensive sexual activity. My own inclination is to believe that the apparent contradiction resolves itself if sexuality is linked directly to fertility: The Power of the dynast is revealed by his ability to create successors and transmit his Power to them. The ordinary Javanese has no means of gauging the ruler's virility except by the number of children that he produces. Should the ruler be impotent or sterile, it would be taken as a sign of political weakness. The ruler's intermittent periods of asceticism become that much more credible if his sexual vitality is otherwise so conspicuously evident. Significantly, in the wayang stories there is very little mention of sexual intercourse between heroes and their women that does not produce instant pregnancy. This fertility in sexual intercourse is taken to farcical extremes in some comic plays in which the Gods themselves become pregnant when they bathe in a pool in which the Pandawa hero Arjuna is having submerged relations with a *widadari* (heavenly nymph). Sexuality without pregnancy, then, would have no political value. (1990:40, n.55)

Interestingly, though Anderson states at the beginning of his essay that power in Java is fundamentally about generation and regeneration and his discussion returns repeatedly to the problem of noble semen—and its concentration or diffusion through ascesis or passion—sex and desire, including its control, are not his focus, though they haunt his analysis. Similarly, Schulte Nordholt, despite a model of

hierarchy that depends on flows of semen, views power in Bali to emanate from a king's dagger, or *keris*, not his phallus (1996:152).

Margaret Wiener argues that hierarchy in precolonial Bali derives not from flows of semen as suggested by Schulte Nordholt, but in a ranking of ritually potent daggers called *keris*. In her emphasis on *keris* as indications of and receptacles for divinely gifted ritual power, Wiener's model of hierarchy and power is consistent with Schulte Nordholt's conviction that power emanates from the king's *keris*. Here I wish to interrogate Wiener's suggestion that "keris were in important ways agents of social reproduction, for the practices involved in keeping a powerful keris produced both gender and hierarchy, dividing male from female and aristocrat from commoner" (1995:64). When taken together with Schulte Nordholt's insight concerning flow of semen and viewed in the context of her own description of the actual use of *keris* in the precolonial Balinese polity, not just for the king, but for all adult men, I suggest we must develop a more complex conceptualization of the relationship between power, gendered objects like keris, semen, blood and sex than has heretofore been articulated in the scholarly literature on Bali.

In both Anderson and Schulte Nordholt, concern over semen and its control are relatively abstract processes, disconnected from the social interaction in which kings engaged, including sexual interaction.[23] What these accounts preclude then, by staying at an abstract level, is a sophisticated understanding of power's diffusion, in Anderson's terms, and semen's flow, in Schulte Nordholt's terms. For Wiener, though her ethnography reveals an emphasis on fertility as evidence of ritual power (Wiener 1995:127), and an attention to the emission of bodily fluids with extraordinary properties as indications of divinely gifted potency (Wiener 1995:59), her almost exclusive attention to the keris of the king obscures the relationship between the body, procreative substance, ritual power, and ritually potent objects, including keris.

When kings and subjects are represented as embodied rather than abstract, and semen is understood not as merely a "flow of water" but a substance exchanged in sexual acts between women and men, then attention to the interaction of male and female substance during sex and the implications of such substantial mixings for power, hierarchy, and person definition become crucial.

Self, sex, desire, and difference

In contrast to previous scholarship, I seek to stress the body as the locus of the "self", sex, desire, and social interaction and as a starting point for thinking through the implications of the related problems of person definition and social difference conceived in terms of rank. While the categories of persons conceived by Geertz (1973) and even Schulte Nordholt's (1986, 1996) conceptualization of a Balinese hierarchy with its implied cone shape of water, so similar to Benedict Anderson's reflector-lamp metaphor for power in Java (Anderson 1990:36) are ranked rigidly in relation to one another, the status of individuals engaged in social interaction is contingent and relatively flexible even if rank is not (Boon 1977:183; Howe 2001:85). I therefore approach thinking about the self and desire not from the direction of the ranked categories set out in previous discussions of person definition

and hierarchy. Rather, I work toward these categories from the "body of a self"—*sarira*, Balinese a term that means the body, the self, and the genitals. This body, the self, is sexed, gendered, and ranked through social interaction, a process to which Wiener (1995:64) alludes when she asserts that practices associated with *keris* elicit gender difference and caste (and descent group) hierarchy, a point to which I return below.

In starting with the body, I take Farquhar's statement that "bodies are far from inert or passive slaves to the intentions of minds; they are inhabited by language and history and ever-responsive to specific built environments" (Farquhar 2002:7) as inspiration. Indeed, were bodies and their appetites to adhere passively and slavishly to Balinese custom (*adat*) for social interaction, perhaps categories of persons would not include "animal" as part of the range of human possibility. Balinese may abhor behaviour that smacks of animalism, as Howe suggests, but they engage in such acts nonetheless and indeed animality, and the indulgence of appetites acting like an animal implies, is just as important for making sense of social difference in Bali as is divinity and control of appetites. Just as *triwangsa* are supposed to act like gods, so commoners, perhaps especially commoner women, should act more like animals. Indeed if they were to aspire to act like gods, social difference would not only fail to impress, it would cease to exist.

The sexual practices described in the sexual *tutur* approach the god-like in their refinement, even more so because they effect a dissolution of the distinction between the human couple and the divine, a divine that is imagined at times in distinctly gendered terms as a cosmic Father and Mother, that is the union of Sky and Earth. At other times, union with the divine affects the descent of a congeries of gods into the climaxing bodies of the lovers. Yet, as Foucault (1990:57) suggests, the details of this *ars erotica* in palm-leaf sex manuals were neither accessible to, nor intended for, all Balinese. Practitioners were "wise men" able to control their own sexual desire, arouse the beloved to ecstatic heights, and harness the couple's pleasure for spiritual and procreative ends. For "idiots" unschooled in the refined techniques of sexual yoga, meditation, and self-control, sex is not about desire's control for fertility, but about desire's uncontrolled expression and pleasure for its own sake. The evocation of "wise men" and "idiots" in these texts, and the implicit reference to caste these terms reveal, impels a more explicit discussion of the dynamics of power implied in sexual relations and the exchange of sexual fluids. If semen is the vehicle of ritual potency (*sakti*), then sex is potentially a transfer of power, not just a loss of power for the man.

Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty's (1980) discussion of the relationship between semen and power in esoteric Hindu texts and contemporary Hindu belief and practice is a fruitful starting place for teasing out the relationship between power and sex in Bali (White 1996:4–5). Rather than focusing solely on the implications of concentration or diffusion of power for men through retention or emission of semen, O'Flaherty discusses seminal exchanges between men and women (particularly as women are conceived in some texts as having semen). In so doing, O'Flaherty reveals a complex ideology regarding the transmission of power *between* men and women, not just *through* women from fathers to their sons. In O'Flaherty's

discussion, in contrast in particular to Anderson's representation of power in Java, men's seminal emissions during sexual relations with women do not just cause a diffusion of the man's power, but result in an accumulation of power for the woman, a consequence neither Schulte Nordholt nor Anderson can address, having excluded women and their seminal exchanges and economy of power from the discussion.

O'Flaherty discusses, at length, variations in the models of procreative fluid emission in various textual traditions including the Vedas, Upanisads, and Puranas. What makes her attention to the subtle differences and similarities between these models relevant here is the stark similarity of these Indian esoteric models of gendered procreative fluids—at times represented as white, male seed and red, female blood and at other times as white, male seed and red, female seed—to the procreative fluids and processes articulated by my Balinese interlocutors in Karangasem. Like the texts O'Flaherty consulted, my interlocutors presented conflicting models. In some accounts male and female procreative substances were gendered "sperm" (*sperma*) alike in kind but different in colour. In other accounts, women's procreative fluid was blood (*darah*) while men's procreative fluid was water (B: *yeh*), desire (B: *kama*) or urine (B: *air mani*).

But the similarities are more profound between O'Flaherty's textual examples and the accounts of my Karangasem interlocutors. She discusses the Vedic notion that "normal flow of procreative semen is from plants and water to the human body" (O'Flaherty 1980:31), an idea articulated by my friends and neighbours in their assertions that procreative fluids are made from the essence of foods (and echoed also in Balinese palm-leaf anatomies and esoteric texts detailing the trajectory of procreation). Further, O'Flaherty notes that in the Rg Veda, "the dead body, at the time of cremation, dissolves into plants and water . . . thus the Upanisads regard the loss of the seed as a kind of death" (1980:31) because in spilling onto the ground semen becomes incorporated into plants and water, effectively reversing the process by which semen is created in the body and "flowing . . . in the direction of death" (1980:31). She suggests that taken together with the notion that intercourse with a woman without the proper protective and directing mantra will allow the woman to rob the man of his substance, these "incidents, joined in a single text, supply the beginning of the idea that power, carried by semen, is lost from one's own body and transferred through sexual contact, to a rival, one's own wife, or another woman" (1980:31).

I suggest we may use this concept of power in the Balinese context. Conceiving power as carried in semen—both male and female—makes sense of the cultural value placed on ascesis not just for kings, but for all Balinese men and chastity and fertility for women. This stress on conservation of power through conservation of semen during ascesis or, alternatively, the importance of fertile outcomes of sex, resonates with what Gyan Prakash (1999) describes in post-colonial India and Judith Farquhar (2002) discusses for post-socialist China. Prakash notes that "Men were to husband their semen with rigid self-discipline and transmute it into energy and power" (1999:155).[24] There is a similar emphasis on retaining male substance in Farquhar's discussion of contemporary readings and uses of Chinese *ars erotica* that discusses an economy of *jing*, which she translates as semen

but as in Bali appears to refer to both male and female sexual/procreative substance.[25]

In ascesis, men seek to conserve semen and in so doing conserve power. At the same time, this view of power renders comprehensible the threat posed by women's promiscuity during which they stand to concentrate power lost by men in non-procreative seminal emissions. In a sexual economy in which seminal flows between men and women (and between high and low castes) articulate shifting relations and combinations of power, procreative sex—though it entails a loss of personal power for the man—relocates power not in the woman but in the children they produce together and that form a man's line of descent (*keturunan*).[26] Indiscriminate (animalistic) sex, in this view, is not simply an area of moral concern but a question of power and its distribution. Conceived as a substantial exchange between men and women, power is not just a matter of caste hierarchy, articulated in the literature as a problem of status between *men* of different groups, but makes sense of the fundamental anxiety with which inter-caste love, sex, and marriage are regarded, a dynamic from which women cannot be removed.

Schulte Nordholt, in describing the vigilance with which nobles had to guard their status and the downward flow of "waters" offers an example not of the wrong directional flow of semen, but of food, the rules for sharing of which are akin to those governing sexual intercourse; both food and procreative fluids being substances that must move in particular directions:

> The leader of puri [Kesatria household] Penarungan had become demented, and was no longer aware of his actions. One day, as he crossed the market opposite his puri, he picked up and ate remnants of food which had been left behind by various people, including lesser jaba [commoners, literally outsiders]. The rule was, and among the nobility still is today, that only equals are permitted to share food, after which servants and commoners may eat the remainder. The lord of puri Penarungan upset this order; he demeaned himself by this irresponsible action and his fall in the hierarchy was inevitable. Shortly afterwards he died. His closest relatives were now faced with a dilemma. The king of Mengwi would not allow the bereaved to honour the deceased in the usual way, for to do so would be to demean the family as well and would stigmatize the hierarchy with an intolerable blemish. But the dead man's sons, whose first loyalty was to their father, disobeyed the king, and the king responded by ousting the entire branch of puri Penarungan from the dynasty. Its representatives could dine and pray with him no longer. Puri Penarungan continued to rule its own domain, but the branch was isolated so that the dynasty would not be 'contaminated'. (1996:153)

As in sexual intercourse, food sharing entails a sharing of substance, specifically saliva also conceived as a kind of water. Saliva, like semen, cannot be allowed to flow up. Thus, the breach of custom enacted by the leader of puri Penarungan implied an elevation of the commoner whose leftover food the demented noble consumed.[27] Since such an elevation was unconscionable, the noble's dramatic shunning and finally ostering was inevitable. A noble woman who engages in sex with, or marries, a commoner man "falls" to his caste position and may no longer eat or pray with her family or address her parents as father, mother, her siblings as

brother, sister, etc. Such actions are more than breaches of custom or etiquette. Indeed, if we see them as mere rules for conduct then the punishment for their infringement is harsh to the extreme. If, however, we see exchanges of substance as a simultaneous movement of power, then the social panic with which wrong-directional food sharing or sex are greeted becomes comprehensible. Such movement of substance affects a power-shift.[28]

O'Flaherty notes that "in the Tantric view, power flows from the woman to the man *especially* when she is more powerful than he . . . there is no significant conflict when the partners are equals, for there is very little, if any, flow" (1980:264). I suggest that this Tantric conception of power's *downward* flow is applicable to Bali and may be particularly useful for thinking about prohibitions against inter-caste marriage and sex during which a high-caste woman's power has the potential to *flow* to her commoner partner. In contemporary Bali when high-caste women marry commoner men, they simply lose caste as they are "thrown down" by their families to "follow" the caste status of their lower-caste husbands. But as Schulte Nordholt notes, historically the consequences for inter-caste transgression were far more dire:

> Dewata Geni . . . was put to death in 1887. [She] was still unmarried and lived in the royal puri of Mengwi. She had an affair with one of the puri's mekel [agent of the royal household], a married jaba [commoner]. Their secret trysting came to light when the woman was discovered to be with child. Punishment for this outrage against the hierarchy was swift. The pregnant woman was burned alive at the burial grounds of desa Mengwi, and the adulterous mekel and all his family were stabbed to death with the kris. (1996:153)

I argue that rather than representing an "outrage against the hierarchy" such relations may be viewed as potential re-organizations of the hierarchy. When viewed from this perspective, the murder of the *mekel's* whole family along with the *mekel* makes more sense. Dewata Geni, by engaging in a sexual affair with the *mekel*, elevated him. His elevation would entail the elevation of his entire family to the same level, or higher, than Dewata Geni and her family, not simply so that the downward flow of semen could be maintained but because her sexual congress with the *mekel* entailed a transfer of power.[29] Their punishment, therefore, must be viewed not as a gratuitous enforcement of prohibitions against inter-caste congress and marriage, but as a power struggle between an existing noble house and an emerging threat.

Power, knives, and synecdoche

I return now to Wiener's suggestion, mentioned previously, that practices surrounding *keris*, which all men in precolonial Bali owned, produce gender difference and social hierarchy. This suggestion is belied by her subsequent statements. She claims that "gender was linked to keris throughout the life cycle" a suggestion that downplays the importance of male and female genitalia and procreative fluids as gendering, both of which are extremely important to Balinese (Wiener 1995:64). I suggest that rather than gender difference being produced

through the possession of, or prohibition against possessing (for women), *keris*, gender is first linked to sexual maturity and marriageability, both of which are dependent on the emission of procreative fluids in first menstruation for women and night emissions for men (both conceptualized as *kotor kain*, or "soiling the sarong") and sex.

The physical changes of puberty, impelled by social interaction and the arousal of erotic appetites, indicate the moment when young men and women must assume gendered work and responsibilities, of which the wearing and wielding of *keris* was one aspect. It is important to note here, too, that men's possession of *keris* was balanced by women's possession of a female-gendered knife shaped something like scissors and used for cutting *pinang* nut (Balinese term for the nut of the areca palm used in betel nut chewing). Knives for cooking are similarly gendered and may be distinguished at a glance by the shape of the blade. Male knives have an upswept blade that curves up toward the back of the blade. Female knives have a downswept back that curves down toward the blade.

The gender of knives and their relationship to genitalia and gender is particularly clear in tooth-filing ceremonies. Tooth-filing ceremonies (B: *matatah*) are ideally performed at puberty and render young men and women marriageable.[30] Filing the six upper, front teeth is supposed to rid the subject of excess "animal" appetite (OJ: *sad ripu*).[31] Depending on whether the subject is a man or woman, a male or female knife is passed around the body three times. The male knife used was a *keris* and the female knife was a *pinang* cutter; these knives were explained to me as male or female genitalia.[32] The single blade of the *keris* was portrayed as a penis, while the double (scissor-like) blades of the *pinang* cutter was described as a vagina, the *pinang* nut the woman's red "seed". Indeed, twists of betel nut are quite explicitly understood in sexual terms as the uniting of male and female procreative fluids—the red of the *pinang* nut coming from the woman and the white of the lime coming from the man, rendering comprehensible the sexy connotations of betel nut when exchanged by unmarried men and women of previous generations.

The specific efficacy of passing the male knife around the man (from right to left) and the female knife around the woman (from left to right) was not explained to me; I am compelled to speculate, however, that this process may "cut" the male aspect out of the woman making her, in essence, all woman ready to unite with a man. Similarly for a man, the knife "cuts" away his female aspect rendering him fully male and ready for marriage and sex with women. This notion that the previously androgynous child has been rendered explicitly male or female ready for conjugal union is supported by the conspicuousness of an image of the dual-aspected love god *SmaraRatih* or *Ardhanareswari* above the head of the subject undergoing the tooth-filing. See Belo's (1949) description in *Rangda and Barong* of the gendering of androgynous children in a model of gender that presages Strathern (see Strathern 1988, 1993).

Wiener suggests that a man's receipt of a *keris* marks his attainment of adult status (1995:64). Schulte Nordholt, referring to the king, states that tooth-filing marked his "entry into adulthood" (1996:151). I suggest we take both of these together as I suspect that, ideally, young men who were sexually mature first had

their teeth filed and then received a *keris*, having had their female aspect "cut" out through the circumlocution of the *keris* ceremonially. Moreover, the tooth-filing controlled the animal appetites that would make carrying a weapon dangerous for the self and others. This control of appetites was the first step in developing the "discipline"—understood explicitly as a control of carnal desires—necessary for the accumulation and control of power (Wiener 1995:60).

These gendered knives, that is, the *keris* and the *pinang* cutter, have a particular relationship to the bodies of men and women, specifically the genitals which are, in essence, the "self" (B: *sarira*). By a kind of synecdoche the genitals come to stand for the individual. Mead notes in her essay "Children and Ritual in Bali" that "[t]he child is made conscious of its sex very early. People pat the little girl's vulva, repeating an adjective for feminine beauty, and applaud the little boy's phallus with the word for 'handsome male'" (Mead 1970:200), attentions consistent with those paid to my two-year-old son during my fieldwork in Karangasem. Such comments quite explicitly equate a gendered self with genitalia.[33] Equally the *keris* and the *pinang* cutter come to stand for the genitals and by a similar synecdochic process come to stand for the individual. Indeed, Wiener acknowledges that "[k]eris are rather obvious phallic symbols" and that "keris could, in certain contexts, even represent a man: someone who could not attend a meeting could send his keris in his place; a man of rank could marry a low-ranking woman by proxy, using one of his lesser keris" (1995:66).

I suggested above that knives bear a relationship to bodies, specifically genitals and procreative substance, and by association the self and sex. This relationship becomes particularly clear with reference to royal *keris* regarded as regalia and referred to as *pajenengan*, which Wiener reveals is related to the concept of *kawitan*, meaning origin or source and referring to Balinese descent groups, leading her to speculate that *pajenengan* might legitimately be translated as "that which confers life", a seemingly contradictory attribution if we look at the *keris* simply as a weapon that can kill. When we view the *keris* in the context of its complex relationship to a man's self/genitals and indeed acknowledge that a *keris* was understood as "alive" (*urip*), its hilt the knife's head (*ulu*) and the sheath its sarong (*sarung*), then its ability to "confer life" begins to take on a different meaning (1995:67–68). Conferring life, here, suggests the quality of power Anderson describes as generation and regeneration, even more so when we understand *keris* to follow the same flows of semen, or lines of descent, that articulate kinship and caste groupings.

Conclusion

Power as Schulte Nordholt (1986, 1996), Anderson (1990), and Wiener (1995) have conceived it is fundamentally a concern of the core rather than a characteristic of the periphery. What I have tried to do in this paper is to view power not as an abstract force but as an embodied substance. In taking this approach, it is not sufficient to suggest simply that power vacillates between concentration and diffusion through the control or indulgence of passions (Anderson 1990). The processes by which power is concentrated and diffused must be examined. Such an analysis is precisely

what I have tried to work through here by including women and commoners in a dialectic of power the description of which has heretofore been confined to men at the apex of a hierarchical system in which the king is viewed as the "source" or "centre" of power.

By attending to the movement of semen and the relationship of potent objects like knives and the sexual bodies of their owners, not just of kings, or even just of men, but of men *and* women at every level of Balinese society, we can begin to appreciate the complex instantiation of hierarchical categories or persons (caste, gender, etc) and power that comes *through* the unequal exchanges of substance that occur during sex. We can also begin to understand the stakes evoked in contemporary Bali by engaging in marital or non-marital sex. These stakes may at first glance appear hyperbolic, particularly when events as diverse as freak weather systems and natural disasters or the destruction of Balinese religion and culture are pointed to as potential consequences of the moral and sexual transgressions of young people. In the context of a discussion of ritual power, however, such dramatically cosmic consequences begin to make perfect sense.

For the Western reader, the notion of sex education likely conjures up images of the reproductive body and the mechanics of fertility—production of sperm, menstrual cycles, conception, and gestation of the fetus during pregnancy. In a sense it is somewhat odd that we should teach such decidedly un-sexy processes under the rubric of "sex education". What my Balinese interlocutors sought out and referred to as "sex education" (*pendidikan seks*) was not necessarily a treatise on reproductive biology but rather the techniques required to elicit desire, sexually satisfy the aroused body, and accumulate, or at least prevent the diffusion of, power. But such "theory" cannot be found in family planning outreach or public school classrooms. This kind of "sex education" is in the pages of the *Kama Sutra*, recently translated into Indonesian, and in the pages of the esoteric sex manuals, and to a more limited extent in the European, American, and Asian pornographic videos widely viewed in Bali today.

What my interlocutors wanted to understand was sexual technique, the elicitation of pleasure, the range of possible sexual positions, and the consequences of certain acts for power and the body. This vocabulary of interaction they suggested was a sexual "theory" (*teori*), without which "practice" (*praktek*) would be inept at best, damaging at worst. *Praktek* was the direct engagement and embodiment of a theory of the erotic body and its responses in sexual interaction. The dance of hormones, fertile periods, and chemical responses that we like to call, in sexological or reproductive biological terms, sex, is not what the Balinese are willing to accept as sex. Indeed the language of hormones is put back in its pleasurable place when it is used to gloss the emission of procreative fluids during climax. The English terms I have used here and have had to do battle with throughout this text do not adequately convey, in fact largely obscure, the emphasis my Balinese interlocutors put on pleasure, that is sexual desire and its relation to orgasmic pleasure, in their accounts. Indeed, this is precisely the problem as Foucault (1990) might describe it in using the terms of *scientia sexualis* to describe a conceptual framework shaped by *ars erotica*. The terms are essentially incompatible and yet the Balinese work to make Western

terms adhere to a different conceptual framework. A social body organized by pleasure, procreative fluids, and power is rendered reconcilable, albeit in troubled ways, with a biological body organized by the machinations of hormones, sperm, and eggs.[34]

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Notes

[1] I have indicated Balinese words with a capital B to distinguish Balinese terms from those in Indonesian, which I have left unmarked. Words in Old Javanese are indicated with a capital OJ.

[2] In making the above assertion about the control of indulgence of appetite and the physical form of power, I am drawing on Anderson's (1990) discussion of power in his often-cited essay "The Idea of Power in Javanese Society". What I find most evocative in Anderson's characterization of power is the notion that power is about generation and regeneration (1990:22), which Anderson links quite explicitly and literally with the sexual potency of the king (1990:32). While I do not think that Anderson's characterization of power in Java is wholly compatible with Bali—most dramatically the emphasis on an immobile king at the apex of the hierarchy (1990:51)—his reference to sexual potency and appetite as factors in the concentration and diffusion of power are germane to my analysis.

[3] Howe's use of a male pronoun here is problematic, particularly given the fact that many witches (*leyak*) are said to be women. He may be emphasizing the fact that many palm-leaf texts are written by men and assume a male audience. It is clear from conversations with my Karangasem interlocutors, however, that both men and women may become *leyak*, but women are more frequently suspected of this particular form of magic.

[4] The Balinese meditation practices described here contain stunning similarities with those Tantric practices White describes, in which the male and female elements within the body are combined through a meditation called the *khecari mudra* (1996:220, 253–255).

[5] See Barbara Watson Andaya's (2000) discussion of the gendering and hierarchizing (in terms of class or caste) of inside and outside throughout the Indonesian archipelago.

[6] James (1973), in his short paper on sacred geometry in Bali, does not relate his observations of sight lines connecting topographical features to Balinese temples and shrines to a notion of "flow" such as that found in Howe (1983). His description of temple locations that correspond to the trajectories of waterways is suggestive of such a connection however (James 1973:144–145).

[7] Hobart (1978) notes that, though the distribution of water within the irrigation society (*subak*) was organized, theft of water and violation of the distribution rules was so pervasive that their enforcement was impossible. Though water theft within the *subak* can hardly be compared to sexual transgression, the point I make here is simply that, though there are rules for sexual conduct, water distribution, etc., the fact of the rules of course does not of itself entail their strict adherence in practice.

[8] Schulte Nordholt suggests that a shift occurred in Balinese accounts of royal origins in the seventeenth century, when the political landscape in Bali changed dramatically and the new power-holders sought to locate their legitimacy in a pre-Islamic kingdom of Javanese origin (1986:12).

Further, he notes that in the *Usana Bali*, dating from the sixteenth century, Balinese rulers were depicted as descended from gods. In the later text, *Babad Dalem*, which Schulte Nordholt suggests is likely eighteenth-century, Balinese royal lines are traced to the Javanese royalty of Majapahit (1986:19). See Creese (2000) for a discussion of the references to Majapahit in Balinese palm-leaf sources as they relate to Balinese constructions of identity.

[9] Men at the top of the hierarchy who have many wives will often engage in all of these marriage practices. For men who have only one or two wives these marriage preferences will frequently be followed quite closely.

[10] This area is considered to be where Balinese people populated the island of Bali and is still the region in which the Bali Aga, the "original Balinese" villages, are located. In the origin myth of one of these villages, Trunyan, situated on the shores of Lake Batur, the goddess ancestress of the Trunyanese descended to Bali from the heavens: "The Trunyanese . . . say that their great-great grandmother was a goddess who was banished from heaven to earth. / A prince from Java, a son of King Dalem Solo, seduced her at first sight, and subsequently married her" (Danandjaja 1978).

[11] While there seems to be an association between blood and milk, as Ruddick (1986, citing Weck) states, there also seems to be an association between milk and semen. In her exploration of a Balinese myth in which a little girl is told to collect the milk of a virginal cow, J. Hooykaas (1961) mentions a related myth in which the girl is supposed to collect the "milk" of an uncastrated bull. Both the cow and the bull are associated with Siwa, the little girl is likely a manifestation of Dewi Sri. Both myths are associated with fertility and procreation of people, animals, rice, etc. The association of blood, milk, and semen is similar to that O'Flaherty (1980:42) describes and also resonates with Traube's discussion of how rain and semen are regarded as similar, one coming from Father Sky, the other from human fathers. She goes on to explain that Mambai describe milk as converted by the woman from semen (Traube 1986:173). Errington (1989), in her description of Bugis and Makassarese in Luwu, describes the importance of "white blood", which is considered to be the blood of divinities, circulated in noble humans as a result of genealogical linkages between nobles and the gods. Though Errington does not suggest that white blood is semen, the concentration of white blood is what determines rank in the Bugis/Makassarese hierarchy and, further, it comes from the gods, from the sky (1989:98). Thus, though white blood is neither explicitly associated with rain nor with semen, according to Errington it still suggests links with similar concepts elsewhere in Indonesia and Asia.

[12] Previous scholars using the English to refer to *kama bang* (red, female procreative substance) and *kama putih* (white, male procreative substance) translate the Balinese as semen and blood, translations that do not capture the similarities attributed to these two substances locally in Karangasem. Though *kama bang* was at times referred to by my interlocutors as blood (*darah*), sometimes "blood seeds" (B: *darah biik*), semen was also referred to as "white blood" (*darah putih*), a designation that was extended to mother's milk. What these translations convey quite vividly is a conceptual framework in which male and female procreative substances are understood as sharing fundamental similarities, an idea that suggests *kama bang* must be considered "water" in the same way that *kama putih* is.

[13] Jennaway asserts that North Balinese also referred to the embryo as *manik,* but that *manik* could equally refer to "ovary" or "ovum" (1996:42–43).

[14] According to the literature, equal quantities of *kama putih* and *kama bang* produce an ambiguous person (called hermaphrodite by Ruddick, citing Weck, and called a bisexual or transvestite by Duff-Cooper) whose procreative substance is pink and who is not considered able to reproduce (Duff-Cooper 1990; Ruddick 1986). My neighbour in Karangasem offered a compatible account, referring to the ambiguous or androgynous person as *banci* or *kedi*, both terms that indicate a person who combines male and female characteristics either in terms of physical ambiguities or through cross-dressing and cross-working.

White (1996) notes that a similar notion is held in contemporary India. What is interesting in White's observation is the connection between the cultural value of producing male children and concerns about semen depletion. Both of these concerns are also relevant for Balinese.

> It would appear that the male sex drive puts males in an impossible bind, in which they find themselves in constant danger of losing their seed, a seed that is accumulated only very slowly and in minuscule quantities through the long process of digestion. . . . Here it takes some twenty-eight days—a lunar month, and the same time it takes a woman's body to

produce an ovum—for the food males ingest to become transformed into semen. Moreover, it requires a prodigious quantity of food to produce a single gram of semen. Ayurvedic theories of conception—according to which male children are produced by a relative preponderance of semen to uterine blood at the moment of conception, while females are produced by an opposite ratio—compound the perils of semen depletion. (1996:340)

[15] According to Duff-Cooper, Balinese physiology of the body indicates the existence of three bodies (*tri sarira*) which include "the physical body . . . on the outside (*ring jero*) of the person, as it were, then the sensational body (*suksma sarira*), and finally the animating body, the "soul" (*atman*) (*antakarana sarira*) most inside (*dalem*), or at the centre of the two other bodies . . ." (1990:28). Further "the human physical body (*sthula sarira*) is composed of three elements: the fontanel to the upper chest, upper chest to waist (navel), and from there to the feet" (1990:27). What Duff-Cooper terms the "sensational body" is termed the "subtle body" in scholarly treatments of Tantric literature (White 1996:4–5). I have adhered to this latter usage.

[16] See also Hooykaas (1976a:40; 1976b:39) for references to the disintegration of these gendered contributions upon death and in mortuary rituals.

[17] Relatively upstream source becomes relative, indeed, when one takes into consideration the notion that the sea is considered holy water. I was told by a high caste Balinese acquaintance undergoing a purificatory ritual (B: *pewintenan*) that holy water had been collected from twenty-seven pure springs (*mata air*) for the ceremony. Water from over four hundred such springs had been sought for a similar ceremony performed for his now deceased father in hopes of curing his fatal brain tumor. Anak Agung stated that if the water from so many springs cannot be gathered quickly enough or the requisite number of springs cannot be found one need only seek water at the sea, for all holy water in Bali eventually flows into the sea.

[18] Not surprisingly, this is a point on which many of my interlocutors were quite cynical, expressing that while high caste should entail greater refinement theoretically, such a distinction was not always borne out in practice. They acknowledged that the model indicates greater purity for high-caste individuals, but that the particularities of individual lives do not always adhere to abstract models.

[19] This method of allowing holy water to run into the mouth from the base of the palm is what I saw most commonly. Bateson and Mead describe a more dramatic method of holy-water drinking to ensure downward flow in which holy water recipients threw their heads back (1942:128, plate 1).

[20] Lansing (1991:73) records Batur as the source of all irrigation water. I have heard people in Bali suggest, however, that Mount Agung is the source of all spring and river water. While accounts appear to differ on which is the source—Lake Batur or Mount Agung—there seems to be some agreement that all irrigation or river water comes from a single, undiminishing source.

[21] Here the "oxymoron" Boon seeks to retain in a discussion of Balinese spatial patterning and which disappears to a certain extent in Hobart is evident as the pure source of water—Lake Batur—is ultimately fed by the ocean, into which polluted river waters flow. This "oxymoron" is enacted on a smaller scale when men bathe in the relatively pure upstream water leaving the relatively polluted downstream water to their female counterparts, the contradiction being that the men are bathing downstream to the women of the village upstream (Boon 1990; Hobart 1978).

[22] Anderson's account of eighteenth-century Java is suggestive of differing ritual potency of semen for men considered *sakti* and others who were not. Based on the comments of my interlocutors in Bali, I suggest this characterization of semen of differing potencies holds true for Bali as well. Anderson, citing Moertono's *State* for this story, interprets Pangeran Puger's succession to the throne of Amangkurat II in lieu of the legitimate heir Amangkurat III, as a result of his ingestion of the deceased king's ritual power, described as "light" that is divinely potent semen:

> "The story is told that the [dead] king's manhood stood erect and on the top of it was a radiant light (*tjahja*), only the size of a grain of pepper. But nobody observed it. Only Pangeran Puger saw it. Pangeran Puger quickly sipped up the [drop of] light. As soon as the light had been sipped, the manhood ceased to stand erect. It was Allah's will that Pangeran Puger should succeed to the throne." Indeed, the sexual fertility of the ruler is one essential sign of the Power that he holds, for his seed is the microcosmic expression of the Power he has concentrated. The fertility of the ruler was seen as simultaneously invoking and guaranteeing the fertility of the land, the prosperity of the society, and the expansionist vitality of the empire (1990:32).

[23] In evoking a contrast between abstract processes and social interaction, I am making a similar move to that of McGilvray in his discussion of the distinction to be made between "caste ideologies" and "how these ideologies impinge upon the actual patterns of group interaction observable in South Asian life (1982:1). I am also influenced by Appadurai's resistance to fixed categories in his discussion of "incarceration". Appadurai's analysis focuses on the "places" as well as the "modes of thought" to which researchers confine "natives" (1988:37). In this work I seek to focus not on fixed "places", what Schulte Nordholt (1986) terms a "fixed order" referring to Balinese hierarchy, but on the dynamic interactive processes that bring categories of people into being and effect transformations in relative status.

[24] Prakash notes that "this discourse represented the body in a 'traditional' frame of cultural intelligibility. Its attribution of power to semen and the recommendation of sexual restraint as a means of spiritual control and energy reiterated ideas and norms contained in such ancient and authoritative sources as the laws of Manu. These ideas were formulated originally in a Brahminical context and referred specifically to the lifestyle of Brahmin students. The modern discourse of *brahmacharya* [celibate study and spiritual focus] departed from this specific concern with Brahmin students and generalized the practice of chastity as a strategy for all Indians. Projecting Brahminical ideals as normative principles for all Indians, it implied a deeply hierarchical vision of sexuality, society, and religion (1999:156).

His suggestion that a concept and practice previously confined to Brahmins has been extended to all Indians is relevant in the Balinese context. This is particularly the case because of the influence on Balinese intellectuals and religious leaders of Hindu nationalist ideas from India. Frederik Bakker (1993) has noted the intellectual debt several Balinese religious leaders—particularly those influential in the formation of Parisada Hindu Dharma, the organization responsible for the recognition of Hinduism as a legitimate "world religion" within the Indonesian state—bear toward Indian writers and religious leaders. Martin Ramstedt's recent work has focused on the inspiration contemporary Balinese intellectual and public figures like Prof. I Gusti Ngurah Bagus and the late Ibu Gedong Bagoes Oka have found in the writings and teachings of figures like Swami Vivekananda, Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (Ramstedt 2002a, 2002b).

[25] Farquhar notes that "in the classical sources on which the modern sex medicine authorities draw, however, limits to the frequency of sexual intercourse and avoidance of desire are not exactly recommended. Apparently, the earliest Chinese culture of sexual practice saw no virtue in abstention from sexual activity or even restriction of its frequency. The entire cosmos runs on the intimate relations of forces classified as yin and yang; why would men and women wish to remove themselves from this dynamic? Moreover, sexual activity produces physiological jing and renders it more active and productive within the body. It follows that the man who seeks to live long and well should have sex often. Because it is very important not to lose jing, however, one of the key techniques advocated by the very earliest bedchamber sources . . . was the prevention of ejaculation" (2002:268).

The cosmic necessity of union of *yin* and *yang* Farquhar notes in this passage is suggestive in the Balinese context, particularly given the fact that the entire known universe appears to be made up of gendered elements. The gender of particular objects or beings is shifting and relational, a phenomena which, however, does not nullify their gendered qualities. It is speculative at this point to suggest that the Balinese notion that the universe is made up of gendered objects and beings might be Chinese in origin and relate, at least historically, to the concepts of *yin* and *yang*, it is compelling, at least, to note that the Balinese script letters that refer to the gendered manifestations of Siwa located in the abdomen of humans and the centre (apex and nadir) of the directional compass (*mata angina*) are ING and YANG. Their locations at the apex and nadir suggest to me that these letters point to a syncretic conflation of Siwa and Durga with Father Sky and Mother Earth, cosmically gendered figures that appear both in India and in China (O'Flaherty 1980; Farquhar 2002).

[26] In commenting on the contrary impulses to ascesis and sex, O'Flaherty mentions the balance that people are supposed to maintain between chastity and leading the "proper religious life . . . to preserve one's health" and the "opposed claims (the need for normal sexual outlets as well as the duty to beget children)" (1980:60). She cites Carstairs' [1957] statement that "the best they can hope for is to order their lives so that their acts of piety suffice to compensate for the inevitable wastage of soul-stuff and semen" (1980:60). She goes on to discuss his observation that men apparently do not manage to balance these two and to compensate with piety what they lose in soul-

stuff in semen, as evidenced in their anxieties about "spermatorrhoea". This point is particularly interesting in thinking about Bali because the concern with watery semen and the consequences of frequent intercourse (for both men and women) is widespread as evidenced by the anxiety expressed in letters to Wimpie Pangkahila (Bellows 2003). Men I talked to—and the letters to Wimpie Pangkahila express identical concerns—were deeply worried about semen depletion resulting from masturbation and frequent intercourse, both of which were thought to lead to physical deterioration, specifically spongy bones, and infertility (due to watery semen) or impotence (resulting from damage to the genitalia). In order to compensate for the deleterious effects on the body of various forms of dissipation and their concomitant impact on personal power, Balinese men commonly drink or consume tonics after sex or even daily consisting of raw eggs mixed with honey, what O'Flaherty calls a "seed substitute" citing a similar phenomenon amongst unmarried Sri Lankan men concerned to replace what they have lost through masturbation or night emissions (O'Flaherty [citing Obeysekere 1976] 1980:51).

[27] White relates a tale of Tantric initiation that effected a similar series of power-transfers and ultimately resulted in the destruction of the king:

> As a conduit for the yogin's semen, the female *kundalini* may be likened to the female sexual organ: indeed, she is sometimes *dombi*, and the Dombi, as the tantrika's favorite sexual partner, was most prized for the transformative powers of her menstrual blood.
>
> For the same reason that there could be nothing more defiling to an orthodox Hindu than the menstrual blood of an outcaste woman, the heterodox tantrikas valued the same as the most powerful fluid in the universe. For the uninitiated, however, the stuff was dynamite, as Cakravarman quickly learns. Following the night of [a] big dance, he becomes the Dombis sexual plaything. He makes them his queens, and they and their outcaste relatives take over the royal court, polluting the entire kingdom in the process. High offices are bestowed upon those who eat polluted leavings off the Dombis plates, and Dom ministers proudly wear the girls' menses-stained undergarments over their courtly attire. Cakravarman, his mind totally gone, rapes a Brahman woman and treacherously puts to death a number of his Damara allies. Shortly thereafter, Damaras set upon him one night in the royal latrine and flay his body as it lies upon the swelling breasts of his Dombi concubine. (1996:309)

[28] The notion that power may be lost through food sharing with people of a lower caste level (and implicitly lower level of ritual or spiritual power, is reflected in the prohibitions against food-sharing Rubinstein describes in the manuscript *Dwijendratattwa* in which the historical figure Dwijendra suggests that his higher born children and their descendants must not share food with his lower born children and their descendants or the higher born group's "knowledge would vanish" (Rubinstein 1991:59). The prohibition Rubinstein discusses in terms of Dwijendra's children is, at the same time, an articulation of the relationship between different Balinese descent groups through the prohibitions against certain kinds of contact. Though all of these children were descended from Dwijendra, their differing status levels within the caste Brahmana resulted from the commoner caste level of their mothers (1991:58–59).

[29] I was told by a Brahmana man in Karangasem that power can be transferred in a kiss during which the giver concentrates power in a quantity of saliva through visualization or potent script letters referring to particular gods and invocatory mantras. He claimed that he has performed such a power-transfer, bestowing ritual power on a commoner man by kissing him and passing saliva to him, which the commoner man then swallowed. To confirm that fact that he had indeed transferred power, the Brahmana pointed to the professional and financial success of the commoner man who had since started a trucking company and amassed a small fortune, at the same time securing an enviable government position.

This notion that ritual power may be transferred through saliva resonates with Wiener's (1995) account of the bequeathing of ritual power upon the death of a ritually powerful person; her account is consistent with those of my Karangasem interlocutors who described such power transfers through a kiss that involved the passing of ritually potent saliva from the dying elder to a chosen successor:

> It is as an individual that such bonds with divinities are formed, although powerful people occasionally pass on their power to a descendant of similar inclinations. Sensing that death is near (the powerful usually know such things), a man may call his heirs around his bed and inform them that whoever dares ingest the substance that emerges from his mouth at the moment of death will inherit his power. (1995:63)

White's description of Tantric initiations that involve the "penetration" of the disciple through an oral transfer of substance complicates how we might be inclined to view such events, as those described above, in Bali:

> In tantric initiation, for example, the guru is said at one point to encase himself, or his mouth, in the body or mouth of his initiate. While there can be no doubt that an exchange of substance takes place between the guru and his disciple in tantric initiation, and that the guru symbolically enters into the body of his initiate, the precise nature and location of his mouth-to-mouth transfer is difficult to pinpoint. While phrases like "give me [your] mouth in [my] mouth" would lead one to imagine that the guru actually locks his mouth over that of his initiate, at least one other reading is possible. This latter reading would have the guru entering his disciple's subtle body to place his mouth at the mouth of the *sankhini nadi* and thereby open that "valve" to liberation in the body. Alternatively, the guru, having filled his mouth with the nectar falling from his own *sankhini nadi*, then transfers that nectar directly into the mouth of his disciple. (1996:257)

[30] I was warned that it is considered a crime akin to rape or murder to file a woman's teeth before she has started to menstruate. I was present at a tooth-filing during which the ritual specialist questioned a young woman closely about whether she had already menstruated. He was suspicious because of her pre-pubescent appearance; she was still without breasts and her hips had not yet begun to take on a womanly shape. She quietly confessed that she had menstruated only one time before, an admission that was confirmed by female relatives. She was allowed to have her teeth filed but only after the ritual specialist had elicited a statement from her, in front of the family as witness, that she had menstruated, obviating the possibility that he could later be accused of a crime against her.

[31] Forge notes that in Balinese representations of animals, even animals that do not exhibit prominent teeth are given sharp fangs (1980:3–4). Forge notes that "the six teeth that are filed are said to symbolize lust, anger, greed, stupidity, drunkenness (either alcoholic or emotional), and envy, and these passions have to be curbed to produce a real human. These vices are also considered to by typical of animals and other non-human non-refined life forms. The ritual of tooth-filing is essential to making a human being, and entry to the afterlife (*swarga*) and hence reincarnation as a human being again is said to be impossible to those who have never had their teeth filed. . . the lower teeth are left untouched because . . . it would not be good to extinguish the passions altogether. . . . Passions are, of course, a form of power, and power can be both good and bad (1980:7–8).

Interestingly, Forge also discusses the former Balinese practice of teeth-blackening, suggesting that this practice was aimed at "the literal disappearance of the visible teeth in human beings" in contrast to representations of animals in carvings and masks with elongated, bright white fangs (1980:12). In Forge's description of tooth-filing, here, he links human passions, and their control, with power of the kind I consider.

[32] The tools for making betel nut, including the *pinang* cutter, could, like *keris*, be named and considered regalia (see photograph of a named royal betel nut kit in Wiener 1995).

[33] By calling attention to the importance of genitalia, I do not mean to suggest that this is "natural" or that the genitals are the inevitable referent for gender difference. Rather, I argue that the Balinese construct gender difference and gendered selves through reference to the genitals first, and gendered work, dress, and social conduct second. Indeed, having male or female genitals does not pre-determine gender. Individuals with penises who, however, dress, work, and interact socially as women are *banci*, "women who do not menstruate" or "women without breasts".

[34] Gyan Prakash's discussion of Western medical science and its relationship to a reconceptualization of the body in the context of colonial India is relevant here, particularly given the fact that the British, during their brief control over the archipelago, were the first to address the rampant problem of venereal diseases, which were only later addressed by the Dutch (Van Der Sterren et al. 1997:204). Interestingly, though perhaps not surprisingly, the European sources that discuss Balinese sexual beliefs and practices both come to us from men employed as doctors by Dutch colonial forces (Jacobs 1883; Weck 1937).

> [C]olonial conditions compelled the art of governance to operate as a mode of translation. This becomes evident in the realm of modern medicine, which was introduced in response to the outbreak of epidemics. The establishment of new forms and institutions of medical scrutiny, population statistics, sanitation campaigns, and vaccination drives brought a medicalized body into view. These institutions and tactics, however, were predicated on the

> recognition that the body, in this case, was irreducibly Indian. If this was so, why should Western therapeutics and the colonial state govern its conduct? Thus, medicalized bodies became objects of struggle as the nationalists mounted a campaign to seize the body from its colonial disciplines. (Prakash 1999:10)

It is beyond the scope of the present scope to examine in any detail the instantiation of a modern body through interventions around small pox or syphilis on the part of the colonial authorities, or indeed on the part of the Indonesian state through vaccination campaigns, family planning programmes, and public health measures.

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