

SVEN CEDERROTH: The spell of the ancestors and the power of Mekkah: a Sasak community in Lombok. (Gothenburg Studies in Social Anthropology, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis) 315pp. Göteborg: Vasastadens Bokbinderi, 1981.

The Sasak of Lombok have long lived in the shadow of their famous neighbours, the Balinese, both as conquered subjects and in the west's search for oriental exotica. The effect has been not only a lamentable lack of study of Sasak society; but, as Cederroth's clear monograph shows, we have been deprived of a fascinating example of the complexity of cultural and religious differentiation in Indonesia. In contrast to their Hindu overlords, the Sasak have long been at least nominally Muslim. The point is that this crude dichotomy fails to point to the subtlety of kinds of metamorphosis, and their political and conceptual implications, within local Islam expressed as an opposition between *waktu lima*, orthodox belief (mythically devalued), and *wetu tiga*, the heterodox tradition. The numerical difference between *lima* (five) and *tiga* (three) alone suggests something of the intricacy of the issue; for five refers not only to the pillars of faith, but meshes perfectly with the use of these numbers in East Indonesia to denote dual divisions. This is not chance: orthodoxy and heterodoxy are described as founded by an elder and younger brother respectively. The common Indonesian exegesis is that the elder is temporally dominant, but the younger is spiritually superior! (Heterodoxy is unfortunately glossed as 'syncretist' - presumably in part with Hinduism - which tends to prejudge the precise nature and ontological status of the issue.) Cederroth shows how ill-advised one is to try to pin shades of religious variation to the usual models of patronage, class, political symbolism or even 'social-structural nuclei', such as *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi*, as Geertz essayed for Java with such confusing consequences. Extended case studies make it clear how the richness of the ethnography has a habit of triumphing over simplistic theory.

The monograph has much of the form of an introductory ethnography and takes one usefully through the main social institutions of a heterodox village. Cederroth acknowledges the influence of British social anthropology, in particular Gluckman's conflict approach and extended case method, as well as transactionalism and Bujra's analysis of the possible transformations between informal factions and organized political parties. The reliance on cases has the drawback, however, that the wood is less visible than the trees. The value of fuller detail comes out, for instance, in the discussion of marriage. The frequency of unions within the range of third collaterals is 90% among aristocrats, and, even over 80% among commoners. Without more background it is impossible fully to interpret these figures, nor to consider the broader question of what light they might throw on the significance of kin marriage in Bali, and so on kinship itself. One hopes that Cederroth will go on to fill in the tantalizing picture he has begun to paint.

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