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CHAPTER FOUR

Orators and Patrons : Two Types of Political Leader in Balinese Village Society¹

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Anthropological interest has recently been focused on the study both of procedure in decision-making groups and systems of diarchic rule,² but little attention as yet has been given to the possible relevance of dual leadership in traditional councils. Bali provides an example of a society where separation of functions exists both in public office and, more significantly, in informal political roles. Local assemblies with wide legislative and executive powers conduct meetings according to a definite protocol which incorporates special speech and language forms, and villagers who are adept in their use are the main spokesmen, or

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2. On councils see: Bailey (1965), Richards and Kuper (1971); for diarchy see: Cunningham (1965) and (1967), pp. 87-88, Needham (1960) and Prins (1963).

orators, in decision-making debates. Constitutional and procedural constraints in the assembly limit, however, its sphere of competence and lead to extra-conciliar relationships, particularly patron-client ties, being used for political ends. Patrons compete for control over the assembly by the mobilisation of factions and the manipulation of temporary coalitions, but remain dependent on orators for normative expressions of sectional interests. The effective political groups in the assembly are factions with an informal system of dual leadership, in which the separate functions of organising political support and public representation are devolved on different figures. The aim of this Chapter, therefore, is to examine the relation between council structure and procedure, the development of complementary leadership roles and their subsequent effects on the decision-making process.

THE BACKGROUND

The Balinese are a Malayo-Polynesian people, practising a variant form of Hinduism, who inhabit Bali and part of Lombok, the two islands lying to the East of Java, in Indonesia. The Balinese number over two million in Bali alone and are concentrated in the coastal and upland regions, especially to the South. They have a peasant economy based on irrigated rice cultivation where water is adequate, and elsewhere dry crops, with small-scale animal husbandry of cattle and pigs. There is a developed market system for local and manufactured goods controlled by professional merchants. The island is predominantly rural, towns are mostly small administrative and trading centres, while villages tend to be tightly-clustered and situated on high ground surrounded by rice fields. Rural settlements vary from isolated hamlets to large residential complexes, with population ranging from two or three hundred to several thousand inhabitants. Large settlements are common and are divided into separate local communities of which the most important administrative and political unit is the *banjar*,³ or hamlet.

Balinese social structure is complex and has been considered by Geertz⁴ as a system of cross-cutting, but not territorially discrete, social institutions which include residential groups, irrigation associations, patrilineal descent groups and voluntary organisations. There is, however, a marked tendency for many of these groups to recruit personnel from a limited catchment area, effectively coterminous with the settle-

3. The spelling system adopted here for Indonesian and Balinese words is that used officially since August 1972. Pronunciation is straightforward, except for the "c-" which is as the "ch-" in "church". Balinese words require an additional distinction between the "é" and "è" with values similar to the French and the unvoiced "e" as in *fasten*.

4. Geertz, C. (1959a).

ment. A feature of this system, in lowland areas in particular, is that the irrigation of rice is organised independently of residence, so settlements do not own a defined tract of agricultural land, corporately or otherwise, and have no control over the distribution of rice land. Balinese society is also notable for its stratification into ranked descent groups, or *penaksaam*, which are commonly classified into four *wangsa*—*Brahmana*, (*K*)*Satriya*, *Wesya* and *Sudra*—according to an ideology similar to the Indian caste system, with a formal division of spiritual and political authority between *Brahmana* and *Satriya* respectively.

Bali traditionally contained some eight small "feudal"⁵ kingdoms, governed by aristocratic families claiming the status of *Satriya*, under the titular overlordship of a *raja*. Regions within the kingdom were ruled by princes of royal or aristocratic descent, who lived in local courts, or *puri*, with extensive estates of agricultural land and dispersed networks of clients. The system of traditional offices was intricate and variable, ranging from direct subordination to the king to effective independence. After the conquest of South Bali by 1908, the power of the indigenous rulers was gradually curtailed, first by the establishment of a rationalised colonial administration, and later by the restriction of land holdings under the Indonesian Land Reform Laws in 1960. In many areas, the aristocracy still maintain a virtual monopoly of public office and, as a consequence both of their past proliferation and continuing political function, possess widespread relations within local settlements.

There have been successive changes in the structure of the administration, but by 1970 the whole island comprised one province (*propinsi*) of the Indonesian Government. The former kingdoms had become local administrative centres, *kecamatan*, with branches of national ministries, political party offices and local government councils. Each *kecamatan* was divided, more or less on pre-existing lines, into *kecamatan*, *perbekelan* and *banjar*, each under a representative official, of which only the *kecamatan* head is a direct government appointee. The *banjar*, which is traditionally a partly autonomous community with its own council and elected leaders, is thus also the smallest unit of government administration. The *perbekelan* consists of several *banjar* grouped together for convenience into an "administrative village" under an elected local official, the *perbekel*. Although this grouping was often originally arbitrary, with the development of political parties and its function as a channel of government funds, the *perbekelan* is increasing in importance as a political arena and the office of *perbekel* has become a valuable prize.

5. The structure of the traditional Balinese state might more appropriately be called 'patrimonial', but the term "feudal" is more common in the literature. cf. Geertz, H. (1959).

The structure of the bureaucracy and its means of functioning affect local political arenas and relations between villagers and officials. Most local decisions are made independently by individual *banjar*, while general executive and policy matters fall within the sphere of the *kecamatan* administration, the ministries and courts. Relatively little formal authority is vested in *kecamatan* and *perbekelan* officials, who tend to act as intermediaries or arbitrators in disputes. The administrative system also serves principally to transmit government regulations, instructions and information through descending levels of the bureaucracy. The official machinery for referring local problems and disputes for settlement by higher authorities is neither notably efficient nor adequate. As a result a network of personal contacts and unofficial patronage provide an alternative system of relations between members of the village and central administration, through which issues may be presented and resolved, often informally.⁶ In the last decades national political parties with organisations extending to the *banjar* have emerged parallel to, and frequently dividing, the administration itself. These furnish additional links with the authorities and villagers' membership of political parties may be evaluated in many instances in terms of the anticipated advantage of such relations.

LOCAL POLITICAL ARENAS

Despite the large bibliography on Bali, relatively little has been written on Balinese local politics and village councils to date, with the exception of a general article by Hildred Geertz and several short references by Clifford Geertz.⁷ To summarise their arguments briefly: in Bali, national political movements are reinterpreted locally in terms of conflicts between existing social groups which form political factions. With the development of a political party system "national politics and local feuds reinforce one another in such an unremitting fashion that village factionalism becomes hyperintensified to the point where a corrective equilibrium is extremely difficult to maintain."⁸ Elsewhere it is stated that "... the basic territorial political unit is the hamlet, or *bandjar*"⁹ with its own council and "decisions are reached within the council by unanimous agreement of its members, in a Quaker-like meeting in which each man speaks his mind as the spirit moves him..."¹⁰ As the Geertzes are only concerned tangentially with village

councils, the argument is necessarily incomplete. For example, it is not clear whether factions are always recruited from existent social groups, how they operate within the council, nor how decisions can be reached by universal consensus where factionalism is so extreme. This raises further questions, for as Kuper argues, it may be difficult to determine precisely what constitutes a decision by consensus.¹¹ Kuper also points out that, regardless of their constitution, every council tends to contain some form of decision-making elite. If this argument is true of Balinese local councils, as I shall suggest, the Geertzes' view that "the members of the hamlet council are all absolutely equal citizens..."¹² may have to be interpreted at an ideal level, rather than as political reality.

In order to examine council structure and leadership in more detail, I would like to draw on material from Tengahpadang, one of several large village settlements about twenty kilometres inland from the *kecamatan* town of Gianyar in South Bali. The village has traditionally been a small administrative centre and is now the site of a *kecamatan* office. More importantly, with four small hamlets lying less than three kilometres away, it forms a *perbekelan*. The main settlement contains several small courts, none of which are particularly wealthy or powerful by Balinese standards and their members all belong to local *banjar*.

Tengahpadang itself is a *désa adat* (see below) and comprises seven *banjar* which vary in size and social composition. The largest *banjar* contains 160 households and over 700 inhabitants, the smallest 49 households, while the mean is slightly over 100 households and 500 inhabitants for Tengahpadang as a whole. Five *banjar* include *triwangsa* (the collective term for the three high caste groups) among their predominantly low caste populations, one consists only of low caste families while the smallest comprises almost exclusively *triwangsa*. Much of the following account refers to Pisangkaja, one of the two largest *banjar* which contains a small court, some 15% *triwangsa* and a large number of descent groups. The general features of political structure were found, however, to be common to all the *banjar* despite the variation in size and composition.

Tengahpadang, as other village settlements in the region has been relatively autonomous both under the princes and the modern state in matters of ritual practice, customary law and local administration and there is a fairly clear distinction between the spheres of authority of village and government. The terms "settlement" or "village" tend though to be misleading, for there are several discrete groupings, usually but not invariably, territorially distinct.

The largest social group of importance in Tengahpadang is the *désa*

6. For more detailed discussion, see Weingrod, (1968).

7. Geertz, H. op. cit.; Geertz, C. (1959a), (1959b), (1963), (1964) and (1967).

8. Geertz, C. (1959b), p. 39 referring to an "invasive type of integration" of which Bali is the example.

9. Geertz, C. (1959a), p. 994.

10. Geertz, H. op. cit. p. 26.

11. Kuper (1971), pp. 15-19.

12. Geertz, C. and Geertz, H. (1964), p. 98.

adat which has mainly religious functions.¹³ The *désa* is a corporate group with residual rights over traditional residential land and which owns a series of temples, the *Kahyangan Tiga*, and agricultural land used for the maintenance of the temples. It possesses a council of elected officials headed by a *bendésa* and its own body of customary law consisting primarily of ritual regulations, which include prescriptions for communal ceremonial activities. The *désa adat* is not recognised by the local government as an administrative unit and rarely becomes a political arena.

The *désa adat* is internally divided into *banjar*, each of which has effective jurisdiction over a portion of the *désa* land. *Banjar* are thus groups with rights over a definite territory, within which they control membership, residence and the use of land. Much of this is allocated to house compounds, known as *karang désa*, the occupants of which have the rights of usufruct and sale under agreed conditions. *Karang désa* are normally inherited patrilineally by a sole heir. Title to the land, however, remains vested in the *banjar*, or in the last instance the *désa*, which may expel the occupants for certain offences and redistribute the land. The unit of *banjar* membership is the *kuren*, or household, which is usually a conjugal family.¹⁴ *Banjar* members fall into two categories, depending on their rights over property, *kerama désa* the households with usufruct of *karang désa* and *pengempian* who reside in the *banjar*, but are not heirs to compounds.¹⁵ In some situations the status of *kerama désa* is superior to *pengempian*, for example, the former are entitled to hold public office, although ideally they have an equal say in local affairs.

Each *banjar* has an assembly, or council, of all its households so that it is, in effect, a "community-in-council",¹⁶ the term *banjar* being used to refer to both the assembly and the community. The assembly is a legislative, judicial and administrative body with its own constitution and statute law. Unlike most communities-in-council, the *banjar* assembly has extensive sanctions with which to compel observance of its decisions. These range from fines to expropriation of personal property

13. cf. Goris (1960).

14. There is slight variation in the rules of membership between *désa*. In Tengahpadang, occupants of *karang désa* are *kuren* whether married or not. Also in each family the heir belongs to the same *kuren* as his parents until their death, in which case the *kuren* may be a stem family.

15. In practice, the situation may be still more complicated and will be discussed in a forthcoming paper. In the region round Tengahpadang and elsewhere the land is owned by a *banjar désa*, membership of which is restricted to *kerama désa*. Both *pengempian* and *kerama désa*, however, are members of the *banjar patas* (*mepatus* is the giving of rice at a death and is one of the duties of *banjar patas* members). The *banjar désa* is almost purely a ritual group and the government of the community is undertaken by the *banjar patas* assembly, so, to avoid undue complication, only the *banjar patas* is referred to in the paper.

16. Kuper, op. cit., p. 14.

and even expulsion. When assemblies reach decisions by compromise this is in the interests of social solidarity, which is highly valued, not because they are otherwise unenforceable.

Besides its legal functions, the assembly administers most public business within the community. This includes the construction of communal facilities, the maintenance of public works and order, the organisation of ritual in specified temples and not infrequently harvesting and cash-raising projects. *Banjar* also have considerable powers of taxation over their members for any purpose approved by the assembly. In Tengahpadang *banjar* hold liquid capital of up to Rp. 500,000,¹⁷ the amount depending upon their industry and current requirements. The assembly has the authority to dispose of the labour of its members, to invest or distribute *banjar* capital and apply penal sanctions against defaulters or dissenters.

Formal control of the *banjar*, lies in the assembly which congregates in a special meeting-house, or *balé banjar*, on regular appointed dates once a month (usually according to the Javanese-Balinese calendrical month of 35 days) or more often if necessary. Although absence from meetings is an offence, the fine is small and attendance is usually in the order of 50% to 90% of households, and an adult proxy may substitute the household head on most occasions. Non-members of the *banjar* are forbidden to vote and may not even be present except by special invitation. Individual rights include entitlement to vote at all elections of officials, contribution to public debate, participation in judicial hearings and a share of any financial proceeds. The corresponding obligations require members to provide taxes and labour and to submit to all assembly decisions. *Banjar* tend to be remarkably solidary groups and as the Balinese express it: "A *banjar* is like a family. It has its good and its bad, but above all one cannot escape it."

Routine administration of the *banjar* is undertaken by officials elected or appointed usually for a five-year term, but their continuity in office is subject to the assembly. The two main offices are *klian dinas* (*klian* literally means "elder") who is the formal head of the *banjar* and its government representative and *klian désa* who is head of the group of *kerama désa*,¹⁸ responsible for all ritual and the complement of the *klian dinas*, such that a separation occurs between secular and religious responsibilities. *Klian* are generally selected from among the better speakers in the *banjar*, as their offices require the convening of meetings and the initiation of much of the debate. The *klian*, though, are answer-

17. In 1972, the value of the Rupiah (Rp.) was approximately Rp. 1,000 to £1.00.

18. i.e. the *banjar désa* referred to in footnote 15. The *klian désa* also has duties in the *banjar patas*.

able to the assembly for all their official actions and in practice their authority is often carefully circumscribed. As Geertz described it, *klian* are "... more servants of the *bandjar* than its masters ...".¹⁹

Balinese society is distinguished by the organised ranking of groups and social roles on the one hand, and by the values of corporateness and equality within groups on the other. Thus, in the assembly where considerable differences in ascribed status and wealth exist, in theory at least, all members are equal regardless of their other social roles. Ideally *banjar* resolutions are reached by consensus between fellow villagers in which event they are regarded as "strong" and *suci*, ritually pure. In practice, decisions are presented as if reached by general agreement, whereas the underlying processes are more complex and unanimity tends to be the form in which decisions are couched after debate rather than the means by which they are taken.

In spite of the ideals of equality and unanimity, the *banjar* studied contained distinct, if informal, élites which possess a significant degree of control over assembly proceedings. There are valuable political and economic spoils available to persons or groups which can influence the outcome of debates and the allocation of funds, so that conflict for these is common. Membership of a *banjar* élite, however, is not necessarily correlated with wealth or caste status, as might be expected. In Pisangkaja, for example, only one of the five wealthiest households and a small proportion of *triwangsa* families played a major part in *banjar* politics.

Some of the features mentioned can be seen in spacial form in the seating arrangements at assembly meetings. All villagers sit at the same level regardless of caste or other status distinctions (which prescribe differential height in caste contexts)—a conscious and explicit statement of the formal status equality of *banjar* members. *Klian* are usually allocated a special place to the north of the *banjar* meeting-house,²⁰ with senior members of the local aristocratic family, if any, beside them, while the rest of the assembly is scattered round in roughly concentric circles towards the south. This is the usual extent of fixed seating arrangements but there is a close relationship between informal spacing and participation in debates. For the innermost circle tends to consist almost entirely of spokesmen for various factions so that the physical centre of the meeting is also the focus of debate. During meetings this core normally remains seated throughout, while other members join and leave the periphery quite freely. Allied spokesmen do not usually

19. Geertz, C. (1959a), p. 995.

20. North, or more precisely, *kaja*, is a ritually pure direction. cf. Swellengrebel (1960), pp. 36–42.

sit together, for this is regarded as too explicit a statement of factional allegiance and because dispersed support creates the tactical illusion of widespread approval.

To recapitulate, the *banjar* assembly with its established body of law and formal constitution provides the main forum for the debate of local issues. The formality of this constitution and the relative immutability of the legal code, however, also strictly limit the sphere of competence of the assembly. Problems and conflicts invariably arise which cannot be resolved within the traditional framework, either because they lie outside the accepted scope of *banjar* authority, or because for the assembly they do not formally exist. In the former category are usually land disputes, breaches of contract and divorce proceedings; while the latter includes many personal disputes and political party conflict or violence which, in most cases, are refused formal cognizance. In Bali, the traditional structure of the *banjar* assembly is inadequate for resolving certain types of conflict and other means are necessary.

COUNCIL PROCEDURE

The rules of the assembly affect the manner in which decisions are reached and leadership roles assumed, for convention determines the conduct of meetings, the type of issues discussed and their means of presentation. Assembly meetings are formal occasions when freedom of expression is restricted rather than open debates. Language use is strictly prescribed, speeches are addressed to the meeting (although side conversations are frequent), *banjar* officials enjoy priority in debate and open conflict is forbidden. Commonly agreed etiquette, although not backed by formal penalties, further defines the appropriate form for speeches and the means of expressing disagreement.

This code of procedure is reinforced by fines and ritual sanctions, especially for breaches of order and language conventions. In Pisangkaja, the interruption of a *klian* incurs a fine of Rp. 20, which is immediately doubled on complaint, while open argument is punished as if it were physical assault with a minimum fine of Rp. 100. The use of improper or insulting language is a serious offence which causes ritual pollution of the whole *banjar*. This state must be annulled, ideally before further work, by an expensive purification ceremony, *perascita*, paid by the offender. In addition, at the end of each meeting a small offering is performed by the *klian* using *cané* (which contains betel-chewing ingredients symbolising commensality) to remove any impurity caused by anger and to "calm feelings".

The formality of Balinese social relations, especially in public, has been commented on by a number of authors,²¹ and is evident in language which, as much else in Bali, can be considered in terms of a dichotomy between the opposed concepts of *alus* (approximately meaning refined) and *kasar* (coarse). Balinese contains a series of vocabularies of respect, or language levels,²² graded on an *alus-kasar* scale in which *alus* levels indicate social distance or status respect in public, caste and familial relations. Language levels are further distinguished by degrees of ritual purity, *alus* being correlated with the pure. The appropriate vocabulary in any given situation is fixed for key terms and misuse results in pollution with the concomitant need for purification discussed earlier.

Several language levels exist, but in Tengahpadang the main distinction, outside court contexts, is between *basa alus* (refined language) used to address or refer to higher castes and in public meetings, *basa biasa* (ordinary Balinese) which is the daily language and *basa kasar* (coarse or obscene speech) used especially between close associates of equal status. While *basa biasa* is the current everyday language, in assembly meetings many *basa biasa* words are inappropriate and *basa kasar* is strictly prohibited. The proper language of meetings, even in *banjar* with no high castes, is *basa alus*, a join quite distinct from that used for normal intercourse, and although the majority of villagers understand it and can speak it to some degree, relatively few have the fluency required for public speeches. In addition, as the vocabulary of *basa alus* is restricted, public speakers must rely on ritually loaded and relatively small language resources which limit expression and constrain it within a formal mould. The use of special language also distinguishes assembly relations from mundane life and emphasizes the inviolability of council decisions by its ritual nature.

The distinction between *alus* and *kasar* is equally applicable to the assessment of public behaviour, as *alus* implies the socially ideal, and *kasar* the ignorance of proper form and behaviour. To speak loudly or ostentatiously, without the correct form and language, or at excessive length are signs of *kasar*, and hence undesirable, qualities. Ideally, an *alus* person makes his contribution to public debate indirect, undemonstrative and brief. Although practice may well fall short, speakers and speeches are still evaluated by their approximation to these ideals and a

21. Geertz, C. (1966a), pp. 53-61, and Bateson (1949).

22. cf., "Language Levels" in Stevens (1965), or "Speech Levels" in Poedjosoedarmo (1968), referring to Madurese and Javanese respectively. I am indebted to Professor G. B. Milner for his assistance with these terms. The following account concentrates on actual forms of common usage, not on the ideal classification. It is therefore over-simplified.

manifestation of *alus* characteristics is one index of a person's suitability for a major role in public affairs.²³

The presentation of speeches also conforms, more or less, to certain ideals of form and content. In Tengahpadang, public addresses contain four main sections: *mabelènin ngeraos*, "to lower one's speaking", an accepted form of self-abasement indicating the speaker's lack of knowledge or fitness to speak; *nyelasang*, "explaining", a restatement of common knowledge or a repetition of universally accepted values on the subject under debate;²⁴ *ngèdèngang peminéh pedidi*, "presenting one's own thoughts", a brief statement of the current speaker's opinion; and finally *nyerahang tekèn banjar*, "surrendering to the *banjar*", announcing that one will follow whatever the assembly decides. Initial addresses which delimit the course of discussion are always by *klian* or recognised speakers who adhere closely to the above form and are received with more attention than subsequent speeches which tend to deviate from the ideal.

In assembly meetings open conflict is censured and in most cases disagreement is expressed indirectly. Reference to personal or sectional interests at the expense of the community, or to overtly divisive issues, is strongly disapproved. As a result, individual and factional concerns tend to be phrased in general terms, ostensibly for the benefit of the *banjar* as a whole, so that conflict between interests is expressed in the guise of different social policies, or alternative solutions to common problems, rather than in terms of individual advantage or rivalry. It is a marked feature of assembly debates that the issue discussed is only partly relevant to the total problem, or problems, and unless this is understood much of what is said at meetings appears either irrelevant or meaningless. Debates are often conducted at more than one level in which manifest and latent issues are simultaneously involved and most matters which concern conflict or personal advantage remain unmentioned.

This can perhaps best be illustrated by a simple example from a speech at an assembly meeting in Pisangkaja. The problem concerned

23. For a comparison of *alus* and *kasar* in Java, see Geertz (1960), p. 232, and with reference to linguistic etiquette, see op. cit., pp. 248-260, although apparently ritual purity is not a consideration in the use of Javanese. For the relationship between *alus* qualities and authority in Java, see Anderson (1972) pp. 42-3.

24. This second section may be of great importance, for the speaker, by establishing his interpretation of the relevant facts, has in part committed his audience, if not to agree with him fully, at least to admit that he has a valid argument. Speeches which rely heavily on the promulgation of social ideals may well propound contrasting or contradictory views. As the total system of beliefs and values is not entirely consistent, speakers have a certain freedom in selecting suitable "sets" from the system with which to back up their opinions, as if it were a sort of "cultural repository" of independent values.

the proximity of a temple festival in one of the *désa* temples (supervised by the *bendésa* and performed by a *Pedanda*, a *Brahmana* high priest) to *Galungan* (a series of ritual days in the Javanese-Balinese calendar).

Example 1

The speaker apologised for taking up the time of the assembly with a matter which was not important. However, in eight weeks' time the *désa* temple festival would occur which would require the *banjar* to work for two weeks in preparation. According to his calculations, which might well be incorrect, *Galungan* would occur at the same time. This would then mean a heavy work load on each household, and worse, because it was shortly before harvest the contributions to both rituals simultaneously would strain individual resources. While far be it from him to suggest a solution to the meeting, would it be possible to change the date of the temple festival until after the harvest? Perhaps other members also felt that the matter should be referred to the *bendésa* and the *Pedanda*? He apologised for raising the issue and wished to concur with the decision of the *banjar*.

There was general consensus that difficulty would arise and a resolution was adopted to pass the matter to the attention of the *bendésa*.

Besides the close approximation to ideal form, this speech illustrates the coexistence of manifest and latent issues. The speaker knew that the dates, while not coinciding, were close and that private concern had been expressed. His reference to the "facts" of the situation were the essence of his argument. The man himself was a *kerama désa* for whom the outlay for the temple festival is much greater than for the *pengempian*, but as an expert in ritual law he knew, although apparently most of his audience did not, that the date of the festival was unchangeable. His covert intention, according to various sources including the speaker, was to create a situation in which *banjar* capital would have to be used to underwrite part of the costs. In due course it was announced that the dates were immutable and the assembly, having acknowledged that the personal outlay would be excessive, had little option but use its capital to assist the *kerama désa*. By establishing agreement on one problem, the speaker was in the longer term proposing an alternative and far less publicly acceptable solution to another.

LEADERSHIP IN THE ASSEMBLY

According to the *banjar* constitution, all householders are equally entitled to contribute to debates, but the majority rarely, if ever, participate actively for a number of reasons. Firstly, a significant proportion

of members know little of the current affairs in the community and attend meetings because it is required. Secondly, speakers must effectively possess not only a knowledge of assembly law and custom, but also precedent from past meetings. Thirdly, the rules of procedure and language, as well as the use of indirect means of presenting issues, limit the number of qualified speakers. Finally, and this is perhaps peculiarly Balinese, speakers are expected not to experience *lek* (shame or "stage-fright"²⁵ in public) and to have an *mua tebel* (literally: a thick face, to feel shame rarely—an ambiguous attribute but necessary in a leader). Spokesmen in meetings who do not possess some or all of these characteristics are liable to ridicule and other diffuse social sanctions.

So, while in principle anyone may address a meeting, several factors tend to restrict the number of major participants and debate in *banjar* assemblies, in Tengahpadang at least, is conducted almost exclusively by about 10% of the members. Villagers with the appropriate requirements are designated as *juru raos* or *tukang munyiang*, a speech-specialist or orator. This role is generally recognised in local society and orators comprise an informal élite within the *banjar* with high prestige and extensive influence in the assembly and community.

In Tengahpadang orators are usually adult men²⁶ aged from thirty to sixty with reputations for their knowledge of law and persuasiveness as speakers. Balinese evaluate an orator's role somewhat differently saying they should be brave, refined, speak sweetly and be able to captivate an audience. They do not belong to any formal group and learn through a highly informal relationship with an experienced orator from whom they acquire the rudiments of technique. Before actual meetings, orators and their assistants engage in private consultation, or *meadungan*, to coordinate roles and give advice on tactics, and this constitutes the main form of teaching.

The style of debate in Balinese assemblies is distinctive—speeches are short and subdued, rarely lasting more than five minutes, and consist of a series of exchanges between rival orators until the mood of the meeting becomes clear. Angry altercations, although strongly disapproved, are not unknown but are usually delegated to junior speakers, senior orators confining themselves to criticism of the opposing argument. Emphasis is placed on calmness and refinement in public discussion and

25. Geertz translates *lek* as "stage-fright", see Geertz (1966), p. 58. This neatly illustrates some of the uses of *lek*, especially in public behaviour, but the word in Balinese has several implications. For example, *lek* is frequently used to mean respect.

26. No instance was encountered of a woman being acknowledged as an orator in the assembly, although households may be represented by women in the assembly.

is evident in the quiet voices used and the self-abasing posture with eyes slightly downcast and hands on lap which are the ideal, and usually the practice.²⁷

The language of debate is constrained by the demands of convention. Addresses normally follow established form and are punctuated with set phrases in which the speaker apologises to the meeting, draws attention to his own insignificance and reiterates his desire to conform to the decisions of others. *Basa alus* is used which is particularly suited to such formulae with its paraphrasing, repetitive elaboration and a tendency to obliqueness emphasized by frequent recourse to the conditional and the inversion of statements as questions. Although *basa alus* has a limited vocabulary, language etiquette tends to restrict the form of expression more than actual content. Clarity of meaning is achieved as many less usual words are common to all levels. Indonesian which is ritually neutral may be used and in the final stages of debate levels may be slightly lowered. Nonetheless speech and language in the assembly are moulded by traditional norms and the skill of orators lies in the manipulation of existing elements rather than the use of innovation. These ideals define relevance, so that pertinent comment without correct form of language tend to be glossed over by the assembly unless rephrased. The unstated maxim of *banjar* meetings is that if one cannot say something well, then it is better left unsaid.

Orators play active roles in other social situations apart from in the assembly, for example, at meetings of irrigation associations, descent groups and voluntary organisations. Their assistance is requested for most marriage negotiations and informal dispute settlements and they are conspicuous on public occasions. In indigenous terms the role of orator is seen as that of an adept in local law, a protagonist of the traditional values of the community and a protector of its interests from interference by the government, *banjar* factions and political parties. Orators uphold approved village ideals and, in a sense, they are "ideal villagers", but, as Balinese social values do not constitute a logically consistent system, with contrasting stress on group equality and merit, the position of orator is necessarily ambiguous.

This ambivalence can be seen on the one hand in the prestige of orators and on the other in the frequency with which their dominant

27. Orators maintain an elaborate mystique of performance. For example, they evaluate emotional states in the assembly in terms of facial features. It is said that they seek to appear calm (*luma*) so their faces have clear expressions (*bingar sebeng*) while discomfiting their rivals so that they become angry and red-faced (*barak biyeng*), ashamed with faces as black as earth (*buka tanahé*) or pale, or even frightened so that their eyes withdraw (*becong*) and cannot speak—the ultimate misfortune for an orator.

roles involve them in conflict and *puwik*.²⁸ *Puwik* is the total suspension of relations between two persons which often endures for years following an unresolved dispute. While *puwik* is widely regarded with disapproval, it may also be manipulated to reinforce a name as a "big man". The prestige of orators in the community rests in large part on their credibility and performance in the assembly. Meetings, therefore, not only provide the opportunities for orators to influence decision-making, but are the focus for fights for prestige as well, in which real and potentially permanent changes may be made in an orator's social reputation.

In Pisangkaja, the life circumstances of orators show several distinctive features. They are recruited equally from *kerama désa*, and *pengem-pian*, although senior orators tend to come from the former category.²⁹ By *banjar* standards, they are generally not wealthy, the mean size of the agricultural holdings of recognised orators is 0.14 hectares compared with 0.39 for all households and roughly half of these owned no cultivable land as against the figure of 37% for the whole *banjar*. Their kinship networks are largely restricted to their natal *banjar*, reinforced by a strong tendency to endogamy, and few had any ties outside the *désa*. Oratorship thus provides a means of political achievement where the absence of wealth or extensive networks restrict opportunities in other arenas.

For a number of reasons, however, the political power wielded by orators is subject to definite limits. Orators do not normally establish large permanent followings, their authority is restricted to the *banjar* and they do not have access to other political arenas, and the highly public nature of their roles places constraints on their domination of the assembly for they are always susceptible to attack, albeit indirect, by their rivals. There are, therefore, checks on the influence orators have over the assembly, and at the *banjar* level there is another type of leader, not formally recognised, whose power derives from different sources, namely the patron.

28. cf., Bateson (1949) p. 40. The material from Tengahpadang does not fully support his view, op. cit. p. 41., that oratory and other activities that demand continued attention from an audience play a small part in Balinese society. There is a marked absence of lengthy declamation or tub-thumping which is often associated with oratory, for the distinguishing feature of Balinese public speaking is the brevity and self-effacement which is employed.

29. There is no particular occupational specialization of orators and they included peasants, casual labourers, local merchants and even a truck driver and, in other *banjar*, local school-teachers.

PATRONAGE

Balinese *banjar* are partly autonomous political units, but many situations occur in which their members are involved in wider social arenas or in conflicts which cannot be resolved within the framework of the assembly. Litigation is frequent, usually over inheritance problems for land boundary disputes, in *kecamatan* courts. Contact with the administration and government agencies is necessary for tax payments, agricultural loans, drawing up of land deeds or tenancy agreements, permits for cockfights, entertainments and so forth. In addition, Bali has been subjected to some thirty years of violence and political instability, so protection to person and property are almost essential, even at the village level.³⁰ As the use of official channels often proves ineffective, a system of patronage has developed between villages and higher political arenas, focused around the minority of villagers who have relationships with government servants and political parties and ties with a patron are a valuable asset. To quote a contemporary cliché: "nowadays, there is no man who does not have a patron".

In a *banjar*, therefore, there are a number of men with "power to dispense favours"³¹ who have access to desired goods and to services outside the local community. Essentially these patrons offer material rewards or assistance in transactions, especially with the authorities, and a degree of political protection in return for the labour and support of their followers through which they establish large and stable clientele. As the primary reference group of these patrons is still the *banjar*, support is mobilised as the backing or votes of client households in the assembly. For the patron the pay-off lies in a measure of control over decision-making and the allocation of resources in the *banjar*; and clients obtain the necessary representation with officialdom and protection within and beyond the *banjar*. Also patrons, through their supra-village relations and local support have access to higher political office in the *perbekelan* or on the *kecamatan* local council.

The local importance of patrons is reflected in the deference shown to them by their clients and in terminology. Apart from their wider functions, in Tengahpadang, patrons are consulted over serious domestic decisions, personal disputes and problems in the *banjar*. They are referred to as *kantih*, the outrigger which supports a boat, and as *guru* or *siwa*, father or spiritual master³² of their followers or, more vividly, are

30. Political protection may appear an unusual asset in a patron, but violence has not been uncommon in the past. In the 1950's several men died in the LOGIS political movement in Tengahpadang. In the last decade there has been sporadic violence, with a climax after the abortive coup of 1965. cf. Geertz, H. op. cit. p. 30.

31. Mayer (1957) p. 168.

32. cf. Van der Tuuk (1897).

said to *nènglèng jambolné* "hold them up by the hair". The same terms may be loosely applied to orators, although the role of patron which involves control over co-villagers and blocs of potential votes is explicitly denied, whereas orators, who influence the direction of debate and unaligned voters, are publicly recognised.

In spite of their diverse origins, patrons in Pisangkaja exhibit many features in common. The majority come from rich families, or those which hold traditional office in the *désa*. Their kinship networks are extensive and they have well-developed relationships in other *désa* and towns which are reinforced by a marked tendency to exogamy (67% of patrons' marriages were contracted outside the *banjar* compared with 25% for orators, and half the unions of patrons were *désa* exogamous) and all the major patrons possess ties with *kecamatan* level officials. Ascribed factors such as inherited networks or wealth, increasingly with its corollary of education, tend to be the necessary, if not sufficient, conditions of patronage.

In the past, patronage was principally the prerogative of the aristocracy and local officials, but with the gradual modernisation of Balinese society, new opportunities have emerged. In Tengahpadang, three categories of patron were discernible: traditional office-holders, government employees and political party leaders (Table 1). Government

TABLE 1. Categories of Patrons.

Category	Type of Incumbent	Distribution of Patrons in Pisangkaja	
		Major	Minor
Traditional Office-Holder	Local Aristocracy	1	1(a)
	Désa Official	1	
	Irrigation Official		1(a)
	Ritual Practitioner	1(b)	1
Government Servant	Police (resident)		2
	Police (posted elsewhere)		2
Political Party Agent	Mixed	2(b)	

(a) This indicates a member of the local court who is also an irrigation association official.

(b) This refers to a local temple priest who is also a political party agent.

service is an increasingly attractive source of employment, but access is restricted and mobility during active service limits the importance of officials as local patrons. The growth of national political parties

provides the most significant new source of patronage at the *banjar* level and local political party agents are among the most powerful patrons, with their close connections in the *kebupatèn* council and administration. However, the fortunes of village party bosses are dependent on events in higher political arenas and, as a result, their positions are precarious.

FACTIONS IN THE BANJAR

In Tengahpadang patrons and their clients almost always form discrete factions in the *banjar*. Geertz also mentions the presence of conflicting political groups in his study of the *banjar* of Tihingan and refers to these as factions, but as these are apparently closely related to unilineal descent groups,³³ this is, perhaps, a doubtful use of the term. Here, I shall follow Nicholas in reserving faction for a group which "... has no corporate existence or clear single principle of recruitment."³⁴

In Pisangkaja factions, known locally as *lèmpèk*, are recruited on diverse grounds and include tenant farmers, agnates, affines, distant kindred, neighbours and "pure" clients (Table 2). As affines and

TABLE 2. Distribution of Patron-Client Ties.

Major Factions				
Descent	Distant*	Affine†	Tenant	Pure
17%	9%	33%	11%	30%
Minor Factions				
Descent	Affine	Pure		
27%	49%	24%		

* Distant descent indicates relationships beyond second collaterals and includes common clan ties.

† Affinal relations may, on occasions, include ties through more than one marriage.

distant kin have potential links with several patrons, the idiom of kinship appears to be used to express reasons for political preference. Once established, however, patron-client relations are relatively stable, especially for core members. Factions are not coterminous with other social groupings and each caste and large descent group is internally divided by factional affiliation. There is no clear-cut division of the community on the basis of wealth or property ownership, every faction containing both landowners and landless, *kerama désa* and *pengempian*,

33. Geertz, C. (1959a) pp. 1004-5., also Geertz, C. (1967) p. 227.

34. Nicholas (1965) pp. 28-9.

TABLE 3. The distribution of factions in Banjar Pisangkaja.

	GOLKAR Faction A	Major Factions		P.N.I. Faction D	Minor Factions All Factions
		← Faction B	→ Faction C		
Patron:	Golkar agent	Local prince	Bendesa	P.N.I. agent	(see Table 1)
Senior orator:	Peasant farmer	Peasant farmer	Landless labourer	Rice merchant	Mainly landless labourers
Wealth of patron:*	0.07	6.92	1.27	0.41	0.57
Wealth of senior orator:	0.33	0.67	0	0	0.04
Wealth of clients (mean):	0.36	0.35	0.61	0.05	0.24
Proportion of kuren in faction:	16%	12.5%	17.5%	6%	25%
Distribution of kuren with normal factional alignments:†	29%	16%	22%	6%	
		Banjar kuren in major factions:	52%		
		Banjar kuren in minor factions:	25%		
		Unaligned kuren:‡	23%		

* Wealth is calculated here in hectares of agricultural land. For simplicity dry land is given half the value of irrigated, a fairly accurate correspondence with their relative market price.

† This was the most frequent factional alignment during 1971-2.

‡ Kuren with no fixed factional affiliations or with extra-banjar patronage.

nor is there a simple correlation between the resources of a patron and those of his clients (Table 3). Nonetheless, of the factions in the *banjar* two are obviously recruited in part on the basis of similar economic status. Faction C, in Table 3, contains a high proportion of rich peasants, faction D, consists almost entirely of landless villagers, while the remaining factions are mixed.

In Pisangkaja there are four major and six minor factions active in the assembly, and similar combinations occur in the other *banjar* in Tengahpadang. Two of the major factions are led by local political party agents, one by the local prince and the last by the *bendesa* who lives in the *banjar*, while the minor factions are headed mostly by government employees. All are nominally associated with a national political party, but these ties only became relevant during periods of political tension. As Geertz has shown, the choice of political parties by village factions is in part arbitrary³⁵ and local factional policies are largely unrelated in Pisangkaja to national differences between the two main local parties, the P.N.I. (Partai Nasional Indonesia) and Golkar (Golongan Karya).³⁶ The factions claiming P.N.I. membership include both the richest and poorest while the Golkar factions are markedly heterogeneous. To the extent that factional conflict is based on underlying social differences, as opposed to a struggle for political domination, this is principally determined by the leadership, not by factions as interest groups.

Patrons act as the leaders of factions which, as sets of households, are involved in intermittent competition for influence in the assembly. This conflict, however, is rarely overt, for the nature of patrons' assets and relationships serve as a constraint on the open exercise of factional power. *Banjar* prohibit the mobilisation of factional, or other relations, under the rule that in *banjar* proceedings no other principle of group affiliation is acknowledged. The assembly remains, in many senses, an autonomous decision-making council independent of the government, political parties and local factions and these rights are jealously guarded. Patrons who attempt to utilise factions openly in the assembly are vulnerable to criticism and denunciation by orators. In practice, patrons are conspicuously absent from most meetings and when they attend they ostensibly avoid involvement in factional issues. Consequently, although patrons head political groups in the *banjar*, these never achieve explicit recognition. In the period of my fieldwork, at no time during assembly meetings were factions or political parties ever mentioned.

POLITICAL ARENAS AND ALLIANCES

At this point, it is useful to distinguish two separate arenas of political action at the local level—a distinction which is both analytical and perceived by the Balinese. The *banjar* assembly constitutes the formal political arena in which members are ideally equal and decisions are reached in meetings after open debate between orators. Outside the *banjar* assembly an informal arena exists, where factional interests are expressed and patrons try to manipulate or anticipate the outcome of debate. There are significant differences between the two arenas. The formal arena is characterised by symmetrical ties between co-villagers; meetings are governed by set rules of procedure and conducted in public, where matters of communal (in this context, *banjar*) interest are discussed and decision-making follows socially approved methods. In contrast, the informal arena is epitomised by asymmetrical ties between patrons and clients; informal and usually secret meetings are held in which patrons negotiate private agreements to personal or factional advantage and attempt to circumvent the assembly. I would suggest, therefore, that in the *banjar* two opposed political arenas coexist, each with discrete patterns of relationships and divergent modes of political action.

Although these arenas are conceptually distinct, they are closely related for both are focused on the same community and draw on the same personnel. Factions exist as organised groups in the informal arena, and as potential blocs of support in the assembly. As decisions may only be ratified in the assembly, factions require representation in meetings and the assistance of orators is essential. Informal relations between specific factions and orators provide the former with legitimised means of expression in public and reciprocally furnish the latter with backing and political protection and such alliances are common. This results, in effect, in a system of dual leadership of factions where political problems are discussed jointly between patron and orator and strategies devised, a process known in Tengahpadang as *mepitungan*.

Political alliances between orators and factions are however, subject to considerable tension, as they depend on a congruence of interests between individual patrons and orators, while as leaders they are direct competitors for control over decision-making. In addition, orators do not derive their authority from factional support, and close association with a patron's interests may prove detrimental to an orator's public credibility. This problem is, in part, resolved through the remarkable facility orators possess in rephrasing partisan concerns in general terms, so that factional differences are seen as alternative social policies.

35. Geertz, H. op. cit. 29–31, and Geertz, C. (1959b) p. 39.

36. Golkar is, in effect, a government political party. See: Crouch (1971), p. 189.

Alliances, however temporary, are a political necessity for patrons and may achieve a degree of permanence especially where kinship relations provide additional ties between leaders. Cooperation between rival orators, on the other hand, is infrequent and profound enmity is not unusual.

The following example illustrates the conditions under which stress may develop in an alliance.

Example 2

In February 1972, Tengahpadang was to elect a new *perbekel*, each *banjar* casting a single vote, after prior debate in the assembly. In Pisangkaja the patron and senior orator of faction A. had agreed to support one candidate M. On the day of the assembly meeting, another candidate N. came to see the orator and persuaded him to provide his support and the orator changed sides and informed his assistants. In the meantime, patron A. happened to be out of the *désa* and knew nothing of this. In the meeting, orator A. argued for his new choice and the faction, presuming a change of plans, followed him and candidate N. was selected in the end. When the patron of action A. returned that night he was angry at the result and an argument ensued between the patron and orators of A. which continued for several days. The alliance did not dissolve though, as the patron admitted in private that the two leaders were bound by close kin ties and the loss of the orator, who was among the best in the assembly, would have deprived the patron of effective representation. Orators preserve considerable independence and are rarely mere clients or spokesmen for patrons.

In summary, the argument is that the structure of local decision-making groups tends to favour the development of an élite comprising two distinct types of leader with separable functions, and dominant in complementary political arenas. This raises the question as to the exclusiveness of the two roles. The evidence available from Tengahpadang indicates that, in almost all instances, the roles of patron and orator were occupied by different incumbents and tended to remain discrete, for two principal reasons. First, the opportunities for leadership are related to ascribed circumstance, patrons usually inherited wealth or extensive social networks, whereas orators possessed mainly local ties and achieved their positions through merit in public debate. Second, the *modus operandi* of patrons relies on the use of extra-legal channels of influence and the maintenance of anonymity, which are incompatible with the assumption of highly public roles, subject to scrutiny. In Tengahpadang, the two roles generally remain separate, if not opposed.

ASSEMBLY DEBATES AND DECISIONS

In Pisangkaja and the other *banjar* councils in Tengahpadang, the rules of procedure for reaching decisions in the assembly, whether legislative, executive or judicial, are essentially similar. After prior announcement a formal meeting is called in which issues (*usul*) are mooted by the *klian* or speakers, without previous notice, and debated until the evident majority view is adopted. Compromise solutions or ambiguous decisions³⁷ are relatively infrequent as the implicit defeat of opposing factions is one of the main aims of assembly conflict. Decisions ratified by the assembly are normally irrevocable, binding and enforced by sanctions. In contrast to most procedural rules, those for establishing what constitutes a valid decision are imprecise. In elections the outcome is determined by ballot and if overt opposition remains after debate the same means can, in theory, be used, although no one could recall a case of a defeated party requesting a formal vote.

In practice, during the course of debate, the predominating view in the assembly rapidly becomes obvious, after which open opposition is relatively uncommon and ineffective and is said to *kena iyaban*, "to be overwhelmed". Dissenting individuals or minority groups are considered as threats to communal solidarity and are open to accusations of deliberately fostering schism. The leaders of splinter groups, or factions, by being seen to support a lost argument lose face and are publicly humiliated.

There are alternative processes for reaching decisions which reveal the complementary relationship of leadership roles. Where the community is equally divided over an issue, it is fought out in the formal assembly arena, in which orators compete to sway the meeting with arguments designed to gain backing from unaligned households and divide opponent's support. Contrarily, other disputes are worked out in the informal arena where successful lobbying enables factions to form temporary coalitions by which one side obtains a majority of committed support and can predetermine the outcome in the assembly.³⁸ While patrons' interests lie in minimizing risks in the assembly by prearranging settlements, in many cases, the urgency of the problem or the neutrality of factions makes this impossible. In spite of private

37. cf. Kuper op. cit. pp. 21-23.

38. Koentjaraningrat implies a similar, if less clear-cut, division of arenas in Java when he writes of village council meetings that "... at the official meeting his (the village head's) announcements are nothing but the final resolution of preliminary discussions, and as such are naturally acceptable to a majority of the assembled people." Koentjaraningrat (1967) p. 274. In the absence of powerful sanctions, Javanese meetings appear to operate more by consensus than in Bali.

negotiation between patrons, the results of a debate are never entirely predictable, as much hinges on the skill and performance of orators.

The importance of coalition formation and the relation between informal political manoeuvres and assembly proceedings is particularly clear in local elections. The following example is taken of the change in leadership in one of the *banjar* in Tengahpadang.

Example 3

In *Banjar Siklod*, the *klians*' period of office was over and as the community was divided an election was agreed upon. Four factions of approximately equal size existed and each informally proposed its own candidate. Two of the factions proposed a coalition in which the candidate of one would be put forward as *klian dinas* and the other as *klian désa*. The remaining major and minor factions failed to reach agreement so, rather than let their candidates lose in a vote, they withdrew. As a result, at the next assembly meeting there were only two applicants for the posts and they were then approved, apparently by consensus.

In this example, the overt unanimity in the selection of officials did not reflect the underlying political differences between factions and disguised the existence of an effective majority vote in the informal arena. The abandonment of the election and the ostensible appointment of the *klian* were the consequences of informal political processes and pose the question of whether appointment or election necessarily are fundamentally different mechanisms in the selection of office-holders.

Assembly debates demonstrate a corresponding relationship between arenas and the role of orators. In meetings manifest issues alone are openly discussed, the latent implications being understood by the speakers, if not all the congregation. These features are evident in the following case, which also illustrates some of the earlier points about assembly procedure and speech form.

Example 4

Banjar have the right to harvest communally rice land owned by their members and exact a tax for the treasury. This system had operated in Pisangkaja for two seasons but had been subject to abuse. The *klian* were suspected of granting preference to faction C members who are mostly landowners, of helping their friends evade the tax and of misappropriating the funds. An assembly meeting was scheduled for shortly before harvest when faction A proposed a coalition with D and some minor factions to stop communal

harvesting. Faction D had always opposed the system as it contained landless men who, under other arrangements could earn high wages as reapers. The orator of D and the patron of A were pursuing a personal quarrel discussed further in the next example. Both patron and orator of faction A also wished to limit the size of the treasury to prevent misuse of funds by the *klian*. Faction B remained neutral as they were mainly tenant farmers of the patron, while faction C was in favour of continuing. The outcome was uncertain so the issue was debated out by the orators, in the meeting. The senior orator of A apologized for mentioning the matter but in the past the *banjar* had performed harvesting. As the crop was now ripe what was the intention of members? There was a brief pause and he added that he had heard that the system was being abused and quoted the case of a high-caste man who had refused to let the *banjar* reap his rice, claiming it was still green and next day had paid labourers a lower rate to cut it. (The man referred to was the client of an opposed minor patron.) The orator concluded that he did not know what the meeting wished to decide but he would, of course, agree with it. His assistant seated on the opposite side of the meeting then said that he did not want to raise the matter, but rumours were being spread privately that many members' fields had been in part left, forcing them to work at the end of the day. Such rumours were bad and should be brought out into the open. Incidentally, had any members had this most unfortunate experience? There were murmurs of assent.

The *klian désa* spoke (as orator for faction C) and said that while it was not up to him to decide on behalf of the meeting, with the capital from past harvests, it had been possible to restore several public buildings, which he proceeded to list, and the *banjar* now had large sums to lend to its members. Cooperative work made the *banjar* like a single family. How could they be united if they did not work together? However, in this matter he would be guided entirely by the assembly. One of the orators of faction C then added that he did not wish to comment further on what the *klian* had already said but was it not better to work for the community than for money? And worse, would not much of this be paid to labourers from other villages instead of contributing to the welfare of Pisangkaja? The orator for D promptly countered this by saying that although it was not a serious consideration in view of the importance of the issue to the community, many members owned no riceland and harvesting prevented them from continuing with their livelihoods and caused everyone excessive work (arguments against communal work are always popular). Such interests, though, were obviously subordinate to the needs of the *banjar*. There were a number of further contributions, some of which were, unfortunately, not audible or too fast to record. The *klian* sensing that the majority

clearly opposed the system from the loud mutters among the lesser householders, asked if it were agreed that harvesting should be stopped. To this there was a low chorus of "*Inggih*" (*Basa alus*: yes). So he announced the system ended and members free to decide their own arrangements.

In this case, apart from the problem of communal harvesting, several other issues were extrinsically involved. In a small community, such as the *banjar*, with its interlocking economic interests and multiplex social relations, a decision on one issue inevitably has complex repercussions. The cessation of harvesting provided opportunities for wage-labour for the poorer households and, significantly in this instance, stopped the highly profitable exchange by merchants of food and coffee in return for padi. (Traditionally when the *banjar* harvests local food-sellers receive heavy remuneration for services.) The decision also withdrew the *klians*' access to favours of harvesting preference and tax avoidance which they were using to attract clients, while keeping treasury funds low prevented further misappropriation.

The distinction between manifest and latent issues may be marked, especially where personal animosity is involved which may not be expressed openly. In the harvesting case the decision had personal as well as political and economic implications. A female merchant owned an expensive food-stall in the main square in Pisangkaja and was the principal beneficiary of the harvest exchange which contributed substantially to her profits. On the death of her husband, she became the mistress of the orator of faction D but later rejected him in favour of a man from another *banjar* (candidate N in Example 2 who later became *perbekel*) who lived with her in her stall. Both her behaviour and his presence were deeply resented, especially by the orator of D and the patron of A who had opposed his candidature earlier. As he was an official no formal action was prudent, so a series of measures were instigated through the assembly, if not to remove the pair, to cause the maximum inconvenience. This was expressed widely, as one reason for ceasing *banjar* harvesting.

Subsequently more extreme action was taken in the assembly in a succession of debates and informal discussions, of which only the briefest outline is given here. The case is mentioned because it clearly illustrates the separation of issues and the means used to circumvent the assembly's limited sphere of competence.

Example 5

Factions A and D (for reasons already discussed) had for some time been opposed to the presence of the official and his mistress, as had

most of the heads of minor factions. Faction C was divided and faction B was neutral, as the woman was the low caste widow of a relative of the patron. The *klian* supported the official as they had been promised favours after his election as *perbekel*. The opposition agreed to a united coalition against the two, which took the following form in public debate. In the assembly, the coalition orators argued that conditions in the *banjar* had deteriorated and there had been much misfortune (an oblique reference to the abortive coup of 1965 and its aftermath). They proposed that this be remedied by the construction of a shrine under a sacred *waringin* tree in the village square. The implication was that this would resolve any supernatural causes of the misfortune. The *klian* and the orators for faction C argued that this shrine could equally well be built elsewhere. A ritual specialist was called in who admitted that the *waringin* site was propitious but, seeing that the woman's stall stood directly under the tree, requested that no personal loss result from the building of the shrine. The *banjar*, ignoring his injunction, immediately passed a resolution that the shrine be constructed under the tree and ordered the woman to demolish her stall. (This was an expensive structure of brick and concrete and represented her sole capital.) The orators were unanimous and effusive in expressing their regrets at her loss, but they emphasised that the spiritual welfare of the community was at stake. The woman was obliged not only to destroy her stall but to pay for the demolition, while the shrine was duly erected. She rebuilt her stall elsewhere at heavy cost which had to be paid by the official.

Formal action by the assembly against the official lay outside its jurisdiction and the demonstration overtly of personal animosity would have been in violation of *banjar* norms. The entire proceedings were, therefore, couched in indirect terms but were nonetheless effective. The assembly conducted the whole issue within the limitations of traditional values and solutions, although the latent ends infringed them and could not be openly acknowledged.* It is questionable whether the manifest intention of the debates—to restore spiritual order and prevent further afflictions by the erection of a shrine—was of great relevance, for the disturbance had occurred several years earlier and the ritual specialist had suggested alternative sites.

* This illustrates how a variety of issues can be incorporated into assembly debates. More generally, it suggests ways in which new political resources may be introduced into the *banjar* covertly, through translation by orators into culturally accepted forms. An example might be political parties which have led to the emergence of a new type of patron—the party representative. For a possible economic parallel: cf. Parkin (1972), esp. pp. 98–9.

CONCLUSION

The Balinese *banjar* is both a community and a council, with considerable sanctions and resources. The coercive authority vested in the community-in-council enables a wide range of decisions to be enforced, often with little compromise, so that influence over decision-making becomes a valuable prize and representation, through patrons and orators, may be essential on occasions to villagers. The *banjar* is a potential stage for intense conflict over access to power, while the suppression of open opposition by minorities tends to exacerbate latent tensions.

Kuper has argued that the separation of decision-making by majority voting from decision by consensus is not always useful.³⁹ In Bali this distinction obscures the nature of the underlying political processes and the procedures in different arenas. While the outcome of debates is phrased in terms of unanimity, many decisions are reached after an initial informal evaluation of factional support—a system of majority assessment outside the assembly. It may also be difficult to distinguish decisions by whether they are administrative or policy-making, as Bailey proposed.⁴⁰ In a small community, the complexity of social and economic interrelations may result in decisions having several connected consequences, which confuses a simple classification.

An examination of Balinese assembly proceedings suggests the possible importance of forms of dual leadership and potential functional limitations of traditional councils. While the rules of assembly procedure tend to lead to specialised roles in public speaking, constitutional, procedural and linguistic restrictions reduce the assembly's viability as an effective political arena. The formality of conciliar proceedings and the limited sphere of competence of public meetings leads to the use of alternative political relations, free of traditional restraints, based on patronage and factional ties. In local communities two types of informal leaders tend to emerge, with separate but related political roles in the decision-making process. In Bali, the distinction of different types of leadership is particularly clear, due to the nature of local political arenas, but it is possible that a similar separation of political functions is to be found elsewhere.

39. Kuper op. cit. p. 17.

40. Bailey (1965).