I first heard the story of the Nubian and the Roman circus under somewhat dubious circumstances, which need not detain us here, from a consultant of the British Transport Authority whose job it was to persuade the British public and politicians that increasing the size and number of juggernauts would be of great benefit to the environment. As it is a shaggy dog story, I give only the gist.

During the heyday of Roman circuses a group of mixed Christians was to be fed to the lions. As they were escorted in front of the expectantly cheering crowd, a giant Nubian man gently grouped his fellow believers together and told them to leave the lions to him. By various means the Nubian dispatched the first three males who attacked with great efficiency. Neither the audience, nor the Caesar, were pleased at this peremptory reversal of their anticipated afternoon's entertainment. So the lions were caged, a troupe of gladiators sent in to seize, bind and bury the Nubian up to his neck in the sand. When the lions were released again it took some time before a cautious male stepped up to the immobilized Christian, sniffed him and decided it was safe to proceed to lunch. As he passed over the Nubian, however, the latter undeterred twisted his neck and bit off the animal's genitals. Upon which a voice from the crowd was heard to call out: 'Fight fair, you black bastard!' History does not relate subsequent events.

This party piece embodies themes which some anthropologists may find unsavoury, concerned as they maintain themselves to be with understanding and explaining people in other cultures to a more or less uninterested world. Behind this safe liberal attitude however, lurk more similarities with the Romans in the story than most care, or dare, to admit. Who, after all, represents these others? And on whose terms are they, as a recent school of thought would have it, allowed their voices back?

In praise of pillage

'Quietness, grown sick of rest, would purge
By any desperate change.'

(Anthony and Cleopatra I, iii)

Anthropologists have a reputation as a predatory lineage. They are great colonizers: so we now have the anthropology-of-almost-anything from violence or evil to women, and doubtless soon premature balding. While
consists in the inscription of social action (strictly, 'our own constructions of other people's constructions'—Geertz 1973: 9). This is made possible by the 'fixing' of transient human discourse into autonomous text, detached from actual utterances and speakers' intentions. Culture therefore can, and should, be read like a text. A logical development is to submit ethnographies themselves to textual analysis which, as fate would have it, casts serious doubts on its original prophet's own pronouncements (see Clifford 1983: 132–33; Crapanzano 1986: 68–76). The textual critics also identify themselves with an assortment of 'post-structuralist' and effectively 'post-Marxist' French thinkers. Despite internal differences in stress, the latter are generally sceptical of the humanist focus on interpretation and meaning of the former. They presume distrust in the capacity of reason and language to reveal eternal, or even immediate, truths, preferring instead to stress the play of power in cultural discourse. Discourse on this reading is closer to the preconditions of action and speech, its historical context, than to the voices of human actors. There are important differences between the main protagonists (Hobart 1985). Whether attempting a synthesis and rendering allegiance both unto Caesar and unto God is sophisticated eclecticism or plain philosophical naïveté, depends a bit on whether one takes the textualists' own view or that of their critics.

One of the textualists' main charges is that anthropologists (usually British) have been slow to appreciate that ethnographies do not simply capture and encapsulate facts. Some of the accused whom I know agree, others contend they have taken it into account from the first, others seem not to grasp what all the fuss is about. There is certainly a prima facie case for arguing that writing is not a neutral medium between reality and its representation, but a process with its own history and implications. Looking, for instance, at textual traditions allows the exploration of such issues as how regional differences were construed, how they become perpetuated and affect the course of inquiry. What began as a useful corrective to a naïve theory of representation (Clifford 1983) has come, however, to lay claim, in such works as *Writing Culture*, to be a full-blown vision of anthropology as critical textuality, ethnography as polyphony, or culture as genre.

At this point the problems begin. While juicy images are eye-catching and suitably erudite sources—abstruse Polish logicians or obscure Elizabethans are to be recommended—often secure professional preferment, ideas involve presuppositions and have implications beyond their immediate application. Although a critical reading of ethnography proposes a purgative of Western ethnocentrism, as a theoretical approach it easily becomes a glaring example of what it condemns, because it is riddled with its own cultural conceptions—hence the American and French Foucaults. Like so much 'reflexive' thinking, what purports to be radical and emancipatory, on close scrutiny turns out to be unreflective, conservative, and subtly hegemonic. It requires everyone to participate on its own terms.

Such remarks about evidently well-meaning scholars need substantiation. In what follows I consider critically the implications of several linked, if not obvious, presuppositions of this textual criticism. These include such old stand-bys as a material metaphor of culture, the psychic unity of mankind,
the metaphysics of presence and a correspondence theory of meaning, which may be explicitly eschewed but are unwittingly retained. These combine in a naïve theory of agency. (Crudely, culture is treated as the negotiated product of a dialogue between humans who share a common subjectivity expressed in different cultural styles but which is revealed by a sensitive reading of their authentic voices.) If this seems simplistic, it looks pretty polished compared to the better known anthropological accounts of South East Asia. Both though achieve a sort of hegemony by establishing the superiority of the knowing author over their objects of study, and, recursively, reconstitute the peoples in question and authorize them to exist and act in quite alien ways. Even the brief analysis of one culture, Bali, with which I conclude, suggests the currency of ideas about identity and agency which are entirely precluded from recognition.

In short, although the new textual criticism is notionally concerned with how we distort the Other, it lands up indulging our seemingly endless passion with ourselves, our language, metaphors and intellectual spectacles, and oddly leaves other peoples even more remote than before. (Ironically, Foucault's suggestively impersonal epithet, 'the Other', has increasingly become an anthropological convenience for lumping the rest of the world together.) The concern with ethnography as knowledge overlooks the world of action and agents of which it is part. So, despite claiming to embrace the Other and liberate its polyphonic discourse, such approaches perpetuate the vision of the anthropologist as the superior 'knowing subject' who benefi­cently grants the Other its right to appear on its own behalf in the circus of contemporary academe. Unfortunately, like the Nubian, the Other has first been safely trussed up in relations of economic and political dependence, and firmly embedded in the sands of Western intellectual categories. So much is fairly familiar. The cruellest cut of all, however, is that the Other is only authorized to participate according to Western notions of self and action, and so is liable to be deemed not to be playing fair when it does not co-operate.

On authors and authorizing

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language or some suitably cautious expression, but as 'voice', which brings to mind Derrida’s point that voice implies the intimate and immediate presence of experience and subjectivity. Despite the supposed transition from experience to discourse, the theme of voices reappears continually in the images of dialogue and polyphony. Voice somehow captures the reality of personal experience. Fieldwork, we are told, rests on inter-subjectivity but this simply begs the question of personal identity and shared subjectivity in the first place. In other words, we seem to be faced with a very old fashioned idea of the self, not just as the sole kind of agent, but as an autonomous, 'knowing subject' in Foucault’s sardonic phrase. This suspicion is borne out by the depiction of ethnography as a negotiation between conscious subjects which conjures up all sorts of utilitarian ghosts. Negotiation presupposes not only an account of intention, interests and self but also, as Durkheim observed long ago, a culturally variable language in which it is conducted (Hobart 1986). After all this has been imposed on the unfortunate Other—at once generalized in its spurious specificity and revocalized by superior agency—it is naïve at best to inform them or the reader that they are now politically significant subjects.

The textualists’ own text tells us much more though. In the Introduction to Writing culture, the essays, we are told (paraphrasing Geertz 1973: 15) focus on ‘the constructed, artificial nature’ of ‘text making’. For ethnography ‘is always caught up in the invention, not the representation, of culture’. It is ‘situated between powerful systems of meaning’, ‘at the boundaries of civilizations, cultures, classes’, and so on. The essays ‘reach beyond texts to contexts of power, resistance, institutional constraint’ (Clifford 1986a: 2) within which anthropological ideas are ‘enmeshed’ (1986a: 11) by ‘staging dialogues’ (1986a: 14) to reach the ‘polyphony’ of ‘negotiated realities’ whereby the falsity of ‘monophonic authority’ is ‘revealed’ (1986a: 15). Such ‘post-modernism’ is distinct in ‘demanding new forms of inventiveness and subtlety’ (1986a: 22–23), where ‘divergent styles of writing are... grappling with these new orders of complexity’ (1986a: 13).

The metaphors are striking. Texts are things made, as cultures are invented, by anthropologists. Power is conceived as force working against resistances and constraints. Meaning and culture, indeed knowledge itself, are bounded, concrete entities. The moving spirit in this solidified world is Mind through the instrument of language. Culture is revealed through language as authentic voices. As Clifford’s allegories, more constitutive than deconstructive, run amuck he is left with a serious problem of agency. 1 A subject in Foucault’s sartorial phrase, this suspicion is borne out by the depiction of ethnography as a negotiation between conscious subjects which conjures up all sorts of utilitarian ghosts. Negotiation presupposes not only an account of intention, interests and self but also, as Durkheim observed long ago, a culturally variable language in which it is conducted (Hobart 1986). After all this has been imposed on the unfortunate Other—at once generalized in Its spurious specificity and revocalized by superior agency—it is naïve at best to inform them or the reader that they are now politically significant subjects.

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For learned nonsense has a deeper sound

Than easy sense, and goes for more profound.

(Samuel Butler, 'Upon the abuse of human learning')

To the extent that Tyler is coherent, he unwittingly embraces most of the presuppositions behind the arguments he attacks. Why, for instance, should culture be about meaning? And why should we be offered a dichotomous choice between ethnography either evoking or representing in the first place? The answers open a can of worms. He assumes essential processes of understanding which constitute exclusive, indeed dichotomous, classes. Doing away with representing would not dispose of the ontological problem of what it is that whoever it is doing to what. One evokes something, however conceived, unless we are to imagine pure undirected evoking, like pure emoting. (Would Tyler wish to argue that his critique of representation is itself purely evocative?) In all this, the nature of the evoking self is treated as curiously unproblematic. Instead we are offered the Western mind reflecting on itself and its creations: 'post-modern ethnography is an object of meditation' (1986: 134). These are not quibbles because they point to confusions in the critical textual project quite beside the rampant essentialism, ontological myopia and assured egotism which the reader has, mercifully briefly, encountered above.

The world Tyler is trying to enter has already been depicted by Baudrillard. It is a world of simulacra created by the knowing subject who in turn becomes a simulation. Simulation, unlike representation, starts 'from the radical negation of the sign as value' (1983a: 11). If one follows this path, the image goes through successive phases:

- it is the reflection of a basic reality
- it masks and perverts a basic reality
- it bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum...

When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality: of second-hand truth, objectivity and authenticity. There is an escalation of the true, of the lived experience; a resurrection of the figurative of the object where the substance has disappeared.

(1983a: 11-12)

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(1983a: 11-12)
forms of domination by underwriting the conditions which made this possible. We are invited to witness a conspiracy against oppression but are left with Neros fiddling while Rome burns.

Hegemony and cryogeny

Steering clear of the Charybdis of a regressive reflexivity is no excuse for leaping back into the gorges of the Scylla of naive realism. A study of regional traditions of ethnographic writing may promise an escape from ethnocentric generalization and enable one to stand back and look at the circumstances in which certain ideas come to be accepted as typifying a particular area of the world (see Strathern in this volume). There are two difficulties however. The first is a trap which textualism is also prey. It may crudely be epitomized by the question of how much perceived variation is due to the emergence of a specific textual tradition and how much to real differences between regions? The second is whether one can trace an emergent tradition without constructing a genealogy which represents sectarian interests at the expense of views of people in other societies, subjects or schools. Focusing on the former obscures the ways in which commentary necessarily involves relations of power as much as does ethnographic writing.

My objection is that to see ethnography in terms of an allelomorphic dichotomy of reality and textually-informed knowing subject is misguided. It rests on a dubious, and highly essentialized, vision of reality, knowledge and agency. In its baldest version it assumes a naive realism (facts are given), linked to a passive theory of knowledge based on a visual metaphor (truth will be perceived when distortions are removed, cf. Rorty 1980: 3–45). The facts and values of a culture, however heterogeneous and changing, are ultimately given. The problem becomes how best to cope with the distortions inevitably imposed by ethnography, whether these be inadequacies of circumstances, method, personality, intellectual or textual tradition, and so on. Reflexivity just adds to the burden of anthropologist as hero. The antithetical view, sometimes labelled idealist, that humans invent culture (Wagner 1981; and that ethnography is therefore constructions of constructions) only shifts the emphasis from the world 'out there' to the world 'in here' of the knowing subject. Juggling both views at once, whether by seeming both naturalism and cultural variability (Brock 1977: ethnocentric generalization and enable one to stand back and look at the circumstances in which certain ideas come to be accepted as typifying a particular area of the world (see Strathern in this volume). There are two difficulties however. The first is a trap which textualism is also prey. It may crudely be epitomized by the question of how much perceived variation is due to the emergence of a specific textual tradition and how much to real differences between regions? The second is whether one can trace an emergent tradition without constructing a genealogy which represents sectarian interests at the expense of views of people in other societies, subjects or schools. Focusing on the former obscures the ways in which commentary necessarily involves relations of power as much as does ethnographic writing.

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In vacuo

Inden, writing about Orientalism, has raised a point which applies with equal force to anthropologists. For Western knowledge is privileged in relation to that of the Orientals and it invariably places itself in a relationship of intellectual dominance over that of the easterners. It has appropriated the power to represent the Orient, to translate and explain his (and her) thoughts and acts not only to Europeans and Americans but also to the Orientals themselves. But that is not all. Once his special knowledge enabled the Orientalist and his countrymen to gain trade concessions, conquer, colonize, rule, and punish the East. Now it authorizes the area studies specialist and his colleagues in government to aid and advise, develop and modernize, arm and stabilize the countries of the so-called Third World. In many respects the intellectual activities of the Orientalist have even produced the very Orient which is constructed in its discourse.

(Inden 1986: 408; my emphases)

I would merely add that imposing our ideas of knowledge, self and reality on the people we study, however carefully they are wrapped up in another for a long time. Ethnography is a newcomer to a world of complex and confused past dialectical relationships. The facts reported by ethnographers do not exist in vacuo but are continually being reworked by agents, including ethnographers themselves, in particular cultural and historical situations. Knowledge, including that pernicious thing the ethnographer's self-consciousness, is not a passive process of realizing what is already there, but a continued re-working on different occasions (even if academics sometimes have to run fast to stand still). In other words, the reality and the textual traditions which notionally might determine the 'content' of ethnography are themselves the results of previous (and, more often than is usually allowed, mutual but not necessarily mutually comprehensible) acts, as is the knowledge and consciousness of both ethnographers and their subjects.

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of agency in the relationship of subjects, authors, texts and readers. What is
seemingly depends partly on what it spawns. So, rather than just add another
premature contribution, it may be worth briefly considering how some of the
best-known approaches to South East Asia depict their subjects, how far
certain works attain the curious status of being definitive and how a textual
tradition may become an agent in constituting ethnographic reality.

The question of how South East Asia has been represented by the
West would, and indeed already has, taken up several books (cf. recent
anthropological work on Indonesia alone see Boon 1977, 1982; de Josselin
de Jong 1953a, 1984; Koentjaraningrat, 1975; on how this has affected,
or been used by, the peoples concerned, see the contributions to Hobart
and Taylor 1986). As anthropologists are relative innocents in a field well
worked over by archaeologists, historians and orientalists, the arguments
over the nature and implications of a specifically South East Asian textual
tradition, were it desirable, would be a substantial undertaking well beyond
the scope of this paper. So instead I shall consider briefly whether there are
(as Inden has argued for India, forthcoming) what might be regarded with
hindsight as hegemonic texts which have established the terms of future
discussion and which have, in a sense, helped to constitute South East
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suggest there is a fascinating cryogenic trend which serves, accidentally or
deliberately, to freeze South East Asian societies from changes which are
depicted as modern and external.

The way in which Western discourses affect their ‘objects’ is apparent in
the notion of South East Asia itself. The term is a convenience born in the
aftermath of the Second World War to cover the area including Thailand
(then Siam) and the colonies of Dutch Indonesia, the Hispano-American
Philippines, British Burma, Malaya, Singapore, Sabah, Brunei, the White
Rajas’ Sarawak, and French Indo-China. Subsequently it has served various
parties’ interests, not least those of ASEAN (Association of South East
Asian Nations), at times to represent themselves as having something in
common. While historians have traced genealogies of kingship (from Java
to Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand, although not under those names)
within the region, in broader terms South East Asian societies have usually
been regarded as peripheral to the two Great Civilizations of India and
China, as the composites Indo-China and Indonesia suggest. Their political
marginality was long under-written by archaeological, historical and cultural
discourses (de Jong 1953a, 1984; Koentjaraningrat, 1975), on how this has affected,
or been used by, the peoples concerned, see the contributions to Hobart
and Taylor 1986). As anthropologists are relative innocents in a field well
worked over by archaeologists, historians and orientalists, the arguments
over the nature and implications of a specifically South East Asian textual
tradition, were it desirable, would be a substantial undertaking well beyond
the scope of this paper. So instead I shall consider briefly whether there are
(as Inden has argued for India, forthcoming) what might be regarded with
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influential sources (Conrad’s novels?), for anthropological purposes I shall
suggest there is a fascinating cryogenic trend which serves, accidentally or
deliberately, to freeze South East Asian societies from changes which are
portrayed as diversified, largely decentralized and disorganized. As Boon
has pointed out (1986), the British colonial authors on Sumatera, Java and
Bali alone (Marsden 1811; Raffles 1817; Crawfurd 1820) described, and
indeed condemned, these three adjacent islands as potential models, as ‘con
rollable’, ‘monumental’ and ‘Kawified’ (literally, Indianized) respectively.
Another way this diversity is expressed is in opposition between the
centralized (Hindu-Buddhist) states of Java and Bali on the one hand and
the local rulers (often mercantile Muslim) of small lowland areas and aca
phalous swidden societies of the ‘Outer Islands’ on the other (a dichotomy given
geographical flesh by Geertz 1963a). Whether the former constituted
far-flung empires or barely controlled the perimeters of their own capitals,
depends on one’s priorities; as does whether the sources upon
which rival interpretations are based are considered historical chronicles
or not (e.g. Pigeaud 1960–63; cf. Berg 1965). Even the adherents of
a vision of dynastic splendour firmly place this in a long-lost past. So the
purported subsequent disorganization and squalor mark the past, and the
necessity of a European managerial presence, appear desirable by contrast.

The themes of diversity and disorganization spread well beyond Indo
nesia. An example is Embree’s famous characterization of Thai society
(maybe by contrast to Japan where he worked before) as a loosely struc
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celebrates ‘enjoyment not hard work’ and indeed ‘to tell a lie successfully, to
dupe someone else, is praiseworthy in Thai culture’ (1950: 191, 190, 186).
Similar themes permeate Leach’s Political systems of Highland Burma
(although I hardly think either would generally be considered to have wielded
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text is determined by the social and personal circumstances of the author.
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action they anticipate.
How emergent academic traditions may directly affect their object of study is strikingly evident in the Netherlands. This was realized in the emergence of the University of Leiden as the centre for both Indonesian studies and for training colonial civil servants: scholars and administrators were often the same people in different stages, or aspects, of their lives (for details, see Koentjaraningrat's nice analysis, 1975). The potential overlap of interests is evident in the stress on adatrecht. Indonesian customary law, which elided inquiry into collective representations and the perceived needs of government, whether explicitly interventionist or not. Adatrecht was almost a curious hybrid, not least because adat is an Arabic word (Indonesians had to borrow, via Islam, the term by which their cultures were conceived, and supposedly general indigenous ideas of a pervasive cosmic harmony). So not only was inquiry into the nature of social processes effectively pre-empted both by the assumptions of the model and the developing dogma that Indonesia, beneath the differences, was a culture area (some of the earlier writings especially include glorious exceptions), but the reified structures came to be upheld by law and celebrated as distinctly Indonesian. In Bali for instance, apart from transmogrifying intricate networks of ties between princes, overseers and peasants into administrative villages or irrigation complexes, subtle regional differences in understanding of economic and political clientage and ranking became rigidified into monolithic systems of land tenure and caste. The twist in the tale is that adat is recognized in Indonesian law, so culture reconstituted is now official.

While mainland South East Asia tended to be conceived in terms of Grand Systems (usually Hinayana Buddhist) imitated by marginal minorities and maritime South East Asia, a field unified in its diversity, two popular anthropological approaches to Indonesia reiterated presuppositions similar to those noted above. The first is the Leiden, and sometime Oxford, tradition of structuralism, which was dominant for a long time in the Netherlands and, as its proponents will soon tell one, predates Levi-Strauss, although it is distinguished by a greater focus on the empirical study of surface structures. The second is associated with the writings of Clifford Geertz. The former, under the guiding hand of the de Josselin de Jong lineage, constitutes an exclusive genealogy; the latter reflects the prolix hermeneutic imagination of Clifford Geertz who, as it happens, was also an extraordinarily articulate, the most articulate, an extraordinary mind (Indonesians had to borrow, via Islam, the term by which their cultures were to be epitomized). It required the contradiction between law, broadly conceived, and supposedly general indigenous ideas of a pervasive cosmic harmony. So not only was inquiry into the nature of social processes effectively pre-empted both by the assumptions of the model and the developing dogma that Indonesia, beneath the differences, was a culture area (some of the earlier writings especially include glorious exceptions), but the reified structures came to be upheld by law and celebrated as distinctly Indonesian. In Bali for instance, apart from transmogrifying intricate networks of ties between princes, overseers and peasants into administrative villages or irrigation complexes, subtle regional differences in understanding economic and political clientage and ranking became rigidified into monolithic systems of land tenure and caste. The twist in the tale is that adat is recognized in Indonesian law, so culture reconstituted is now official.

By under-playing the degree to which Java was integrated into the Dutch economy and the subsequent strangle-hold of the Chinese on commercial capital, the impression is created of the Javanese as rude dolts, clowning their superiors but largely failing to grasp even the rudiments of modern business, rather than as the rural sector of a complex industrialized, and partly international, economy trying to gain entry into fiercely defended monopolies (cf. Dewey's subtler account, 1962).

Geertz traces the complexity and internal political instability of Java to the co-existence of three ideal typical status groups which provided the nuclei of social structure (1960: 5). Of these, the Santri (Muslim) and Priyayi (Hindu-Buddhist) models have been imported and coexist more or less easily with an indigenous Abangan tradition, which looks like the Little Tradition aping its Hindu elders and betters. Although he recognizes the significance of cultural borrowing, Geertz has had at times to engage in quite fancy footwork to dissociate Java and Bali from India. His theory of human nature requires it. For humans are essentially (sic) driven by the need (Geertz 1963: 4) to impose meaningful structures and significations on foreign ideas and institutions, mainly through Dutch economic and administrative policies (1963a), have reduced villages to amorphous suburbs (cf. Jay 1969; Koentjaraningrat 1985: 99–229), while the burgeoning towns are at once shakily held together and divided by allegiance to different status groups, reincarnate as rival political parties (Geertz 1957, 1965). The implication that things were in some kind of balance before the Dutch made it all go wrong not only fits ill with historians' portrayals of widespread strife and confusion (e.g. Ricklefs 1978), but also, dichotomously, equates corporate groups and formal organization with structure and their absence with chaos. The assumptions are illustrated by the problem the Javanese have had, according to Geertz, in achieving 'economic take-off' (1963b). By under-playing the degree to which Java was integrated into the Dutch economy and the subsequent strangle-hold of the Chinese on commercial capital, the impression is created of the Javanese as rude dolts, clowning their superiors but largely failing to grasp even the rudiments of modern business, rather than as the rural sector of a complex industrialized, and partly international, economy trying to gain entry into fiercely defended monopolies (cf. Dewey's subtler account, 1962).
Java as the economic and political hub of Indonesia, and Bali as quaint and unlikely. (Perhaps because of its proximity and historical links, in some un unstated manner Bali is paradoxically made to exemplify at once the idyllic beauty and Otherness of pre-conquest Java, and its potential violence and instability.) In a well-known article directly addressed to the problem of variation, Geertz seeks to explain variation in terms of a kaleidoscopic model of village institutions or "planes of social organization", which may be mixed in different combinations like playing cards (1959b: 991-92). (Later, he gives more stress to the dynamic implications of differences in styles of life between aristocrats and commoners, e.g. 1980.)

The possibility of endogenous progressive change is effectively ruled out ab initio because these planes are "fixed and invariant" (Geertz 1959b: 991). Geertz does not, however, clarify a significant ontological confusion over whether planes of organization are indigenous or analyst's constructs. The former reading would be in keeping with his general concern with local conceptual systems, but this would leave the unfortunate Balinese trapped inside a static conceptual model and seemingly unable to do much about changes in the world. (Two years earlier—in 1957—Geertz had proposed that the instabilities of Java were due to "culture" lagging behind changes in "structure".) Organizational deficiencies in Bali are due to the system still working through traditional ties to achieve traditional goals (1963b), so external influences, for example national politics, are disruptive. Like giving a child a machine gun, they are excessively powerful tools with which to pursue petty local rivalries, as they are in the hands of people who are not yet equipped to handle them (1959a).

In the vast literature on Bali a trend, so far more or less implicit, emerges clearly which one might label that of "the cryogenic text". In 1925 Korn, one of the great Dutch scholars on Bali, for instance, wrote an article appropriately in the Koloniale Tijdschrift (Colonial Journal) with the arresting title "Bali is apart . . . is even onder deel van Indie" ("Bali is a thing apart, it is more distinct from any other part of the Indies"). This was in fact only one in a long series of curious representations of the island which, as Boon has argued (1971: 10-89), stretches back to Cornelis de Houtman's retrospectively famous stop there in 1597. It continues in ever more numerous projects to "rescue" Balinese culture—and sometimes the Balinese—from the depredations of tourists, Western economic and Indonesian political influences, if not from the Balinese themselves, which have been generated by the same vision as Baudrillard's. (Korn, too, gives more stress to the dynamic implications of differences in styles of life between aristocrats and commoners, e.g. 1980.)

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For ethnography to live, its object must die. But the latter renews itself by dying for having been 'discovered', and defies by its death the science that wants to take hold of it.

(Baudrillard 1983a: 13)

The museological urge was clear in the excitement over the Tasaday who became

the simulation model for all conceivable Indians before ethnography... frozen, cryogenized, sterilized, protected to death, they have become referential simulacra, and the science itself a pure simulation.

(1983a: 15)

We also apply this cryogenic urge to ourselves, he suggests. For "our entire linear and accumulative culture would collapse if we could not stockpile the past in plain view" (1983a: 19). There is a trend towards appropriating a homogenized and re-constituted past (or perhaps how the world might have been?). If Bali does not loom large in contemporary Indonesian self-images, the reasons are interesting. Nehru not least claimed it as 'the morning of the world', what it (and presumably India) had been like when still young. And why scholars, museum curators and tourists armed with cameras descend on Bali in hordes is intriguing. Culture, suitably reified, has become a commodity to be owned.

Similar tendencies may be discerned in ethnographical accounts. Gellner, for instance, has charged Leach with hypostatizing the Kachin, as he assumes that change is explicable by specifying the contradictory ideals that are operating—which can be done through static models employing static concepts—thereby simultaneously indicating the mechanism of change and describing a changing society by means of two unchanging models.

(1973: 97)

Behind this rests our old friend the Correspondence Theory of truth and meaning, according to which concepts somehow describe, or mirror, the world. As Geller points out, however, there is no such simple parallelism between concepts and things such as Leach seems to expect... The concept of "change", for instance, does not itself change yet it can "reflect" reality as much as the concept "stability"... (1973: 97). The difficulties stem from a kind of Idealism, the view that human action is ultimately explicable in terms of static, indeed frozen, cultural ideals (1973: 105-6), shared in different ways by Clifford Geertz and the Dutch structuralists.

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world, merely introduces Mind—or here middle-class American minds—as the central agent to the exclusion of those who do the acting and thinking. It is a world without practice, where consciousness is aloof from the endless, and endlessly changing, mutual reworking of humans and culture.

Adopting or rejecting such an approach is not just a matter of scholarly indulgence which matters little to the 'real world'. Cryogeny underwrites, in different ways, the latest exercise in Imperial domination, the need to 'develop' others because, coming from static societies and unequipped with a Western dynamic individualism, they cannot do it for themselves. Now in itself it doesn't really matter a hoot if academics are wildly wrong in imagining how the world is: in so far as it is not governed by the abstract ruminations of epistemologists, the world will carry on regardless. It matters very much, however, if our ideas affect other people, let alone how we set about changing them, whether the consequences are foreseen or not. For people in other societies adopt, or have imposed on them, ideas and practices which implicate absurd, or even occasionally useful, theories which may come to be seen as legitimate and proper goals (see R. H. Taylor on the Burmese road to socialism, 1986; or Picard on tourism in Bali, 1986). If societies are not discrete entities, and their members passive pawns, but all related in a complex dialectic, might we then not learn something from others' usage?

Not yet

In the rest of this chapter I sketch out Balinese notions of action and agency and argue their bearing on an understanding of the self. These are sufficiently distinct as to vitiate the textualists' models among others and to give us reason to reflect on the adequacy of our own categories. The reason not the means to represent a potentially transparent reality, be this meta-

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In this view, reality is not simply lumpen-matter. 'Appearance and reality, the subjective and objective, are at once both opposed (i.e. different) and also united.' For 'consciousness and knowledge are not simply static states, but rather active processes' in which 'knowledge is the process of the transformation of reality into thought' (Sayers 1985: 15, 16). This approach has several advantages. It avoids unnecessary essentialized dichotomies in favour of a logic of overlapping classes (Collingwood 1933: 26–53), as well as the epistemological traps which privilege academics as the closest thing we have ever come to pure understanding; and it opens the way to studying how agents in different cultural settings rework their knowledge and experience of, and so, the world in which they and others live.

The stereotype of the Balinese as sybaritically sating themselves on a surfeit of symbolism underplays the importance of agency. The drawbacks of ideal models come out in cosmological representations of Divinity. It is possible to extrapolate different versions. For example, Divinity is spoken of as Ida Sang Hyang Widi Wasa. In Old Javanese usage, the language of much Balinese literature and philosophy, widi connotes 'rule, law ordering, regulation' and the verb form 'to command, order'. Wasa is 'power, force, dominion'; and widiwasa 'the power of fate or destiny' (Zoetmulder 1982: 2262–63, 2213–14). So Divinity appears at once as order, what orders, the power of order(s) or of fate. By ignoring the question of who makes such claims and in what situations, it is possible to regard priests and kings as immanently both the patients (in the sense of being the subjects or recipients of Divine ordinances) and the agents of order and orders to those under their command, rather as village patrons may appear as agents to their followers but as instruments to their superiors circumstances. So knowledge, including self-knowledge, is active, dialectical, cumulative and situated.

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stillness is arguably both the precondition of action and action in its most consummate form.

At times, I confess, I too am tempted to succumb to the pleasure of playing with worldviews. They bear precious little relation, however, to the references to Divinity in whatever guise in different genres of writing (see Vickers 1986), far less to how Balinese talk about and act on such matters when occasion requires. The trouble comes from assuming an essence, revealing which will somehow explain how and why things are as they are. It may be the essential properties of the world or, more relevant in this instance, our constructs (quite possibly the same thing: Goodman 1972: 24–31) or an authorial intention which imbues the vision with meaning. The stress on text and its meaning, exemplified differently by both Geertz and the textualists, simplifies and hypothesizes the relationship between author, audience, referent, theme, text, language and tradition. (The antithetical Utilitarian view of culture as the rusty blunderbuss of legitimacy to scatter opponents as calculation calls, is merely a variation on the theme.) By contrast Balinese texts leave much to the reader, literally in so far as works are often read aloud (ngawacén) and translated (ngaröng) to an audience which makes it unwise to try to infer an essential meaning a priori. Texts are produced and reproduced by complex agents from courts, priestly circles and sects to other interest groups, where the author may be as much instrument as agent and the text's significance is reached contextually.

To return to my example, Divinity is differently instantiated by variously constituted agents in diverse situations (Hobart forthcoming).

In daily life Balinese make use of a rich vocabulary of social action. Among the commonest expressions for customary ways of doing things is tata krama; and to participate in the activities of local corporate groups is makrama. While tata is used to speak of order in the sense of fixed rules or proper arrangement, krama is awkward. On different occasions it signifies 'customary or fixed behaviour', 'conduct', 'the rules according to which something happens', 'order', 'succession'; but also 'the facts of an event' and 'someone's way of doing something' as well as those who engage in the behaviour or are responsible for ordered behaviour. At once it implies action, proper action and people who (are expected to) act in a particular way. As we shall see the link of action, appropriate action and agency is a recurrent theme.

There are other terms. The expression for doing something on the command of a prince or as part of one's duty to a group is nevah and may be evoked or actualized by both Geertz and the textualists, simplifies and hypothesizes the relationship between author, audience, referent, theme, text, language and tradition. (The antithetical Utilitarian view of culture as the rusty blunderbuss of legitimacy to scatter opponents as calculation calls, is merely a variation on the theme.) By contrast Balinese texts leave much to the reader, literally in so far as works are often read aloud (ngawacén) and translated (ngaröng) to an audience which makes it unwise to try to infer an essential meaning a priori. Texts are produced and reproduced by complex agents from courts, priestly circles and sects to other interest groups, where the author may be as much instrument as agent and the text's significance is reached contextually.

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This discussion may illuminate a striking feature of expressions in Balinese and other Indonesian languages for what we call future action. If one asks if something is the case, or if someone has done something (for instance, whether it is the rainy season or whether someone has ever visited a particular place), the answer, largely regardless of the likelihood of it happening, is commonly not 'no' but 'not yet' ( nuurung, tondén in high and low Balinese respectively, belam in Indonesian and Malay). While a fuller analysis is obviously required of the circumstances in which such replies are elicited, the usage is quite consonant with Balinese ideas that the future is anticipated, but not determined, in various ways by what is already the case. They have a subtle sense of the cultural obligations which constitute being human and of being situated, so to speak, in history. Consider, by contrast, the difficulties most contemporary Europeans have in conceiving of the self as diverse processes (cf. Parfit 1971) or of the future as portrayed in space-time physics.

To return to action, different kinds of being engage in different typical behaviour. Birds fly, snakes crawl and so on; but plants also grow in different ways and one has only to sit for a time to observe that rice fields too have their own peculiar activity. The term for the ways in which different agents or the instrument of Divinity? What of the king who commands his troops to battle but becomes the victim of the enemy? So it may be useful to speak of situations, persons, ideas, even actions as agentive, as requiring or inviting action and the emergence of an agent. Patients do not just suffer, they help to create a context in which action is implied, anticipated, invited or demanded. If Balinese usage allows a link between necessary or anticipated action and humans or groups as agents or instruments to prefigured ends, we would be wise to dismiss this as prelogical or as proof of mystical ideas of time and causation.

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Who do you think you are?  

Can Balinese ideas about persons and suchlike beings throw light on problems about the self outlined earlier or on issues of agency? To consider how they may, I contrast some Balinese representations with what is inevitably something of a parody of common Western presuppositions about the self. Then I turn to what that hardy anthropological perennial, 'ancestor worship', might tell us about knowledge and memory as actions. It is striking how often contemporary Western notions of personal identity are couched in spatial metaphors. Persons are not only construed as in-dividual, in-divisible (Marriott 1976: 109–14), but human experience is spoken of as split into an external world upon which an interior self, or mind, reflects. For instance, the development of the modern subject/person involves the unification of these spaces—without which the modern conception of a unified personality may not be possible—and then interiorization...the space of disclosure is considered to be inside, in the 'mind'... By space of disclosure, I mean the locus where things emerge at their fullest, clearest, most salient.

(Taylor 1985a: 277)

We speak so often of persons as substantive and unitary in space that it becomes hard to focus on the many situations in professional and daily life when we treat humans as in some sense dispersed. An alternative view of the self as subject to disparate forces is perhaps expressed in the popular enthusiasm for health foods, bio-rhythms, ions, astrology and the like. If humans are not independent closed atoms, neither are they necessarily perfectly integrated systems. (Why the Utilitarian view of humans as 'pre-social

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stress the necessity of allowing a balance between alternative personal dispositions.

This brings us conveniently to the Balinese. Prima facie many of their representations seem largely to avoid imputing substance, atomism, unitariness or harmony to human nature. Among the ways humans are constituted are the triwarga, triguna and isaga-ñana. The triwarga, the goals or motives for action (dharma, good; artha, wealth or utility; kama, pleasure), mix in degree in explaining most actions. The isaga-ñana, energy (bayu), speech (subda) and thought (idep) are not essences but are closer to abilities, capacities or potentialities. (The contrast with Aristotle’s division of plants, animals and humans by the cumulative essences—or souls, psyche—of nourishment, perception and thought or reason should make the differences clear, Aristotle 1941: 556-62, 413b-15b). Such potentialities differ in degree and kind over time among different beings: the speech of gods, princes and the village thief is often distinct. As contradictory or incommensurable tendencies are inherent to each scheme, humans are not simple unitary isolates in a Great Chain of Being.

The distinctions have a complicated history of use which is traceable through Old Javanese to Sanskrit. One must beware, however, of false essential continuities. In Balinese, as dispositions, might be glossed as knowledge or purity, satwa; passion, activity, raja(h); and desire or ignorance, tamas (Zoetmulder 1982: 1713, 1462, 1914; cf. Monier-Williams 1899: 1135, 863, 438). However, the terms are by no means restricted to humans but are ways in which the cosmos, understood as living processes, changes and are perhaps closer to ‘existence’ (‘presence’), ‘activity’ and ‘darkness’ respectively (see Inden 1985: 144-48). So when Balinese speak of the state of the self—b(h)uwana aliI—as related in some way to the universe—b(h)uwana agung—it neither necessarily implies a displacement of responsibility for, nor a projection of, one’s own actions, but a recognition of overlap, dispersal and the complexity of agency and patiency. Contrariety and change are built in. Nor do the schemes depict unchanging essences of human nature, but rather possible ways in which goals, capacities and predispositions combine, clash and work themselves out, or humans learn to command them.

People are also popularly constituted in other, non-coordinate ways. According to a theory of humours the environment impinges directly on people. Extremes of cold (gesit), and worse heat (panas), are dangerous, the default condition is in-between (dumalada) and the ideal, coolness (etis). The weather, what one has eaten and all sorts of other factors affect one’s being or cause illness and discomfort. So remedial ‘ritual’ or medical care may be needed to redress the balance. If there is too much water in one’s body for example, marasa nyem, one has an uncomfortable feeling of heaviness, best relieved by something which makes one sweat. Rasa is widely used of what one experiences as within the body. Humans feel the world through the five senses (ngarasaang sakalo anituk panca indriya), but may also internally feel such states as being disturbed by something (menweh) or polluted (leteh). The self is an intricate field.

In some accounts feelings are localized. Balinese often link some of what we might call strong emotions to the (ulun) atti, the (tip of the) liver, or stomach (basang); so one may complain of marasa lek atti, feeling ashamed or gedeg basang, angry. When speaking carefully though, people more often referred to gedeg keneh. Keneh is opposed to pemineh as desire-based thought is to opinion or detached judgement (and is mediated by manah which one might loosely render here as mind, will, or inclination). The distinction is parallel to the opposition of tamas and satwa. Balinese recognize the complex relationship between such processes and action (Vickers forthcoming). Apart from being the preconditions to action, thought or feeling may be the patient of someone else’s actions, for example in making one angry. It may also be passion as when an attractive woman incites desire.

All sorts of other influences are often held to affect humans, especially when things go wrong. Date of birth, where one lives, what one does, caste or descent group affiliation all help to make up the kind of person one is and the misfortunes to which one is subject. More or less unitary invisible agents from deities, ancestors and fate (ganit) to the qualities of particular days are also held to affect the living and their actions. These work on Balinese as patients, not mere objects. So ignorance of duwasa (appropriate days for different kinds of activity) or particular deities is as likely to leave one unable to utilize their potential as it is directly to lead to harm. Balinese disquisitions on the relation between the senses, feelings and mind and the world are, of course, far more elaborate than I can deal with here, a point which further underwrites the infancy of sweeping a priori assertions.

Knowledge and memory as action

Anthropologists sometimes depict peoples who regard the world as directly affecting them as pre-Copernican (e.g. Douglas 1966: 80). So it may be instructive to consider the language Balinese use to discuss an important class of beings whom they hold to affect their lives in all sorts of ways, namely the dead. In shunting the relations of living and dead away into categories like ‘ancestor worship’, anthropologists impose their own preconceptions about the nature of being and action in such a way as to make themselves look intelligent at the expense of both understanding and other peoples.

‘Ancestor’ is a very poor gloss of the Balinese. The term most commonly used is lalu(h)ur from lu(h)ur, ‘above’, ‘superior’; the latter making better sense than ‘ancestor’. (In tourist brochures gods and ancestors are always up in an empyrean heaven whence they descend. In fact their nature and locus is problematic, see J. Hooykaas 1955, 1956.) When humans die, funerary rites are required to transform them from incomplete presences, pirata, to their new state of being as pitara (both variations on the Sanskrit pitor) who are also referred to more elegantly as b(h)nata, a generic respect term for aspects of Divinity, which suggests ‘lord’ but also ‘protector’. At any stage though, the dead may affect the living for good or ill. When misfortunes fall upon a household, sooner or later its members normally resort to spirit
of terms: forgetting and remembering. Lali (engsay in low Balinese) is to forget or ignore. Now something of its sense may be appreciated by considering its antonym, to remember, dling (inger in low), which is widely synonymous with being conscious. Remembering and forgetting, in contrasting ways, are vital preconditions of action. It is not just that when human neglect is recalled (kaelingang) by the ancestors they take steps; or when humans remember what is required of them all is likely to be reasonably well. Memory and consciousness (or, for that matter, forgetting) are not passive faculties, they shape the pattern of agency. Humans are not the helpless victims of bloody-minded ghosts; rather they take part in the process of recreating the dead, who are patients slowly being transformed back into agents, through remembering them. This bears in a different way on the active or passive involvement of ancestors with the living. Where the living go beyond the normal course of duty in remembering the dead, the dead are enabled to respond by energetically helping their kin. (One man in a village where I worked was well known for his assiduous devotion to his old grandmother. After she died he became very rich which was often said to be due to her unusually active help.) Inaction, similarly, brings about a passive response: the dead are reminded, kaelingang, that the living have not remembered.

Much of the discussion about remembering holds true for Balinese ways of talking about knowing. They seem to put far less emphasis than we on learning as the active process, knowing as the steady state thereafter, and memory as its atrophy. In many contexts, all are treated as different kinds of action, as indeed are their associated activities. Seeing, for instance, as my phrase about the dead 'keeping an eye on' the living was intended to suggest, involves active participation: few important events can take place without a witness. A witness is not a passive spectator but an agent who makes the event part of recorded happening. There is a stress on the way such actions continually reconstitute the person and, to the degree that agents are dispersed, affect others. The stripped identity, 'the soul', atma, which is said to experience the after-world, is incapable of speech or action: it just suffers as it is the ultimate patient.

This necessarily simplistic overview makes me wonder whether the perduing glories of ethnography are all they are cracked up to be. Most approaches to South East Asia torture what they do not discard altogether into largely useless caricatures on the Procrustean bed of academic essentialism. The standing joke about the informant who rushes home to look up process of recreating the dead, who are patients slowly being transformed back into agents, through remembering them. This bears in a different way on the active or passive involvement of ancestors with the living. Where the living go beyond the normal course of duty in remembering the dead, the dead are enabled to respond by energetically helping their kin. (One man in a village where I worked was well known for his assiduous devotion to his old grandmother. After she died he became very rich which was often said to be due to her unusually active help.) Inaction, similarly, brings about a passive response: the dead are reminded, kaelingang, that the living have not remembered.

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Reflection on how we write about all this summons up banished spectres not just of what we include in our accounts and what we exclude, or are excluded from observing, but also of the implications of our descriptions for others and ourselves. There are several aspects to this. We tend to recreate the world in our image, if not require others to do so. This process sometimes works in complex ways: it is not only contemporary Europeans who re-enact the work of an Elizabethan Englishman who made a (supposedly) black man express the ethnographical dream of the Other:

'And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.'

(Othello I, iii)

If our depictions are loaded acts, on what authority do we make them? Whether anthropologists—who often exaggerate the importance of their puny loyal opposition to the big guns of economics and political science—are the concerned pluralists and moral liberals they claim is a moot point, as a critical look at the textual critics makes clear. On the home front, I have my doubts both about this and about whether there are many situations where the subject or its practitioners constitute a unitary agent in any useful sense. Talk of grand, or regional, anthropological traditions is more about just of what we include in Our accounts and what we exclude, or are excluded and ourselves. There are several aspects to this. We tend to recreate the fate of the Nubian, perhaps we should recall the remark of that familiar

That the silent majority (or the masses) is an imaginary referent does not mean they don't exist. It means that their representation is no longer possible. The masses are no longer a referent because they no longer belong to the order of representation. They don't express themselves, they are surveyed. They don't reflect upon themselves, they are tested. Now polls, tests, the referendum, media are devices which no longer belong to a dimension of representations, but to one of simulation. They no longer have a referent in view, but a model.

(Mark Hobart)

Notes

1. 'And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.'

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2. For instance Margaret Mead and George Elliot are cited as both being enticed by a pastoral allegory (1986b: 114, 109) which makes sense if one posits meaning as a perduring essence, but hardly if it is historically and contextually situated. If anyone is neo-pastoralist, it may be the textualists themselves.

3. Commenting on Shostak's comments on her informant's comments on her life, Clifford remarks that here 'the hum of unmarked, impersonal existence can be heard' (1986b: 106). At the end of the book we are told 'the transforming relationship ends with an equality in affection and respect' (1986b: 107). Now, to whom in each case is this so? Short of a remarkable confluence of ideas or of crediting Shostak's informant, or !Kung culture with having anticipated (or having imposed upon them) contemporary American intellectual fashions, one must conclude all this has precious little to do with the unfortunate !Kung.

4. These, despite the airy gesture to power and history common to many textualists, are treated as ahistorical, asocial and unsituated. Otherwise, talk of 'evocation' cross-culturally in vitro is meaningless. The project, as he makes abundantly plain, is to promote treating 'the other as us', and eliminate anyone, especially the Other, from exploring the divergent possibilities of discourse. The enthusiastic essentialism is made apparent by Tyler representing all ethnographic writings as instantiations of a generic 'text' which presumes every text to share the essential characteristics of the genus, as opposed say to ethnography being a way of reading disparate materials.

5. Although elsewhere Baudrillard's target is sociology, his remarks on the creation of simulations are not irrelevant.

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(1983b: 20)

Here actual people in other societies have been replaced by the reflexive anthropologists' models.

6. A good critique of the dominant view of self as defined purely by self-conscious 'inner' space, or mind, is to be found in Charles Taylor 1985a. Such a view heard' (1986b: 106). At the end of the book we are told 'the transforming relationship ends with an equality in affection and respect' (1986b: 107). Now, to whom in each case is this so? Short of a remarkable confluence of ideas or of crediting Shostak's informant, or !Kung culture with having anticipated (or having imposed upon them) contemporary American intellectual fashions, one must conclude all this has precious little to do with the unfortunate !Kung.

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There is a fascinating history, still largely to be written, of the relationship between European political and economic domination of Africa, the Americas and Asia, and the growth of a scholarly tradition in which the West's hegemony is established and perpetuated. In part this seems to have required both a distancing and stereotyping (Arendt 1987) and a diversification of the Other (Africa, the Americas, China, ancient and ossified; India ancient and degenerate; Arab stark and fanciful). Unsurprisingly, perhaps, it is often disconcerting trends, which may subsequently be perceived to hold more for the authors' own societies than for those whom they claim to describe, are the most fervently projected onto the Other (Inden 1986). At the same time, ironically, Western philosophers have often required the Other, for instance India, as foil for such otherwise opposed visions as those of both German Romanticism and the Utilitarianism of J. S. Mill (1820), quite apart from the work of Hegel (1919) and of Marx on the Asiatic Mode of production, on which see Inden forthcoming. Something similar may hold of Java in the work of von Humboldt (1836–39).

There is a fascinating history, still largely to be written, of the relationship between Europe and Asia, and the growth of a scholarly tradition in which the West's hegemony is established and perpetuated. In part this seems to have required both a distancing and stereotyping (Arendt 1987) and a diversification of the Other (Africa, the Americas, China, ancient and ossified; India ancient and degenerate; Arab stark and fanciful). Unsurprisingly, perhaps, it is often disconcerting trends, which may subsequently be perceived to hold more for the authors' own societies than for those whom they claim to describe, are the most fervently projected onto the Other (Inden 1986). At the same time, ironically, Western philosophers have often required the Other, for instance India, as foil for such otherwise opposed visions as those of both German Romanticism and the Utilitarianism of J. S. Mill (1820), quite apart from the work of Hegel (1919) and of Marx on the Asiatic Mode of production, on which see Inden forthcoming. Something similar may hold of Java in the work of von Humboldt (1836–39).

Now that the long-lost capital of the supposedly mercantile empire of Sriwijaya in Sumatra has reportedly been located, it will be interesting to see whether, and how, these stereotypes are re-evaluated.

Sometimes the reason is given a collective nature: people are too democratic. Democracy, or egalitarianism, is a frequent explanatory Deus ex machina for failure. This is the more interesting in that most South East Asian peoples are often described (by the same authors) as remarkably rank or hierarchical. On a further oscillation, see the next footnote.

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A great deal of effort has gone into defining Indonesia as a field of study. This is the more remarkable in that Indonesia began as a colonial fiction and incorporates what one might, if one is so inclined, consider parts of Melanesia. The Romans were not the last to imagine their empires as belonging to them by divine right, or by analogy with the West's own development. The present interpretation is no more profound than the earlier. No doubt the devil is in the detail, but the details are often what one might suppose or imply certain more general views.

Both term seemed generally used to imply the mystical harmony supposedly connoted by adat. As if to make my earlier point, Hindu Balinese villagers now often adopt the Arabic term adat to talk generally of 'tradition', not only when using Indonesian and in a comparative context, but in recent years by contrast to governmental (dinas) aspects of local affairs. Occasionally the less educated used adat as a synonym for tata but no one, as far as I could establish, did so for krama.

Ugly as it is, 'agnostic' is not a neologism but has been used in anthropology and linguistics precisely where ascension of agency is important. Because genuinely agnostic discourse about educating others into practices, more or less successfully, which presuppose or imply certain more general views.

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