

**MARK HOBART**

# **AFTER CULTURE**

**ANTHROPOLOGY AS RADICAL  
METAPHYSICAL CRITIQUE**

PROGRAM STUDI MAGISTER KAJIAN BUDAYA UNUD  
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## Preface

*After Culture: Anthropology as Radical Metaphysical Critique* written by Dr Mark Hobart is an issue of Lembaran Pengkajian Budaya XI and published by the Postgraduate Program in Cultural Studies at Udayana University together with Duta Wacana University Press. This work is a compilation of some of Mark Hobart's most important writings on culture scattered across different publications, which are rearranged and reissued with new materials and a comprehensive original introduction.

The idea for this book came from my request to the writer as a colleague and fellow anthropologist, who has devoted his expertise over the years to studying Bali. The reason that this book is important is not only because it presents a thorough detailed account of Mark Hobart's research on Bali, but also because it addresses the work of various scholars who have made Bali the focus of their research, including notably the salient work of Clifford Geertz. The result is a nuanced and responsive discussion, which is developed throughout the seven chapters of the book.

The writer is senior lecturer and researcher at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London and he has engaged in intensive research in Bali over a period of more than thirty years. Apart from this work, the author has also published two other books in Bali entitled: *Ideas of Identity: the Interpretation of Kinship in Bali* (1980) and *The Search for Sustenance: the Peasant Economy of a Balinese Village and its Cultural Implications* (1980).

With its comparative overview of the work of other writers on Bali, I expect the book to provide new critical insights into and interpretations of Balinese culture, as part of a continuing dialogue around our understanding of culture as a developing process in Bali in particular and in Indonesia more generally. To Dr Mark Hobart I would like to express my sincere thanks for his trust and permission to publish his book.

Denpasar, December 2000  
Head of the Postgraduate Program in Cultural Studies  
Udayana University

I Gusti Ngurah Bagus

## Acknowledgements

'Thinker, thespian, soldier, slave? assumptions about human nature in the study of Balinese society' was originally published in a shorter version in *Context, meaning, and power in Southeast Asia*. eds. M. Hobart & R.H. Taylor, Ithaca, New York.: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1986. The following chapters have been previously published in a slightly different form. 'Anthropos through the looking-glass: or how to teach the Balinese to bark' was first published in *Reason and morality*. ed. J. Overing, ASA Monographs in Social Anthropology 24, London: Tavistock, 1985; and 'As I lay laughing: encountering global knowledge in Bali'. in *Counterworks: managing the diversity of knowledge*. ed. R. Fardon, ASA Decennial Series, London: Routledge, 1995. 'The missing subject: Balinese time and the elimination of history' appeared in *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Studies*. 31, 1, in June 1997. And 'As they like it: overinterpretation and hyporeality in Bali.' Was published in *The problem of context. methodology and history in anthropology, Volume 4*. ed. R. Dilley, Oxford: Berghahn, in 1999. The first and last chapters, *After culture: anthropology as radical metaphysical critique* and *Cabbages and kings: Balinese rulers as articulators of worlds* appear here for the first time.

I am grateful to acknowledge the financial support of the Leverhulme Trust and the London-Cornell Project for two years' field research between 1970 and 1972, the School of Oriental and African Studies and the Economic and Social Research Council for funding my research in Bali in 1979-80 and 1988-89 respectively. Since 1990 I have been engaged in a collaborative project with the Indonesian Academy of Performing Arts, STSI, Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia, Denpasar, to record, document and research Balinese television. This has been funded by grants from the British Academy Committee for South-East Asian Studies, the Nuffield Foundation and The School of Oriental and African Studies.

The research could never have been accomplished without the Indonesian Academy of Sciences, LIPI, Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia and the sponsorship of Universitas Udayana in Bali. My thanks are due to the late Professor Ida Bagus Mantra who, as Rector of Universitas Udayana, was most supportive of my research and to Drs. Wayan Geriya for administrative help with research permission. I would like to acknowledge the support, and assistance of my counterparts on the Balinese Television Project at STSI, the successive Directors, Professor Madé Bandem and Professor Wayan Dibia, and the unfailing helpfulness of Ida Bagus Alit, the head of the STSI technical division.

There are a number of people in Bali who have made important intellectual contributions in different ways to my research. A special place is due to the late Professor Christiaan Hooykaas, who was my teacher in matters Balinese from 1968 on, and also the late Professor I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa who patiently taught me Balinese language. I would like to thank both Drs. Nyoman Darma Putra and Drs. Nyoman Wijaya, for all their stimulating intellectual discussions over the years. One special debt of gratitude in particular I wish to acknowledge, to my friend and colleague, Professor I Gusti Ngurah Bagus, whom I have known since we both taught on the Cultural Anthropology programme at Universitas

Udayana from 1970-72. I have had innumerable discussions about Bali with Professor Ngurah Bagus over the last thirty years, and it was he who originally invited me to write this book. And I would like to thank Julia Africa for coping so good humouredly on my behalf with the endless details of getting to book to press.

I owe special thanks to the late Cokorda Gedé Agung Sukawati, who not only supported me throughout my first fieldwork, but who also taught me much about an aristocratic understanding of life in Bali. My thanks also go to Cokorda Gedé Agung Suyasa, who assisted me in all sorts of ways during my first field research in Bali. I would like to thank the members of Banjar Pisangkaja (a pseudonym adopted at the request of the inhabitants), who have put up with me getting in the way and asking endless, often naïve, questions. A number of people deserve particular mention: the late Jéro Mangku Désa, the Jéro Mangku Dalem Kauh, the Bendésa I Ktut Gendul, I Wayan Séro, Ni Madé Tublin, I Nyoman Sorog, I Madé Suradnya and Ni Nyoman Kèrti. I would like to thank them for their friendship, helpfulness and unflagging patience over the last thirty years in trying to help with my requests for their opinions, or with clarification on issues which must at times have seemed distinctly peculiar. I Wayan Suardana has worked tirelessly recording television broadcasts and transcribing these as well as research tapes of conversations.

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A number of academic colleagues deserve special mention. At SOAS, I am grateful to David Parkin and Richard Fardon for many conversations about what anthropology is about and where it is heading. My understanding of Bali is continually changing thanks to invaluable discussions over the years especially with Linda Connor, Adrian Vickers, Margaret Wiener and Peter Worsley. The theoretical approach – again I hope a changing one – has emerged in significant part out of conversations with Ron Inden over the last twenty years or so.

Mark Hobart  
London  
May 2000

## **After culture. Anthropology as radical metaphysical critique**

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Chapter 1	Introduction. After culture. Anthropology as radical metaphysical critique
Chapter 2	Thinker, thespian, soldier, slave? assumptions about human nature in the study of Balinese society.
Chapter 3	Anthropos through the looking-glass: or how to teach the Balinese to bark.
Chapter 4	As I lay laughing: encountering global knowledge in Bali.
Chapter 5	As they like it: overinterpretation and hyporeality in Bali.
Chapter 6	The missing subject: Balinese time and the elimination of history.
Chapter 7	Cabbages and kings: Balinese rulers as articulators of worlds.