Ethnographic Fieldwork

An Anthropological Reader

Edited by

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Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis

Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead

Introduction

The form of presentation used in this monograph is an experimental innovation. During the period from 1928 to 1936 we were separately engaged in efforts to translate aspects of culture never successfully recorded by the scientist, although often caught by the artist, into some form of communication sufficiently clear and sufficiently unequivocal to satisfy the requirements of scientific enquiry. "Coming of Age in Samoa," "Growing up in New Guinea," and "Sex and Temperament"[1] all attempted to communicate those intangible aspects of culture which had been vaguely referred to as its *ethos*. As no precise scientific vocabulary was available, the ordinary English words were used, with all their weight of culturally limited connotations, in an attempt to describe the way in which the emotional life of these various South Sea peoples was organized in culturally standardized forms. This method had many serious limitations: it transgressed the canons of precise and operational scientific exposition proper to science; it was far too dependent upon idiosyncratic factors of style and literary skill; it was difficult to duplicate; and it was difficult to evaluate.

Most serious of all, we know this about the relationship between culture and verbal concepts – that the words which one culture has invested with meaning are by the very accuracy of their cultural fit, singularly inappropriate as vehicles for precise comment upon another culture. Many anthropologists have been so impressed with this verbal inadequacy that they have attempted to sharpen their comment upon other cultures by very extensive borrowing from the native language. This procedure, however, in addition to being clumsy and forbidding, does not solve the problem, because the only method of translation available to make the native terms finally intelligible is still the use of our own culturally limited language. Attempts to substitute terms of cross-cultural validity, while they have been reasonably successful in the field of social organization, have proved exceedingly unsatisfactory when finer shades of cultural meaning were attempted.

Parallel with these attempts to rely upon ordinary English as a vehicle, the approach discussed in "Naven"[2] was being developed – an approach which sought to take the problem one step further by demonstrating how such categories as ethos, there defined as "a

Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, pp. xi–xvi, 49–51, 13–17, 84–90, and Plates 15–17 from Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis* (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1942).

culturally standardized system of organization of the instincts and emotions of individuals," were not classifications of items of behavior but were abstractions which could be applied systematically to all items of behavior.

The first method has been criticized as journalistic – as an arbitrary selection of highly colored cases to illustrate types of behavior so alien to the reader that he continues to regard them as incredible. The second method was branded as too analytical – as neglecting the phenomena of a culture in order to intellectualize and schematize it. The first method was accused of being so synthetic that it became fiction, the second of being so analytic that it became disembodied methodological discussion.

In this monograph we are attempting a new method of stating the intangible relationships among different types of culturally standardized behavior by placing side by side mutually relevant photographs. Pieces of behavior, spatially and contextually separated – a trance dancer being carried in procession, a man looking up at an aeroplane, a servant greeting his master in a play, the painting of a dream – may all be relevant to a single discussion; the same emotional thread may run through them. To present them together in words, it is necessary either to resort to devices which are inevitably literary, or to dissect the living scenes so that only desiccated items remain.

By the use of photographs, the wholeness of each piece of behavior can be preserved, while the special cross-referencing desired can be obtained by placing the series of photographs on the same page. It is possible to avoid the artificial construction of a scene at which a man, watching a dance, also looks up at an aeroplane and has a dream; it is also possible to avoid diagramming the single element in these scenes which we wish to stress – the importance of levels in Balinese inter-personal relationships – in such a way that the reality of the scenes themselves is destroyed.

This is not a book about Balinese custom, but about the Balinese – about the way in which they, as living persons, moving, standing, eating, sleeping, dancing, and going into trance, embody that abstraction which (after we have abstracted it) we technically call culture.

We are interested in the steps by which workers in a new science solve piecemeal their problems of description and analysis, and in the relationship between what we now say about Balinese culture, with these new techniques, and what we have said with more imperfect means of communication about other cultures. A particular method of presentation has therefore been agreed upon. Margaret Mead has written the introductory description of Balinese character, which is needed to orient the reader so that the plates may be meaningful. She has used here the same order of vocabulary and the same verbal devices which have been made to do service in earlier descriptions of other cultures. Gregory Bateson will apply to the behavior depicted in the photographs the same sort of verbal analysis which he applied to his records of Iatmul transvestitism in "Naven," and the reader will have the photographic presentation itself to unite and carry further these two partial methods of describing the ethos of the Balinese.

Former students of Bali have approached Balinese culture as peripheral to and derivative from the higher cultures of India, China, and Java, carefully identifying in Bali the reduced and residual forms of the heroes of the Ramajana or of the Hindoo pantheon, or of the characters of the Chinese theater. All those items of Balinese culture which could not be assimilated to this picture of Asiatic diffusion have been variously classified as "Polynesian," "Indonesian," "animistic," or "*Bali aga*" (a term which some Balinese have learned to use in contradistinction to "*Bali Hindoe*"). We, however, always approached the material from the opposite point of view; we assumed that Bali had a cultural base upon which various intrusive elements had been progressively grafted over the centuries, and that the more rewarding approach would be to study this base first. We accordingly selected for our primary study a mountain village, Bajoeng Gede, near Kintamani in the District of Bangli, where most of the conspicuous elements of the later, intrusive culture were lacking. In Bajoeng Gede one does not find use of Hindoo names for the Gods, the importance of color in relation to direction in offerings, cremation, caste,

the taboo upon eating beef, or any relationship to a Brahman priestly household. Writing there was, but only a half-dozen semi-literate individuals who were barely able to keep records of attendance, fines, etc. The village boasted one calendrical expert who was skilled enough to advise the village officials on the intricacies of the calendar of multiple interlocking weeks and "months." Furthermore, Bajoeng Gede was ceremonially bare, even compared with other Balinese mountain villages. These was a minimum of that reduplication and over-elaboration of art and ceremonialism which is such a marked characteristic of Balinese culture. Reliance on the calendar and complication of offerings and *rites de passage* were all reduced to a meager and skeletal minimum – a minimum which would nevertheless seem highly complex in comparison with most of the known cultures of the world. In this locality, it was possible in the course of a year to get a systematic understanding of the ground plan of the culture.

This undertaking was facilitated by two circumstances: the population of Bajoeng Gede suffered from a pronounced thyroid condition, with about 15 per cent of the population showing various degrees of simple goiter; and the whole population was markedly slow both in intellectual response and in speed of bodily movement. These circumstances, which are no doubt interrelated, provided us with a community in which the cultural emphases were schematically simplified, and upon our understanding of this base it was possible to graft – as the Balinese had before us – an understanding of the more complex versions of the same essential forms which we encountered on the plains. (It is important to remember that Hindoo culture came by way of Java, where the culture was related to that of Bali, and that most of the elements probably reached Bali in a partially assimilated form, already somewhat adapted to Balinese emphases and social structures.)

After an initial two months of exploration and work on the language in Oeboed (district of Gianjar), we selected Bajoeng Gede, and we worked there with only a few short absences from June 1936 to June 1937 and intermittently till February 1938. In November 1936, we established a second camp in Bangli in a palace built by a former Rajah, from which we were able during various short stays to participate in the family ceremonies of the ruling caste of Bangli. Finally in 1937, we built a pavilion in the courtyard of a Buddhistic Brahman family in the village of Batoean, from which position we participated in and studied Brahman family life, simultaneously collecting the work and studying the personality of the large group of Brahman and casteless painters in the school of art which had sprung up in Batoean during the last ten years.

Through Miss Belo's work in Sajan, a peasant plains village dominated by feudal Kesatrya nobles; Mrs Mershon's work in Sanoer, a coastal fishing village consisting mainly of Sivaistic Brahmans and casteless people; and from material provided by our Balinese secretary who came from a rising casteless family in Singaradja, the Dutch capital in North Bali, we were able to gather various sorts of comparative materials to round out the picture of Balinese culture which we had developed on the basis of observations in Bajoeng Gede. The discussions of Balinese culture in this book are based on these experiences, and on short excursions by ourselves and our collaborators to other villages and cities in Bali.

It is true that every village in Bali differs from every other in many conspicuous respects, and that there are even more striking differences between districts, so that no single concrete statement about Bali is true of all of Bali, and any negative statement about Bali must be made with the greatest caution. But through this diversity there runs a common ethos, whether one is observing the home of the highest caste, the Brahman, or of the simplest mountain peasant. The Brahman's greater ease, due to the fact that there are fewer of those who know much more than he, is but another version of the peasant's unwillingness to commit himself, of his "lest I err, being an illiterate man." The most conspicuous exceptions to this common ethos are the culture of the ruling caste, the Kesatryas, and the culture of North Bali which has been exposed to strong foreign influences during the

last sixty years. In both of these groups may be found an emphasis upon the individual rather than upon his status, an element of social climbing and an uneasiness of tenure which contrast strongly with the rest of Bali. For this reason, reference to these two groups, except for occasional bits of ceremonial which they hold in common with the rest of Bali, has been excluded from this discussion.

In the Plates, each single illustration is dated and placed, and it is not safe to generalize from its detailed content for other parts of Bali. The form, however, the ethological emphasis which is implicit, may be taken to apply to all those parts of Bali of which we have any knowledge, except for North Bali, the Kesatryas, and the Vesias, a lower caste which mimics the Kesatryas and upon which we did very little work. These groups we explicitly exclude and we avoid all detailed negative statements as such statements are virtually impossible to make about a culture which has found it possible to combine such extraordinarily divergent content with such a consistent ethological emphasis. There is no apparent difference in the character structure of the people in villages where trance is shared by all and those in villages where no one ever goes into trance; people in villages where every other woman is believed to be a witch and those in villages where no one is believed to be a witch. In most of the cultures of which we have systematic knowledge, such matters are intricately and inextricably part of the personality of every participant member of the culture, but in Bali the same attitude of mind, the same system of posture and gesture, seems able to operate with these great contrasts in content with virtually no alteration in form. So also for climatic contrasts, and contrasts in wealth and poverty: the mountain people are dirtier, slower, and more suspicious than the plains people; the poor are more frightened than the rich, but the differences are in degree only; the same types of dirtiness, of suspicion, and anxiety are common at all levels.

This volume is in no sense a complete account of Balinese culture, even in its most general outlines. It is an attempt to present, at this time when scientific presentations are likely to be widely spaced, those aspects of our results and those methods of research which we have judged most likely to be of immediate use to other students. A less pregnant period of history might have dictated another choice of subject matter for our first presentation. Balinese culture, even that of Bajoeng Gede, is very rich and complex, and our two years' work, with two American collaborators and three Balinese secretaries, can only claim to be a "sampling" of the Balinese scene. We attempted to make systematic samples of village organization, calendrical ceremonial and *rites de passage*, trance, painting, carving, the shadow-play puppets, death rituals, and child behavior, so as to provide a series of crosscutting pictures of the culture which could be fitted together and cross checked against each other. The discussion which follows is a synthetic statement based upon these various samples; the photographs are a carefully selected series, analyzed on the basis of the same sampling.

Finally a word about the relevance of such researches to the period of history in which we find ourselves. Balinese culture is in many ways less like our own than any other which has yet been recorded. It is also a culture in which the ordinary adjustment of the individual approximates in form the sort of maladjustment which, in our own cultural setting, we call schizoid. As the toll of dementia praecox among our own population continues to rise, it becomes increasingly important for us to know the bases in childhood experience which predispose to this condition, and we need to know how such predisposition can be culturally handled, so that it does not become maladjustment.

Meanwhile, we are faced with the problem of building a new world; we have to reorient the old values of many contrasting and contradictory cultural systems into a new form which will use but transcend them all, draw on their respective strengths and allow for their respective weaknesses. We have to build a culture richer and more rewarding than any that the world has ever seen. This can only be done through a disciplined science of human relations and such a science is built by drawing out from very detailed, concrete materials, such as these, the relevant abstractions – the vocabulary which will help us to plan an integrated world.

Notes on the Photographs and Captions

Taking the photographs

. . . We tried to use the still and the moving-picture cameras to get a record of Balinese behavior, and this is a very different matter from the preparation of "documentary" film or photographs. We tried to shoot what happened normally and spontaneously, rather than to decide upon the norms and then get Balinese to go through these behaviors in suitable lighting. We treated the cameras in the field as recording instruments, not as devices for illustrating our theses.

Four factors may be mentioned which contributed to diminish camera consciousness in our subjects:

A. The very large number of photographs taken. In two years we took about 25,000 Leica stills and about 22,000 feet of 16 mm. film, and it is almost impossible to maintain camera consciousness after the first dozen shots.

B. The fact that we never asked to take pictures, but just took them as a matter of routine, wearing or carrying the two cameras day in and day out, so that the photographer himself ceased to be camera conscious.

C. We habitually directed attention to our photographing of small babies, and the parents overlooked the fact that they also were included in the pictures (as even American parents will, in similar circumstances).

D. We occasionally used an angular view finder for shots when the subject might be expected to dislike being photographed at that particular moment.

We usually worked together, Margaret Mead keeping verbal notes on the behavior and Gregory Bateson moving around in and out of the scene with the two cameras. The verbal record included frequent notes on the time and occasional notes on the photographer's movements, such as the direction from which he was working and which instrument he was using. Whenever a new roll of film was inserted in the camera, the date and time of insertion were scribbled on the leader; and when the film was removed, the date and time were again recorded, so that the film could be accurately fitted to the notes.

For work of this sort it is essential to have at least two workers in close cooperation. The photographic sequence is almost valueless without a verbal account of what occurred, and it is not possible to take full notes while manipulating cameras. The photographer, with his eye glued to a view finder and moving about, gets a very imperfect view of what is actually happening, and Margaret Mead (who is able to write with only an occasional glance at her notebook) had a much fuller view of the scene than Gregory Bateson. She was able to do some very necessary directing of the photography, calling the photographer's attention to one or another child or to some special play which was beginning on the other side of the yard. Occasionally, when we were working on family scenes, we were accompanied by our native secretary, I Made Kaler. He would engage in ethnographic interviews with the parents, or take verbatim notes on the conversations.

In a great many instances, we created the *context* in which the notes and photographs were taken, e.g., by paying for the dance, or asking a mother to delay the bathing of her child until the sun was high, but this is very different from posing the photographs. Payment for theatrical performances is the economic base upon which the Balinese theater depends, and the extra emphasis given to the baby served to dimmish the mother's awareness that she was to be photographed. A visit "to photograph the baby being bathed" would last from fifteen minutes to two hours, and the greater part of the time after the bathing would be spent watching the family in a large variety of types of play other behavior. In such a setting, a roll of Leica film (about 40 exposures) lasted from five to fifteen minutes.

Selection of photographs

Selection of data must occur in any scientific recording and exposition, but it is important that the principles of selection be stated. In the field, we were guided first by certain major assumptions, e.g., that parent-child relationships and relationships between siblings are likely to be more rewarding than agricultural

techniques. We therefore selected especially contexts and sequences of this sort. We recorded as fully as possible what happened while we were in the houseyard, and it is so hard to predict behavior that it was scarcely possible to select particular postures or gestures for photographic recording. In general, we found that any attempt to select for special details was fatal, and that the best results were obtained when the photography was most rapid and almost random. . . .

One rather curious type of selection did occur. We were compelled to economize on motion-picture film, and disregarding the future difficulties of exposition, we assumed that the still photography and the motion-picture film *together* would constitute our record of behavior. We therefore reserved the motion-picture camera for the more active and interesting moments, and recorded the slower and less significant behaviors with the still camera. The present book is illustrated solely by photographs taken with the latter, and as a result, the book contains no photograph of a father suckling his child at the nipple, and the series of kris dancers leaves much to be desired.

After taking the photographs, a further selection occurred. On returning to America, we had the entire collection of 25,000 frames printed as diapositives on strips of positive film, and in planning this book we made a list of categories which we intended to illustrate – a list similar to, but not identical with, the grouping of the plates in the table of Contents. We then projected all the diapositives, one by one, and wrote category cards for those which seemed to merit further consideration for inclusion in the book. We thus obtained a list of about 6,000 frames. Of these, we enlarged approximately the first 4,000 in chronological order, desisting at this point because time was short. From these 4,000, the majority of the prints reproduced here were selected, and we only drew upon the later negatives for a few special points which were not represented in the earlier series. The book thus contains a disproportionate number of photographs taken in the first three-quarters of our time in Bali.

The final choice of photographs for each plate was in terms of relevance, photographic quality, and size. In a number of cases, relevance to a problem is necessarily two-sided; there would be some photographs making one half of a psychological generalization, and others making a converse or obverse point. In these cases, we have tried to arrange the photographs so that most of the plate is occupied with the more typical aspect, while a statement of the obverse is given by one or two photographs at the bottom (usually in the right-hand corner) of the plate. In other cases, it has seemed worth-while to devote two plates to the contrasting aspects of the same generalization.

Conflict between scientific relevance and photographic merit has usually been easily settled in favor of the former, and a large number of pictures have been included in spite of photographic faults. Selection by size was more distressing. Each plate was to be reproduced as a unit and therefore we had the task of preparing prints which would fit together in laying out the plate. Working with this large collection of negatives, it was not possible to plan the lay-out in advance, and therefore, in the case of the more important photographs, two prints of different sizes were prepared. Even with this precaution, the purely physical problems of space and composition on the plate have eliminated a few photographs which we would have liked to include.

Learning (Plates 15 to 17)

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

an old garment, worn before, but fitted on by another hand.

As with speech, so with posture and gesture. The right hand must be distinguished from the left; the right hand touches food, and the right thumb may be used in pointing; the left hand is the hand with which one cleanses oneself, or protects one's genitals in bathing, and must never be used to touch food, to point, or to receive a gift. But the Balinese mother or nurse carries a child, either in or out of a sling, on her left hip, thus leaving her own right hand free. In this position, the baby's *left* arm is free, while the right is frequently pinioned in against the breast, or at best extended behind the mother's back. Naturally, when a baby is offered a flower or a bit of cake, it reaches for it with the free left hand, and the mother or the child nurse invariably pulls the left hand back, extricates the baby's right hand – usually limp and motiveless under this interference with the free gesture – and extends the right hand to receive the gift. This training is begun long before the child is able to learn the distinction, begun in fact as soon as the child is able to grasp at a proffered object, and discontinued usually when the child is off the hip. A three-year-old may often err and receive a casual present in his left hand, with no more punishment than to have some older child or nearby adult shout "*Noenas!*" ("Ask!") which means "Cup the right hand in the left," but the baby of four months is permitted no such leeway. Over and over again, the first spontaneous gesture is clipped off, and a passive, plastic gesture is substituted.

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

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

Learning to walk, learning the first appropriate gestures of playing musical instruments, learning to eat, and to dance are all accomplished with the teacher behind the pupil, conveying directly by pressure, and almost always with a minimum of words, the gesture to be performed. Under such a system of learning, one can only learn if one is completely relaxed and if will and consciousness as we understand those terms are almost in abeyance. The flexible body of the dancing pupil is twisted and

turned in the teacher's hands; teacher and pupil go through the proper gesture, then suddenly the teacher springs aside, leaving the pupil to continue the pattern to which he has surrendered himself, sometimes with the teacher continuing it so that the pupil can watch him as he dances. Learning with the eyes flows directly from learning passively while one's own body is being manipulated by another.

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

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

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

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

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

etc., are women's work, whereas carving, painting, music, making certain other offerings, etc., are men's work.

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

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

Plate 15 Visual and Kinaesthetic Learning I

An individual's character structure, his attitudes toward himself and his interpretations of experience are conditioned not only by what he learns, but also by the methods of his learning. If he is brought up in habits of rote learning, his character will be profoundly different from what would result from habits of learning by insight.

Among the Balinese, learning is very rarely dependent upon verbal teaching. Instead, the methods of learning are visual and kinaesthetic. The pupil either watches some other individual perform the act or he is made to perform the act by the teacher who holds his limbs and moves them correctly. During this process the pupil is entirely limp and appears to exhibit no resistant muscular tensions. A Balinese hand, if you hold it and manipulate the fingers, is perfectly limp like the hand of a monkey or of a corpse.

1, 2, and 3. Learning to carry on the head. These three photographs were all taken on the same occasion and show a girl (fig. 2) preparing to go home from a temple feast, carrying on her head the offerings which her family sent to the ceremony. Figs. 1 and 3 show two smaller girls imitating her and so beginning to participate in the ceremonial life of the village.

Fig. 1, I Djani; fig. 2, I Maderi (unrelated); fig. 3, I Djana (younger sister of I Djani).
Bajoeng Gede. June 23, 1937. 11 Z 30, 26, 33.

4 and 5. A father teaches his son to dance, humming a tune and posturing with his hand. In the first picture, the father shapes his facial expression to a typical dance smile and the son looks at the raised hand. In the second picture, the son tries to grasp the arm, and the father's expression becomes inter-personal instead of stylized.

Nang Oera, the father; I Karba, the son, aged 265 days.
Bajoeng Gede. Oct, 1, 1936, 2 U 30, 31.

6. The same father teaches his son to play the xylophone.

Nang Oera; I Karba, aged 393 days.
Bajoeng Gede. Feb. 5, 1937. 4 S 1.

7. A child nurse teaches the same baby to walk. She holds the baby by the upper part of the arms. There was no baby in her household and she spent a great part of her time looking after her father's step-brother's child. This photograph of learning to walk was taken five months later than the photographs of the same child learning to dance.

I Djeben teaching I Karba, aged 414 days.
Bajoeng Gede. March 26, 1937. 6 F 15.

8. Small high-caste boys learning to draw in the sand. The boy in the center was the most skilled and the others stopped their own drawing to watch him. All three boys show the typical Balinese high kinaesthetic awareness in the hands, and this is heightened by their using very small twigs for their drawing.

I. B. Saboeh; I Dewa Moeklen; I Dewa Loepiah.
Batoean. Oct. 5, 1937. 16 M 2.

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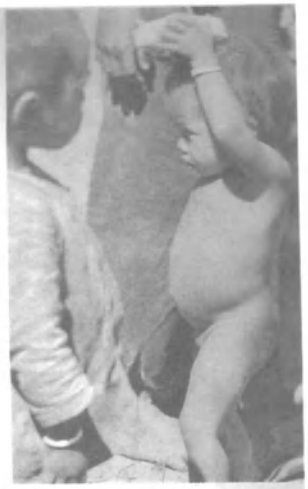

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Plate 16 Visual and Kinaesthetic Learning II

Teaching by muscular rote in which the pupil is made to perform the correct movements is most strikingly developed in the dancing lesson.

Mario of Tabanan, the teacher in this sequence, is the dancer chiefly responsible for the evolution of the *kebiar* dance which has become very popular in Bali in the last twenty years. The dance is performed sitting in a square space surrounded by the instruments of the orchestra, but though the principal emphasis is upon the head and hands, the dance involves the whole body, and Mario has introduced a great deal of virtuosity into the difficult feat of rapid locomotion without rising from the sitting position. The chief faults in the pupil's dancing are that he dances only with his head and arms, and does not show the disharmonic tensions characteristic of the dance.

This sequence of photographs illustrates two essential points in Balinese character formation. From his dancing lesson, the pupil learns passivity, and he acquires a separate awareness in the different parts of the body.

1. The pupil dances alone while Mario watches in the background. Note the imperfect development of the pupil's finger posture.

2. Mario comes forward to show the pupil how it should be danced.

3. Mario urges the pupil to straighten up the small of his back. Note that this instruction is given by gesture rather than by words.

4. Mario's hand position and facial expression while demonstrating.

5. Mario takes the pupil by the wrists and swings him across the dancing space.

6. Mario makes his pupil dance correctly by holding his hands and forcing him to move as he should. Note that Mario is actually dancing in this photograph, and that he postures with his fingers even while holding the pupil's hands. The position of Mario's left elbow in these photographs is characteristic of the tensions developed in this dance.

7. Mario even assumes the conventional sweet impersonal smile of the dancer while he moves the pupil's arms and holds the pupil tightly between his knees to correct his tendency to bend the small of his back.

8. Mario again tries to correct the pupil's tendency to bend his back.
I Mario of Tabanan teaching I Dewa P. Djaja of Kedere.
Tabanan. Dec. 1, 1936. 3 O 11, 13, 14, 17, 21, 22, 23, 25.

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Plate 17 Balance

Plates 15 and 16 taken together give us indications about the Balinese body image. We have, on the one hand, the fantasy of the inverted body with its head on the pubes; and on the other, the Balinese methods of learning through their muscles, the discrepant muscular tensions which are characteristic of their dancing, and the independent movement and posturing of the separate fingers in dance. We have, in fact, a double series of motifs – indications that the body is a single unit as perfectly integrated as any single organ, and contrasting indications that the body is made up of separate parts, each of which is as perfectly integrated as the whole.

This plate illustrates the motif of the perfectly integrated body image.

1 and 2. A small boy learns to stand and walk. His father has set up for him in the houseyard a horizontal bamboo supported on two posts (*penegtegan*). The boy learns to walk by using this as a support.

The topology of this arrangement is the precise opposite of that of the play-pen of Western culture. The Western child is confined within restricting limits and would like to escape from them; the Balinese child is supported within a central area and is frightened of departure from this support.

In fig. 2, when unsure of his balance, he holds onto his penis. This method of reassurance is common in Balinese baby boys.

I Karba, aged 414 days; I Kenjoen, his cousin, aged 317 days, behind him.

Bajoeng Gede. March 26, 1937. 6 F 20, 21.

3. A baby girl unsure of her balance. She clasps her hands in front of her abdomen.

I Kangoen.

Bajoeng Gede. April 21, 1937. 7 A 15.

4. A child nurse picks a baby from the ground. Note the straightness of the small of the back and the resulting emphasis on the buttocks.

I Njantel picks up I Karba; I Dani watches.

Bajoeng Gede. May 13, 1937. 8 U 30.

5. A girl stoops to pick up part of an offering. The flexibility of the body and the emphasis on the buttocks continue into later life, and occur even in those who are unusually heavily built.

I Teboes; I Tjerita behind her.

Bajoeng Gede. April 26, 1937. 7 H 18.

6. Decorative panel on a temple wall. This figure stands as one of a series of representations of transformed witches (*lejak*) and graveyard spirits (*tangan-tangan, njapoepoe*, etc., cf. Pl. 20, fig. 5).

Poera Dalem, Bangli. Nov. 23, 1936. 3 J 5.

7. A small boy scratches his leg. He was waiting in the road, uncertain whether his playmate was following. His natural movement is to raise his leg, rather than to stoop.

Bajoeng Gede. April 19, 1937. 6 W 19.

8 and 9. Paintings of a woman transforming herself into a witch (*anak mereh*). She goes out alone at night, sets up a little shrine and makes offerings on the ground to the demons. She dances before the shrine with her left foot on a fowl, and becomes transformed into supernatural size and shape. The fantasy that the body is as integrated as a single organ is here danced out in grotesque balance, and leads to a nightmare transformation or ecstatic dissociation of the personality. The drawings illustrate the close association between grotesque posture and the ecstasy of witchcraft (cf. figs. 6 and 7).

Paintings by I. B. Nj. Tjeta of Batoean.

Purchased Feb. 2, 1938. Reduced x 1/3 linear. Cat. Nos. 545 and 548.

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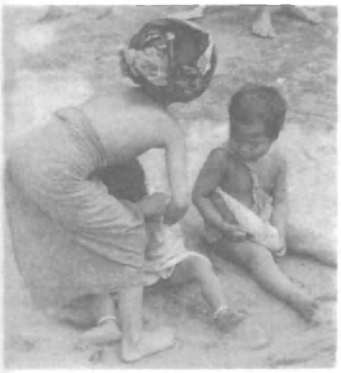

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