God, Divinities and Ancestors.
For the Positive Representation of a "Religious Plurality" in Bugis Society, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Gilbert HAMONIC*

Introduction
An Apprehension of a "Religious Plurality." Some Points of Methodology

To deal with the religious thinking and "imaginaire" of the Bugis society, situated in South Sulawesi, as presented here is first and foremost paradoxical. But under a certain light, it is also scandalous, and this is shown by the sole fact of juxtaposing the notions of "God," "divinities" and "ancestors" in a society which, in the whole Indonesian archipelago, appears to be one of the most "fervent" (the terminology here is *fanatic* or *panatik* with a positive meaning) in the Muslim religion. At best, the use of the concept of "polytheism" would seem legitimate with regard to an ancient or lost state of the Bugis society, being before its "official" conversion to the "monotheism" of Islam in the first years of the seventeenth century (see Noorduyn, J. [1972]). However, if this work is put forward as the reconstruction of the *plurality* of the history of Bugis religious thinking, its research data is just as much historic as ethnographic, and refers almost exclusively to a mentality resolutely anchored in the present.

* Dynamique Espace Variation en Insulinde, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 22, rue d'Athenes 75009 Paris France

The second theoretical paradox is that not only are the concepts of "monotheism" and "polytheism" contradictory in their terminology, but they are presented again respectively as *synchronic totalities*. And these *synchronic totalities*, the former being a centralising force and the latter being a differentiating one, serve as labels for religious doctrines set up in *systems*. Now, such systems, which can certainly contain dichotomies, logical conflicts, functional complimentarities or hierarchies, always offer *their own* point of view like flatlands, sorts of harmonious oases where history, whatever its course, hardly leave a trace.

As a matter of fact, with the Bugis, first of all, we find ourselves confronted by what is best termed "prolific religious thinking," that is to say by a society whose universe is populated throughout with entities more or less vague and anonymous (*toalusu'*, "subtle spirits," *totenrita*, "invisible beings," *torilangi'*, "celestial beings," *toriolo'*, "beings from long ago". . .) which coexist perfectly with certain other "religious crystallisations" (sometimes able to be traced historically) and

represented either by personalised divinities of the local mythology or by Islamic figures, Allah, Muhammed, angels and other *sétang*. . . . Secondly, the practices of the beliefs and rituals are not really codified in the rigorous theological liturgies or doctrines — and this holds even for Islam, at least in the way the Bugis conceive it !

Finally, the multiplicity of concrete cultural practices which are actually observable — for example, the worshipping of anonymous spirits populating the daily universe, the worshipping of family ancestors, the worshipping of local mythological divinities, or *regalia* cults, or finally the distinctive worship of the Muslim religion — are arranged here in a perfect parallel, one next to the other. To be more precise, if it is certain there are ritual distinctions between each of these practices — again it will be seen that these distinctions remain fairly vague in general [Pelras 1985a] — these appear to be on the whole more "ramified" than "contradictory," and far from dominating each other (even in the guise of a "foil"). In practice it is as if each one has its own relative degree of autonomy. From here, it seems that the presence of disconcerting juxtapositions with their extreme heterogeneity of ritual gestures ([*ibid.*], also see below the example relative to offerings), is, in the mind of the Bugis believer, the presence of "simultaneous" sincerities which would only be contradictory from the systematic and reifying viewpoint focused on them.

Thus we find ourselves faced with an ambiguous reality where the idea of a unique and supreme god seems to have adapted itself to the existence of other "gods" in the regional mythology; these also appear to tolerate the existence of other religious entities which are doubtless more archaic, out of which I will attempt to show that the later ones were perhaps partly born. From there, I believe that this work will show the inadequacy of theoretical tools forged out of the notions of "polytheism" (for instance, that of the divinities of the local, mythological pantheon, called "La Galigo," see Pelras [1983]), and "monotheism" (for instance, Islam). Taken literally, and by the general form of reasoning that they follow, each of these "systems" is presented on its own unique account, self-sufficient and capable of minimising differences.

So, in what areas can these concepts still be of interest for us here? By virtue of their incapacity to take into account the plurality of real and concrete religious practices the right way round renders by itself the phenomena of *displacement* and *transposition*, of which they are the object, unintelligible. In other words, the concepts of polytheism and monotheism allow us to ask these questions which are fundamental for us and which are precisely *external* to their systems, namely: Has not the notion of a "unique God" been welcomed by South Sulawesi thanks to its reference (however vague that might be) to the ancient mythological divinities of "La Galigo"? Haven't these divinities been generated in their turn through a certain relation which they kept alive with the archaic notion of local ancestors — and from this, what has been the impact and contribution here of "foreign" religious figures, both the Hindu-Buddhist origin and the Muslim one? First of all, we will turn to the theoretical implications of these questions, which lead us to draw, by way of conclusion, the contours of the notion of

"polycentric," "a-centric," or better still, "network" systems, whose modalities of approach we must define.

To do this, we must dwell on various processes at work at the heart of such systems, and ruling their development, to find out:

- The process of making up religious paradigms, that is to say, their movements and inner dynamism.

- The process of *dialectic* logic which, synchronously, links them and distributes them in diverse spatial-frameworks that are singular on each occasion.

- The process of social "sedimentation" and "stratification" which, diachronically, both appear to produce these diverse sets of paradigms and to lay them in tiers, from the most recent to the most ancient, from the most contingent to the most unchanging, from the most determining to the most incidental. . . .

- The *plurality* of visions of the world resulting from the ordering of the set of processes mentioned above.

Let us take each one of these different points, illustrating them with examples.

Part I — Paradigms and Dynamics in Religious Thinking

The paradigms of religious thinking — for instance, those of Bugis thinking, as for example the idea of the "navel," *posi*; the idea of the "*sacred tree*" (given in terms nearly synonymous with terms used for varieties of ficus, *baringeng*, *penrang*, *ajuara*, etc.); the idea of "beings descended from the heavens," *tomanurung*; the idea of "beings arisen from the depths," *totompo'*, etc. — are presented first and foremost under the form of invariants. Or they are presented as what is designated for our part as sorts of small autonomous islands, apparently transhistoric, but nevertheless shaping certain manners of thinking about the world which, themselves, are historically datable, even if approximately.

Thus for example, the belief in *tomanurung* and *totompo'*, which persisted for more than four centuries in parallel with the Muslim faith, doubtlessly attained its full and rapid development during the period when the kingdoms of South Sulawesi were emerging, at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, since all the south island traditions (Bugis, Mandar, Makassar, Toraja) agree on the fact that the confederative regrouping of ancient village unities was accomplished here under the leadership of such semi-divine characters [Hamonic 1987: 7, 13–16]. We know, however, that this archetype of "being descended from heaven," or "arisen from the depths" took place before this period, since it magnificently inaugurated the great local mythological cycle of "La Galigo," whose arrangement very probably occured between the ninth and the twelfth centuries [*ibid.*:6]. And furthermore, we have tried to demonstrate elsewhere that this archetype doubtlessly resulted in the transposition and reorientation of very archaic exchange relations and other matrimonial unions between "peoples of the highlands" and "people of the coast" [*ibid.*:19 passim].

Thus it must not be forgotten that every

invariant or every "core," is itself made up of a set of relations; and it's why a paradigm always remains multidimensional. Various new ideas, images or values can in turn come to shed light on certain facets, whilst others will be plunged into darkness.

One example will help us here to measure the whole range of shades of meaning of the behaviour and beliefs aroused by the same paradigm.

In the Bugis society, the very archaic image of the "*sacred tree*" has never been obliterated from the mentality of the inhabitants, despite the diverse cultural waves that followed one another in the course of South Sulawesi's history. But this image is nonetheless cloaked with diverse meanings according to the synchronic and diachronic contexts into which it fits :

– Sometimes, it concerns a sacred tree (*baringen, ajuara, penrang*, etc.) which stood at the centre of certain clearings, before the earth was even populated, and is supposed to have presided over the later establishment of villages on its periphery (see here the Chronicle of Wajo', cited in Hamonic [*ibid*. :160]).

– In another context, it concerns a "breath-of-life tree" (*laju tinio*), whose conception appears to go back to the most archaic period of South Sulawesi, but whose popular rituals show today that it is considered the "ancestor" or the "twin brother" of the new-born (see the description of birth rituals in Bugis, where the placenta is buried with a coconut [*ibid*.:39]).

– Sometimes, it concerns a sacred tree inhabited by divinities and sources of medecine, around which the last priests of pre-Islamic religions came "to make a circular tour" during shamanistic rituals [*ibid*.:182,

note 43].

– In yet another context, it concerns the cosmic tree, the axis of the world mentioned in the great cycle of "La Galigo," whose boughs pierce the canopy of heaven according to the four orients, while the roots plunged into the abyssal world. This image is however explicitly "foreign" and is qualified by the expression of *Pao* Jengki, "The Mango Tree of Zanj," that is to say Zanzibar [Pelras 1983: 96, note 19].

– Finally, it could concern the sacred tree providing shade to which the fervent Muslim will come "to receive the magic knowledge" (*mappotarimai paddisengeng*) in the course of a nocturnal ritual termed *mangamala'* (a term formed from the Arab term *kamal*, "perfect") [Hamonic 1987: 22].

There is thus simultaneous breaking off and continuity in the temporal impact of one or another paradigm of religious thinking and the shifts and mutations to which it is subject indeed make up its specific dynamism. It is why it could be important to question the type of logic that governs such dynamics, which are simultaneously internal to the paradigms and rule their external association.

About "Another" Logic

As a matter of fact, the working logic at the heart of paradigms as between paradigms themselves is not at all a *logic of exclusion* (the type of Aristotelian logic in which A cannot be non-A), but rather a *logic of participation, of oscillation*, or of the perpetual coming and going between the polarities of a "same" and "another" which is also a "same."

Thus, to our way of thinking there is the very characteristic presence of structures, the vast majority of which are "trinary" and not "binary" in the religious thinking that concerns us (three worlds making up the universe, three essential polarities; "head," "navel" and "feet"; three religious orientations of the cosmos; rising, zenith and setting; etc.). Also there is the recurrence of near-obsessional mythological themes in the imaginary world of the inhabitants of South Sulawesi, for example, the divine, hermaphroditic figures or the incest between twins, and especially the truly androgynous image of transvestite priests (*bissu*) all being part of ancient religions. In addition, one should note the confrontation with types of reasoning which never balk at or refrain from interbreeding with other kinds, sexes or species which for us are very distinct. The figures of the "child-reptiles," human beings "enveloped in the crocodile form," or more simply beings which are half-man/half-god, come to populate not only the dreams but also the "daily" reality of the Bugis [*ibid.*:9]. Finally, we have the perpetual search for this key notion of *equilibrium* (*paléwa*) which, given the number of metaphors (notably that of the pendulum, *ati'*) crosscuts all the contexts of the society (equilibrium of the diverse components of power, equilibrium of the diverse components of the cosmos, equilibrium of the elements making up the human body, equilibrium of the degrees of nobility in the blood, etc. [*ibid.*: for example 90, n. 376]).

The relationship existing between what can appear as complimentary oppositions is not simply a joining together of two contradictory terms into a third one, which would only serve to mechanically add up opposites. The subject matter of Bugis religious thinking appears to be much more *symbiotic* than *synthetic*; if certain paradigms like that of *posi'* (see below), or the androgynous body of the pre-Islamic priest, are well and truly at the highest planes of *mediation* between the opposites (and a number of rituals *practices* confirm this), they are no less complete paradigms on their own.

Thus have we been able to show that the phenomenon of transvestites (a behaviour that is widespread in South Sulawesi, as elsewhere in numerous other South East Asian cultures, in Borneo, Java, the Philippines, Malaysia and New Guinea) is dismissed nowhere as a simple reversed transposition of behaviour here defined as masculine or feminine, but is instead perceived as concerning a separate third and autonomous image [*ibid.*:45 passim].

So the distinctive life of religious paradigms follows here a logic of the ambiguous governing a perpetual oscillatory movement between the polarities which are diversified much more in the form of a *gradation* than in the form of a contradiction, even if these paradigms sometimes crystalise into strange medial figures (the worship of *regalia*, which simultaneously assumes certain aspects of the worship of divinities and the worship of ancestors, is an example of this to be discussed later on).

Networks and Stratification
of Religious Paradigms

Thus the dialectic process which, synchronically works at the heart of the sets of paradigms of religious thinking, can help us once again to understand the manner in which

these are diachronically tiered in relation to each other.

In other words, let us assume that each family or swarm of religious paradigms splits up into micro-units, appearing moreover as relatively autonomous. As has been seen above, each of these micro-units is not defined by "contradictions" uniting it with the others but by *practices* which are its very own.

For example, it is common to see the same person going first to the tomb of a great Muslim saint for some ascetic practice, and then sometime after to repair the *saukang* or the *palakka* (votive altars dedicated to vague divinities or local ancestors) in order for a venture to be successful or to receive substantial monetary benefits (see the description of such practices in [*ibid*.:182 passim]). However, there is no contradiction between these two practices, only a simple difference in their meanings. Also, the same spatial-framework can sometimes assume the function of a "repellent," and sometimes act as a true centre of "attraction." Nevertheless, the two cases just described are well and truly examples of behavioural determinism.

Moreover, it appears that not only do these diverse spatial-frameworks not necessarily communicate with each other, but also that the transition can sometimes be completed, and sometimes aborted at the heart of the same set of paradigms. A study of the details of religious offerings will serve as an example here.

Thus in the course of the *same ritualistic practice*, one can see certain offerings (such as glutinous rice in two colours — black and white — or in four colours — white, black, yellow, red), intended for diverse sorts of

anonymous ancestors (called simply *tomanurung, totompo', toriolo', torilangi'*) easily being placed side by side with other offerings aimed at quite individual divinities (such as the *sokko' aruang nrupa*, or "glutinous rice of eight colours," being the four colours mentioned above twice over, destined for Sangiang Serri, the god of rice), whilst others still (such as the *sokko' siddi rupa* or "single-coloured rice") are cloaked in a necessary vagueness, and can be given just as easily to the particular local mythological divinities, Sawérigading and Wé Tenriabeng . . . as to the prophet Mohammed [Pelras 1985a].

In fact, the plurality of significance of such or such a paradigm or group of paradigms arises then in the very heart of the ritualistic practice relating to it, and illustrates in this way that this plurality is irreducible.

The Transition, Mutation and Metamorphosis of Religious Paradigms; the Diversity of Relational Processes at the Heart of a Mentality

The problem resulting from the preceding lines is thus that of the *crossing* of diverse spatial-frameworks of paradigms, tiered one in relation to the other, but nevertheless relatively autonomous. To answer this, we must now return to the very reality of these paradigms and closely follow the processes of transposition, translation and mutation concerning the inherent *values* or *symbols*, and whose function is precisely to create connections between the "worlds" or separate planes.

Also, in the first place, it is advisable to pay attention to this sort of *concurrence* of concepts, relative to the same paradigm from the

same register (for example, a liturgic "corpus"), and to observe if such a web of values and meanings allows us to locate the possible mutations. A simple example concerning the "*paradigm of the navel*" or *posi'*, will suffice here to expose the reasoning in question.

In the Bugis society, the paradigm of the "navel" is one of the best attestations among the multiple and diverse material or conceptual realities. The human body of course (of which the umbilicus is a place of prime importance in magico-ritual practices), but also the traditional house, the ship, the territory of the ancient village units (*wanua*), that of kingdoms and that of the world of humans itself, are said to each have their "navel," rendered elsewhere by the identical term of *posi'* (*posi' ale'*, *posi' bola, posi' tana'*. . .). The temptation is then great to arrange these diverse "navels" in one thread of the same thinking ranging from the most specific to the most general. The "navel of the human body" comes to be set under the "navel of the house," which is inserted in its turn under the "navel of the territory" of the *wanua*, and thus continues up to the "navel of the earth" which, according to the Bugis, would be represented by an island situated on the western borders of the inhabited world. Now, an attentive study of the known ancient texts and of the ritualistic practices still observable reveals to us not only that the diverse "navels" do not refer to a vision of an identical world, but again and above all that none of these diverse "navels" refer to the same period in history, although certain ones coexist today in a perfect mental synchrony.

In this way we have been able to demonstrate elsewhere [Hamonic 1987:187, 224],

that the self-actualisation of the "navel" of the human body very probably takes us back to the most archaic stratum in the history of South Sulawesi, and some shamanistic rites are still there to vouch for this [*ibid*.:173]. The notion of the "navel of the earth" is for its part inseparable from the great mythological cycle of "La Galigo," and the period can be situated, through diverse cross-checking, somewhere between the ninth and the twelfth centuries. The notion of the "navel of kingdoms" cannot exist before the historic emergence of the said kingdoms, being, if one believes the local Chronicles, towards the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries. Lastly, the notion of the "navel of the house" (represented by a particular pillar) is attached we believe more directly to the notion of the "navel" of villages unities, formerly represented by a large tree. The traditional disposition of these villages has today almost disappeared from South Sulawesi, but the image of the "navel of kingdoms" is perhaps only the later transposition of this, since these resulted from the federation of preexisting village unities. Let us add again that following the great Hinduistic currents which spread throughout the Insular Southeast Asia, from which South Sulawesi could not escape being affected, even if it was in a very toned down way, the paradigm of the "navel" seems sometimes to have been identified here with the image of the centre of a *mandala*, when originally, the *posi'* was never determined by the junction of the medians of a rectangle or square, but constituted rather the intermediary point between two poles that would represent for example the directions of "head" and "foot" [*ibid*.:

190, 224].

Without complicating at will the relative details in such a paradigm, one can at least assess from this example the empty claim of any global, systematic reconstruction which is by its nature incapable of taking into account the *plurality* of its object. And mostly, it is interesting to note that the "original" or "beginning" value with which the concept of "navel" is associated is not always expressed in identical terms.

Sometimes the old Bugis word of Nusanterian origin, *pong*, is associated with it (a term evoking in concrete terms the image of the "base," of the "stump" of a tree, for example); sometimes it is associated with the term *mula* of Sanskrit origin (giving in Bugis the words *amulang*, "beginning," but also "what is caused, initial reason," and *mammulang*, "what is first"); at other times, it is associated with the term of Arabian origin *assaleng* (from *asal*, and also giving in Bugis *ripeyas-saleng*, "in provenance from," "originating from"). In still other contexts, only the image of an "umbilical cord" (*pamentara* in ancient Bugis) seems able to cover this polyvalence of the "origin" symbolised by the navel.

This example thus finds us again confronted by a real plural form of thinking, which, at the same time, runs counter to the naive "interlocking" of notions.

That is why it is not a matter of separating or reducing — neither the diversity of religious paradigms, nor that of their respective variations, neither the diversity of the processes synchronically uniting them, nor the diversity of the diachronically tiered spatial-frameworks in which they work and spread out all these relationships — but rather try to

conceive of a system which takes these same diversities as its object, as a "broken-up" object, and submits to it. The plurality of the religious thinking should then cease to be the obstacle, but become the very principle of reflection.

A Multidimensional Religious Thinking and the Particular Cases of Its Determinism

To conclude the differential reading of the religious thinking put forward in these pages, it remains to try and *chronologically* place the objects and values in their relation to the principal known periods of the society we have studied. In this case, the etymology and linguistic analysis will then be the most efficient methods of approach, and the "competition" of concepts previously located in the notion of "origin" in the Bugis thinking can be the first illustration of this.

However, nearly all the documents at our disposal on the subject matter concerning us here (mystic texts, liturgic corpus, mythological narrations, abstruse magic formulae. . .) is by its nature perfectly "ideological," which means that the documents quite elude form of chronology from the outset, even though we rightly claim to have found in them the mark of a "periodisation."

One example relating to an esoteric and very secretive contemporary mystical text, dealing originally with the Bugis gods and already studied elsewhere [Hamonic 1983] will serve as an illustration here, since the analysis enables us to recognise traces of elements and relations concerning the three distinct strata of Bugis history, these being :
    — a religious material inspired by the Mus-

lim thinking, here illustrated 1) by "characters" and elements around which the narration is formed (*Alla taala*, "The very high God"; *Ruhul Khudus*, "the angel Gabriel"; *Muhammed*; *jalla lella* and *jama lella*, "majesty" and "beauty" attributes of God; the fire, air, water and earth constituents of the universe, etc); and 2) by certain processes of creation (of relation) that are set in motion (the role of the "light of Muhammed," *Nurung Muhammed*; the insufflation of a soul giving life to the creatures, etc.).

– a mythological material linked to the period called "La Galigo," renowned for 1) the inauguration of the ancestry of the mythological gods who are explicitly named (Datu Patoto', "The prince of destinies," Guru ri Selleng, "The master of the straits," Datu Palinge', "The primordial princess," etc), and 2) the incestuous marriages between male and female twins mating "two by two". . .

– a neatly cosmologic material which takes its roots from the most archaic history of South Sulawesi, and which gives as much importance to the sun, moon and constellations (which pre-date the myth of "La Galigo"), as to an androgynous divinity coming to give birth on its own. . .

Thus this relative "betrayal" of the initial spirit in which our three sets of data were locally developed, and which follows upon the steps we are applying, cannot neglect answering the question concerning the very determinism of this spirit. And so the problem of relations between the visions of the world and the concrete historical realities of a society arises again.

But it is a fact that, although determining behaviour, the type of religious thinking with which we are dealing, being pre-eminently esoteric, is not acquainted with chronology and does not wish to become acquainted. This is comparable with the unconscious and dreams, and perhaps only exists by this act of refusal, of denying time, while for our part we insist on the opposite, that it should always remain accessible to historical reading. Again like the unconscious and dreams, religious thinking is no less constructed in precise spatio-temporal frameworks which determine it.

Having stated the general principles of our argument, we must now illustrate them by analysing a precise case. The study of diverse turning-points which punctuate the history of Bugis religious thinking will here serve as a touchstone.

Part II — God, Divinities and Ancestors in the Bugis Society

A Necessary Division into Periods

The essential aim of this work being to delineate the transformations affecting Bugis religious thinking, we will begin first by giving some idea of the chronological framework of their society. Every analysis of religious notions, values or symbols — and therein lies the continual requirement of the preceding lines — cannot escape the snare of a necessary

division into periods. It is understood that if there are really specific examples of rationality and coherence belonging exclusively to such a thinking, these are dependent on a whole series of mental and social mutations which simultaneously modify their internal equilibrium and their general features. In doing this, we will moreover get the feeling of being perfectly loyal to the local mentality, tinged with a real fascination for history. The word "fascination" is here used with all the nearly obsessional ambiguity that it carries; in the sense that, in the same trend, Bugis religious thinking continually becomes entrenched in a past that it nevertheless denies as such. This point appears evident through two phenomena.

The first is that each of the historical periods which are going to be isolated finds its legitimacy, in a way, in the period which has preceded it, and therefore cannot exist without it, even though its wish to make the distinction in relation to the previous period is clearly evident (see below on the local traditions of the various "gaps" of Bugis history, illustrated by the image of the gods withdrawing, then of chaos and earthly anarchy arising as a consequence). This results from the fact that a *mixed space* is then formed between myth and history, in which the most distant past and the most recent present coincide. Thus, for the great majority of Bugis people, the heros of the mythological era of "La Galigo" are not only historical heros, but also characters who are just as alive and real as their close contemporaries — and a number of our informants "converse" regularly with them. . . .

The second point, correlating with the first, is the essential place that *memory* fills in religious behaviour. Memory, the royal connection between men and the gods, has more or less given rise in the Bugis society to the development of a religion having direct contact with the divine; and this is true even across the mystic forms of local Islam, well attested in various *tarékat* peculiar to South Sulawesi [Mattulada 1976a]. Likewise, for the most ancient periods, this memory was first spread in shamanistic techniques of recollection, spiritual exercises and divinatory ecstasies practised within a very closed sacerdotal group of priests, which had its own "level of language" [Hamonic 1987]. "To utter the words which are not forgotten," "to give back memory to those who have lost it," such was the recurrent theme of the most ancient religious Bugis liturgies, where the priests long monopolised the social and collective memory (after first having confiscated it). Thus, in this society where lapse of memory was well and truly considered a curse; religion, memory and history were first and foremost considered one and the same thing. And even though a proper "modern" meaning of memory is slowly coming to light, doing its best to see time as it is and magnificently illustrated in the local historical chronicles from the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries on [Cense 1972], the assertion of "another" memory will persist for a long time, doing its best to escape from time so as to be united with the deity (the two principle orderings of initiation rituals being moreover that of "marriage" and that of "giving birth" or of "birth" [Hamonic 1987: 34 passim, 173, 175]. Certainly, outside the institutional framework and mental context on which it depends, this previous conception of memory will soon lose

much of its effective social impact. It is no less an excellent illustration of a "*habitus*" of thought which outlasts chronological divisions into periods.

Also, however essential the notion of *division into periods* might be to give an account of the changes which have taken place in a mentality, it is nothing other than a simple "tool" which, no matter how practical, should never veil these places of balance and parallel creations which are, for their part, situated on the fringes or uncertain steps of multiple sub-periods of a poorly-defined time.

One can distinguish therefore, "in the Bugis fashion," four principal periods in the history of their society.

a) an archaic period, or "pre-La Galigo," going back to an era roughly before the ninth century, during which reference to some sparse elements of shamanistic rituals emerge (today almost completely disappeared), along with some rare and very sacred accounts of the creation of the universe. Such accounts have been passed down to the present day by word of mouth in the secrecy of mystical initiations [Hamonic 1983; 1987].

b) a period called "La Galigo," the name of the great local mythical-epic cycle which occurs around the ninth to the twelfth centuries, and which, for the Bugis, would correspond to the description of a state of society that really existed (somewhat like the "Homeric times" in our own Western culture) [Hamonic 1987; Mattulada 1976b; Pelras 1971; 1983].

c) a period called the "*tomanurung*" ("beings descended from the heavens") corresponding to the proper "historic" emergence of kingdoms in South Sulawesi, and whose

local Chronicles give us an account from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries [Pelras 1971; Zainal Abidin 1983].

d) a period which, from the very beginning of the seventeenth century, corresponds to the official conversion of South Sulawesi to the Muslim religion, and which, by decisively inserting the Bugis society at the heart of a vast set of Southeast Asian Islamic networks, from that date forced all the previous periods to be joined under the qualifying umbrella of "pre-Islamic" [Mattulada 1976b; Noorduyn 1972; Pelras 1980; 1981; 1985b].

With each of these periods signalling a more or less radical transition or mutation in the religious mentality of the Bugis people, we should ask ourselves what is maintained, transformed or lost each time at the heart of a similar historical process; and try to sketch the principal conditions which slowly came to govern the emergence of the framework of thinking seen today.

Thus, the transition which led the most archaic beliefs of South Sulawesi to the formation of a mythology with a perfectly structured pantheon corresponds in fact to the period of grand Hindu kingdoms in Southeast Asia. And, however watered-down the effects felt in South Sulawesi might have been, however fragmentary the archaeological discoveries relating to this period [Hamonic 1987: 9–11], we can imagine that 1) a truly conceptual renewal must have been implemented, the traces of which must still be recognisable through the formation of ancient levels of the Bugis language [*ibid.*], and that 2) the original Sanskrit terms of greeting — which the Bugis were to give a meaning in accordance with their ancient beliefs — should have been

4号

of great use.

On the religious plane, a certain number of hypostases would have also spread out. The laborious efforts of the local mystical traditions to link the archaic worship of the sun and the moon in some way to the sovereign, personalised divinities of the myth of "La Galigo" prove this [Gervaise 1688; Hamonic 1983]: another proof being a conception of "individualised" natural forces which soon came into being, where the meaning of the names of numerous divinities of the pantheon of "La Galigo" bear the marking [Pelras 1983].

In a similar movement, we thus recognise a double phenomenon in this transition period. On the one hand, a certain modification of ancient religious notions took place. And if, for example, the old symbols of underworld divinities relating to the ancestors, notably the snakes, rock-lizards and crocodiles, still persist (as in the local expression of *tomas-sumpang buaja*, "beings born of crocodiles"), they have changed, at least in part, into a new metaphor of a sort of "crocodile of the mountains" (*buajana buluë*) refering to the ancestor above all others, the "tiger," this time seen as belonging to the superior or celestial world, and yet this is an animal which has never really existed in Sulawesi. . .[Hamonic 1987: 57, 157]. In the same way, the old dual symbolism "bird-snake" is still maintained through certain rituals (see description of *arumpigi* and *alosu* [*ibid*.: 178, n. 29]), but then lose some of its significance. In the same way again, the antique processes of divination through omens linked to birds continued to be practised for a long time [*ibid*.: 157, n.20, 194, n.107], but they were thenceforth given a new

conception of time, and associated with other divinatory techniques [*ibid*.:184 passim].

On the other hand, it is said that the real surging of new ideas — such as that of the cycle of fertility and the appearance of the "Earth-Mother" symbol, *pérétiwi*, showing the eternal cycle of vegetation — took place but that it nevertheless came to be transplanted or to fit into the links of pre-existing thought, to finally be reorganised in a fundamental way. And so probably the idea of metempsy-chosis, or the resurrected dead, came to modify for a time the traditions relating to the very archaic worship and rituals of the dead with double funerals, well attested in South Sulawesi [Koubi 1982; Hamonic 1987: 201 passim; Pelras 1981]. And eventually the whole mental universe of the Bugis soon found itself "reoriented" in the proper sense (see the detailed analysis of such a process in the formation of the mythical geography of "La Galigo" in Hamonic [1987: 225 passim]).

In the Bugis society, on the religious plane, we have shown elsewhere that the masters of the exemplary works of this historic process, resulting simultaneously from rupture and continuity, were the *bissu* priests. No doubt simply in order to be glorified local ancient shamans, and despite their qualifying sanskritic consonance, they knew how to ensure this remarkable transition of mentality which was soon going to transform them into members of a truly royal clergy, controlled by the state. It was only by designing from the outset the great mythical and divine figures of the Bugis, that certain ones, such as Batara Guru, become the "ancestors" of the local aristocracy. The *bissu* played an active role in constructing, for the first time in the history of

14

this society, an extremely well-structured, imaginary religious hierarchy, which was then going to serve as a model of reference — and of legitimacy — in the creation of South Sulawesi kingdoms from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, or the era called the *tomanurung* [Zainal Abidin 1983].

Between the end of the period presumed real in "La Galigo" and that of the *tomanurung*, there is definitely a "break" that the local tradition considers as "seven generations of anarchy," and during which the humans, abandoned by the gods who had left the earth, found themselves left to their most dreadful instincts [Pelras 1971]. Also it was by symbolically *renewing* with the earlier period that a series of kingdoms throughout the southern parts of Sulawesi were formed; kingdoms were born from the process of the federative regrouping of pre-existing territorial communities (*wanua*), but are said to have been created under the aegis of *tomanurung*, that is to say the semi-divine characters which then descended from heaven for the *second* time. And they soon served to legitimatise the existence of a new aristocracy, which was also seen as almost divine and supposed to have "white blood" (*tomaddara takku'*).

Nevertheless, in the same movement, and doubtless helped by the development of new skills (such as writing, calendars, agriculture and metalwork, see Pelras [1981]), the antique notions of power came to be profoundly readapted to new realities; and the existence of government contracts in "democratic" terms between the princes and the people is the best example of this in South Sulawesi (see below, and cf. Alwy Mahmud and M. Jassin Arief [1951], Pelras [1971],

Zainal Abidin [1983]).

Once again, the framework of Bugis thinking was thus modified. And so we pass from the conception of time as repetitive to that of time oriented toward the future (see the analysis of the local historical Chronicles [Cense 1972]). And so we pass from a cosmogonic type space, that is very central and closed in on itself (as, notably, the various rituals intended to draw "the outline" of an expanse, or *mappalili*; see Hamonic [1987: 210 passim]) to a space opening bit by bit onto vast networks of contacts and exchanges, where mobility became the rule (here one can refer to the Chronicle of the kingdom of Wajo', and the words given to one of his "representatives of the people," La Tiringngeng To Taba', as early as the fifteenth century, well before that the conversion of South Sulawesi to Islam; see Abdurrazak Daeng Patunru [1965: 39]).

These mutations of a politico-social order were also going to find their corollaries in the intellectual order, since it was doubtlessly in this period that the myth of "La Galigo" was put down in writing [Hamonic 1987: 166 passim, 232]. Finally and most importantly for our account, the relationship between power and religion would thenceforth find a new symbolic manner of expression in the presence of aristocratic *regalia* which, probably so as not to be only the simple metamorphosis of an ancient worship of popular, local ancestors (see below), would become the new form of power which was set up and which would last nearly until the 1960s.

In the space of two or three centuries then, a new mentality was installed in South Sulawesi, at the heart of which the ancient reference models had been manipulated for

other ends. From the outset, the order of inner man was transformed, and history was thenceforth "his business" and not just that of the Gods.

Also, the conversion of Bugis to Islam, marking the fourth period of South Sulawesi's history at the beginning of the seventeenth century, only acted as a *revealer* of the new socio-economic structures that' were set up, and whose values were thenceforth heavily tinged with mercantile attitudes, since in most of the royal kingdoms on the island, the prince had become more or less "the chief tradesman." This did not mean that Islam was established in South Sulawesi without encountering any opposition or resistance. Far from it. The dogmas which it gave rise to were fought against for a long time (cf. for example Gervaise [1688]), even if they no doubt eventually came to be adapted to local reality (see below the persistency of the role of the Bugis aristocracy, and Pelras [1985b]). And between 1605 and 1611, nearly all the kingdoms in the south of Sulawesi were plunged into the agony of veritable *holy wars* which, by their very nature, revealed unequivocally the *tension* existing between the old beliefs and the implantation of the new religion [*ibid.*].

Yet, if the adoption of Islam in the Bugis society so violently occupied the forefront of the historical stage, it is above all because it was only exacerbating and precipitating a potential crisis, resulting in part from the inability of the ancient local religions to meet the requirements of the new and wide networks of contacts which had come into being. And no doubt the religious values belonging to the faith of the Prophet — being only its universalist character — would largely serve the remarkable development which would subsequently mark the southern parts of the island.

Were they going to witness the phenomenon of a radical clean sweep of the pre-existing beliefs? Certainly not, and if Islam was truly implanted in South Sulawesi through the bias of the local aristocracy (but whilst simultaneously establishing their supremacy and the ancient religious rituals which belonged to them; for the *bissu* priests were thenceforth confined to the princely circles), a certain renewal of the most archaic popular religious traditions was seen at the same time, and their existence is confirmed by the number of rituals still in existence today [Hamonic 1987].

However — and therein lies the key theme which clarifies and defines what could be the specificity of the "polytheisms" of South Sulawesi — the practices and resurgences of similar old beliefs are not generally understood in Bugis as *contradicting* the Islamic dogma or faith, but rather as *increasing* and *counterbalancing* it. Also, the religious thinking is differentiated, as has been seen above, into diverse spatial-plans, whose equilibrium most certainly remains precarious and unstable (diverse radical Muslim movements, such as the rebellion of Kahar Muzakar in the 1960s, bear this out; see Sillars Harvey [1974]), but which simultaneously guarantees its incredible mobility and capacity for adaptation.

As a result, the determination of the categories of "God," the "divinities" and the "ancestors" which is our aim here, cannot escape being fundamentally affected by the weight of such a history; and the same "fluid-

ity" and "ramifications" synchronically marking the reciprocal relations of these categories brings us back to the diachronic dimension which has always sustained them — right up to the present time.

From the Figures of the Ancestors to Those of the Divinities

The initial apprehension of the two categories of "ancestors" and "divinities" appears first and foremost indissociable from the distinction between the popular circles and the aristocratic circles. Straight away, these two "pairs" of notions are presented as being very different in the Bugis society. The same holds for the divinities of the great, local, mythical cycle of "La Galigo" which appears to owe nothing to the aquatic genus (large fish, eels) and other reptiles (rock-lizards, lizards, crocodiles) which are considered to be the ancestors of "ordinary men." The same holds yet again for the Bugis nobility (or let us rather say the diverse hierarchical degrees which make it up) which has never ceased marking what distinguishes it from lower people, if only through a remarkable inflation of ritual details which belong to it in its own right [Hamonic 1987], and a conception of its origin which is just as strange as it is "foreign."

In effect the nobility are the only class in the Bugis society to possess genealogies, and in the last instance these all comprise the mythical figure of a founding and *divine* ancestor, generally termed a *tomanurung* ("a being which has descended from the heavens") and always linked in some way to a divinity of the local pantheon, this divinity calling itself

Batara Guru, Sawérigading. . . .

In this light, the origin of the Bugis aristocracy is therefore neither more nor less "mysterious" than that of the divinities. It even repeats the exact "abrupt" beginning, that is without a "pre-history," and is symbolised here by the fact of "descending from the heavens" or of "rising from the depths."

However, we will begin by noting that this desire for distinction entrenched between the categories of "divinities" and "ancestors," well maintained in the social practices, is curiously counterbalanced, indeed nearly erased, by the ambiguity of terms precisely qualifying these entities. The word *déwata* certainly belongs to the divinities of "La Galigo" cycle; even though the lower people just as often allude to strange *déwata macella'*, or "red divinities," which are particulary evil, and which one cannot recognise as such in the "official" mythical cycle, and which are probably linked to the world of the dead. In the same way, the common people also use the expression *déwata pitu*, meaning the "seven divinities," and there is nothing certain about whether these indicate the seven divinities inhabiting the seven stages of the heavenly world, or those of the seven stages of the underworld in the local pantheon [Pelras 1983]. The expression *réwata*, and the phrases relating to it, *sangiang réwata*, ("divine spirits") or *réwata ponco'*, ("small spirits" or secondary spirits), highly recurrent in the liturgy of the pre-Islamic Bugis priests, but also in some exorcising chants used by popular medical-healers, seem to indicate a multitude of badly-defined and anonymous spirits, which probably represent the "spirits of the ancestors," for other generic terms, such as

17

those of *toriolo'* ("former beings"), *torilangi'* ("heavenly beings") and *puang néné* ("ancestors," "forefathers") are often used in a parallel way [Hamonic 1987]. And the Bugis like to keep the specific vagueness of these diverse categories alive; maintaining that the ruling nobles and the princes of the highest nobility have no "ancestors" other than the "first heavenly creatures." *Déwata, réwata, toriolo', torilangi',* and ancestors (*néné*) of members of the purest aristocracy are thus worshipped in an almost similar fashion (the difference in rituals being a simple difference of "degree") in so far as they are *divine* or *semi-divine* beings.

It is the same for the *regalia* (*arajang* in Bugis), in that the most varied objects are supposed to have arrived on earth in some mysterious way [Mattulada 1978; Hamonic 1987: 210 sqq]. Honoured as veritable living and personified beings (they were addressed by the term *petta*, "My Lord," were "awoken" and "put to sleep," purifying baths were given to them, they were led in procession when different circumstances required, and in olden times they could even be "captured" to be taken to other territories), they are understood to embody a concentrated form of the "breath of life" of former generations, and to occupy as such an important place in the ancient rituals of investiture for princes and high priests. Now, if the *regalia* of the highest kingdoms of the island were evidently the most prestigious here, a number of villages units (*wanua*), or even families "of common birth" also possessed their own *arajang*, most frequently kept in the attic of the house, and regulary worshipped as the "ancestors" guaranteeing the integrity of a territory or a family group.

A close observation of the set of ritualistic practices and a non-discrimination of vernacular terms in current use convey a certain vagueness in categories that were initially clear; and likewise, although it would be a clever person indeed, who, in Bugis society, could tell whether or not the expressions *rué* ("lord") and *opa batari* ("Father-Mother") opening and closing nearly all the liturgic prayers of the pre-Islamic priests, refer to a "divinity" or an "ancestor" [Hamonic 1987: 55, 155 passim]. Can the terms of foreign origin help us in this matter? Alas no, and to close this chapter for now, it must be added that thenceforth many Bugis (whatever their social class) used the expression (of Sanskrit origin) *bijadari* ("heavenly creature") jointly with the expression (of Arab origin) *malaéka* ("angels") as synonymous with the set of terms cited above (with the exception of *arajang*).

It was stated at the outset that there are two opposite movements at work in the Bugis thinking. The one, as seen in the last example, unambiguously attributes to the nobility, "personified" divinities from the cycle of "La Galigo" as their own ancestors. The other, no less important in our eyes, but perhaps operating in a more subdued fashion, more "unconscious" in the Bugis mentality, maintains at will the vagueness and uncertainty between the categories of "ancestors" and "divinities," and aims more to present them along an imperceptible gradation spread out between the two extremes, and flanked by a throng of intermediary entities. So, doubtless, one is entitled to suspect here the completion of a simple process, one that is moreover crystal-

lised in a veritable ritual in a society bordering the Bugis, the Toraja; a ritual which quite simply involves transforming an ancestor of nobility into a divinity (in this case one said to "return the leaf"; see Koubi [1982] and Hamonic [1987: 190]).

Now, if such an ambiguity of meaning then allows us to guess that certain shifts or metamorphoses could affect the categories of "gods" and "ancestors" at a given time in the history of Bugis thinking, it does not mean that the gods and ancestors — or rather, to repeat, "these two extremes on a line where the figures of the "imaginaire" of Bugis religion were gradually arranged" — did not develop *an identical problem in different terms* : both are indeed the guardians and agents of order, both are the mainteners of tradition, both recall that there is something to safeguard; whether it concerns an equilibrium, an integrity, a fertility, a richness, or more generally a social memory.

And yet their difference is essential.

It mandates that from now on the Bugis divinities shall be presented as arranged in a veritable mythological *pantheon*, what is none other than a *system of classification*, besides being hierarchical and here "totalizing" (or at least it tried to be; see below p. 21): and which presides over the organisation of certain powers or certain strengths in the supernatural worlds [Pelras 1983], whilst simultaneously applying themselves to nature and the universe of human beings. And the cosmological, social, psychological, and ethnic system of the Bugis pantheon of "La Galigo" appears consequently as the projection of a "perfect" order on the organisation of human society (the behavioural models of the nobility tending

moreover to be transferred "to the greatest possible extend" on to the divine models).

As for the "ancestors" — that is to say the ancestors of the "common people" — they are presented in a somewhat different light. First of all, they are, as far as we know, much less personalised than *individualised*, meaning in this case isolated or solitary, and this solitude refers, through quite a distant past, to a very specific village or territorial entity. If indeed there are some local traditions in the folklore which relate to "groups of ancestors" (notably groups of ghosts and other themes around the "hunt" carried out by "ghosts"), the relations linking these ancestors are not at all comparable to the relations characterising a divine pantheon.

In the second place, the ancestors appear to be much more ambivalent than the Bugis gods; the fact that everything seems to happen according to the specialisation of the divinities' power in the cycle of "La Galigo," doubtlessly resulting in their "classification" [Pelras 1983], corresponds with a polyvalence of functions and duties on which the rituals of humans can moreover have some influence.

In the same way, if one questions the nature of the bonds linking the divinities (and the nobility to these divinities), they are revealed, above all, to be *genealogical* links [Pelras 1971; 1983], even if the spatial distribution of these gods sometimes discloses antique polarities belonging to a very archaic substrata [Pelras 1983; Hamonic 1987: 225 passim]. Conversely, the one and only way to identify an "ancestor" is nearly always through its *spatial determination* (the attic of a house, a spring, an old tree, a rock, the top of a hill, a specific territory, indeed "a district" of a large

town. . .); and the genealogical nature of the bond uniting one such "ancestor" with one such individual or family of individuals appears to be of secondary importance, if not useless, in comparison with the *topology* (a phenomenon possibly correlating with the very high mobility of the inhabitants). The common people of Bugis society return religiously to the *places* where, for example, their "crocodile-ancestors" reside — these are referred to by the simple generic term "forefather" (*néné*) or "crocodile" (*buaja*) — in order to feed them through offerings and to ask them for favours or for protection, by the way of a veritable *contract* which I will term as "give–give"; this is rarely the case with the divinities of the pantheon of "La Galigo."

Finally, from this angle, the *tomanurung* figures (or rather, those of the *new tomanurung*, which were supposed to have appeared in South Sulawesi at the same time as the historical kingdoms were formed) is then seen as a curious *median point* between the two entities, gods and ancestors, since the spatial associations (the *tomanurung* nearly always arose at the top of specific hills which are still places of specialised worship today) cannot be separated from the genealogical origin of one or another noble family (see what is said about the worship of *regalia* further on).

We must now make several proposals which will throw light on both the nature of "ancestors" among the Bugis and the very process of their "divine" pantheon's *formation*.

Beginning with the social plane, it appears that the "polytheism" of the gods in "La Galigo" cycle can only function — here as elsewhere — in reference to a *social division* between the aristocracy and the commoners.

Also the relationship with the gods of the Bugis pantheon seems to be the veritable privilege of the nobility. Likewise, the precise and detailed knowledge of the divine figures and the arguments of the mythological narrative seems to be the monopoly of the clergy attached to the nobility, the *bissu* priests. And everything happens as if the fairly large number of divinities known to an individual refer in a sense to its own position in the social hierarchy.

However, on a more religious plane, parallel to what has just been said, it appears that the characteristic "divinities" of the Bugis nobility can only exist in a certain rapport (sometimes contradictory or ambiguous) with the "ancestors" of the society's common people, for a diachronic study of these realities suggests that the Bugis "gods" were originally nothing other than the "products" of former archaic ancestral figures in all likelihood, thenceforth deified and magnified by the indelible seal affixed by the nobility [Hamonic 1987].

Following on from this, is the fact that certain Bugis "divinities" are seen as "tainted" by the existence of prior figures; and the fact that certain arguments of the mythological cycle seem "weighed-down" with paradigms of more archaic thinking, could not be considered evidence of incoherence.

Also, without getting lost in an accumulation of fastidious details, everybody would be quite free to identify each and every "divine" figure of the Bugis pantheon in "La Galigo"; be it here the image of a former dread of death, now transposed to an ontological plane (cf. for example Datu Patoto', "The prince who decides destinies" [Pelras 1983]);

whether it be a metaphor of fertility (cf. Datu Palingé, "The primordial Princess" [*ibid.*]), the antique notion of a flow of life represented by heavenly waters spilling over "nourished" and "gluttonous" mankind (cf. Hamonic [1987]), or even the spatial transposition of an old idea of the eternal, vegetative cycle (cf. the term *pérétiwi*, the "earth-mother," to indicate the underworld), etc. — despite the welcome given to "foreign" divinities and terms of Sanskrit origin, largely completing this process. Actually, these terms were nearly always stripped of their etymologic content to be used rather as "substitutes," excuses for adorning the most ancient local paradigms and forms of thinking belonging exclusively to the oldest Nusanterian substrata [*ibid.*].

But correspondingly, we cannot doubt that the antique figure of Bugis "ancestors" was somewhat modified by this "epiphany" from the mythological gods, which we shall try to define more accurately in the following lines. Perhaps the notion of "ancestors" in this society originally covered nothing other than simple symbols (moon, sun, plants, reptiles. . .) or simple values (positive/negative, day/night, life/death. . .) flanking certain places or spatial polarities (of the "head/navel/feet" type analysed earlier); the formation of a divine pantheon profoundly *reoriented*, *misrepresented*, *transposed* or even *metamorphosed* several of these symbols (such as the figure of a "cosmic tree" or that of a "navel of the earth" mentioned earlier), whilst others plunged (almost) permanently into oblivion (for example, the androgynous figure of an essential entity [Hamonic 1983]) or were even explicitly "put to death" (the "Master of Destinies," Datu Patoto', punishing by

death other divinities claiming to be descendants of the divine pantheon of "La Galigo," as well as those belonging in fact to "another line of descent" [Pelras 1983:70]).

From all these phenomena, as- we see it, particular forms have resulted from the multidimensional meanings of paradigms in Bugis religion, that no theoretical reduction should ever modify, in order to appreciate their synchronic coexistence which, up to now, is still seen in ritual practices.

Moreover, such an approach perfectly high-lights the phenomenon of this double problem of "mysterious" origin, both of the pantheon of gods and the Bugis nobility. This has been discussed in another very detailed analysis [Hamonic 1987] from which we will only reproduce here the hypothesis of a narrow correlation between :

— a) a phenomenon of concentration or regrouping of kinship, largely facilitated in the Bugis society by the existence of truly bilateral relations, which doubly link someone to the maternal and paternal lines, and which are interwoven from the outset in a vast network of kinship and clientele.

— b) a phenomenon called here the "federation" of the first village units into the structure of state kingdoms.

— c) the phenomenon of constituting (with the full meaning of the word, for the myth was thenceforth *written*) of the mythological cycle of the Bugis, or *Sure' La Galigo.*

Certainly, the very nature of data available on these themes makes it much easier, as previously noted, to define the *ideological* process of such formations than their economic or social reasons. However, it must be stated that the events certified by objective and

concrete reality — for instance, the historical appearance of Bugis kingdoms witnessed in the local Chronicles from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries — are said to have come about precisely under the leadership of these divine or semi-divine agents, the *tomanurung*; and everything seems to really have happened as if certain "ideological representations" had here assumed the role of a determining infrastructure. . ."in the last instance." Whatever the most efficient impetus of such projects (the most convincing here being without doubt a reconversion of traditional economic networks [Pelras 1981; 1985b]), we must definitely examine the modalities of this whole task of ideological elaboration, which endeavoured to gain acceptance for a new reality of kingdoms and social stratification styled on "supernatural" origins. For actually, it is by an identical (but polymorphous) action that we believe the Bugis laid the ground for a double and interdependent innovation; that of a mixed and novel form of worship between gods and ancestors, and that of politics.

The Worship of Regalia and the Resurgence of Politics

To affirm in such a way that the whole set of transpositions affected by this new sociohistorical construction around the thirteenth century can be traced essentially on the religious plane, prejudges nothing whatsoever of the existence of other economic or social instances, or in a more general sense, of the "power" mutually extendable to this construction. One could, for example, question whether the "ontological individualisation," highlighted above, at the time the Bugis pan-

theon was set up, did not correlate with a phenomenon of concentration — both of ecclesiastic powers (installation of a hierarchical clergy of priests in the aristocratic milieu), and of secular powers (the semi-divine figure of the ruling prince). As a matter of fact, a really new form of power was then styled in the Bugis society for we can tell that the most ancient lines of authority at work in village units existing before the thirteenth century (relationships of the type father/son, elder/younger, brother/sister, etc., the "head" of a *wanua* being moreover *elected* from an assembly representing groups of kinship) are in no way comparable to the lines of hierarchical authority governing the order of the nobility itself, and the relation of the nobility to the other social classes ("freemen," commoners or slaves).

And yet (still following this plural and non-reducing approach of the society that interests us), several facts can not go unrecorded; precisely because they seem to contradict the image of power outlined here.

First and foremost, it should be noted that certain *wanua* at the heart of a kingdom, or even certain kingdoms between them, were said to conserve in relation to the other, ties of "mother" to "son," or of "elder brother" to "younger brother" [Hamonic 1987: 16], as if the reference to antique relations of parental authority should last until new socio-political realities came into being in South Sulawesi, around the thirteenth century.

Following on from this, even if the descent to earth by a semi-divine *tomanurung* was supposed to have come to organise confederative systems at the origin of the kingdoms, the *laws* they brought with them should

always have fitted in *by contract* with the diverse territorial or familial entities already in existence. That, in turn, led to the very original forms of government that were seen as much in Bugis as in Makassar and Mandar and which sometimes reminded one of the truly democratic structures in existence before the written word (see Alwy Mahmud and M. Jassin Arief [1951] and Zainal Abidin [1983]).

Finally, if the organisation of the *bissu* clergy attached to the governing princes was, in fact, very hierarchical, it is however true that all the clergy had to be of common birth [Hamonic 1987: 172], and that the terms used for "the high priest" and his assistant were none other than "elder" (*matoa*) and "younger" (*lolo*), being the very terms of parental authority around which it seems was arranged the life of the most ancient village communities in South Sulawesi (among the Bugis the term *matoa* also designated somebody noteworthy of common birth, who led for example a *wanua* [*ibid.*: 219]).

From the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries on, there was therefore, on the one hand, a widespread blossoming in South Sulawesi of *tomanurung* and *totompo'*, a multiplication of "navel of the territory," an abundance of symbolic images and other ritualistic "stagings" belonging to the nobility and monopolised for a while, in times of old, by the mythical narration, "La Galigo"; everything happened as if the understanding of the universe, developed by a very localised religious ideology (originally, probably linked in a specific way to the Luwu' kingdom [*ibid.*: 149]) increased tenfold from that point onward in the Bugis, Makassar and Mandar

areas.

But at the same time, because it had to reconcile the pre-existing historical facts with the new reality which developed in this way, the old Bugis religion — and, in these circumstances, the old distinction between the "gods" of the mythological pantheon and the "ancestors" of the "common people" — was soon to give birth to a form of worship that was partly new, but yet one that could be considered as a sort of throwback, and which was none other than the reappearance of a former ancestor worship, newly metamorphosised : the worship of *regalia*.

Without getting lost in a detailed presentation of religious practices relating to this theme (see the ritualistic descriptions in [*ibid.*: 210 passim]), it is important to highlight the manner in which the worship of *regalia* was extended to diverse relational degrees (of the hierarchical type, certainly, but also of the "contractual" type) which were represented at the heart of the Bugis kingdoms or in the differentiated groups in the confederation of *wanua*.

Now, on the one hand, the symbolic *legitimacy* and even *legality* of power would thenceforth be passed down to the *regalia*, for the figure of *tomanurung* (which could be understood as a veritable "myth of sovereignty") and the memory of the magnificent "divine past" from which followed the *regalia*, made it possible for these two notions to be articulated in the social body. The *regalia*, supposed to contain a concentrated "breath of life" (*sumange'*) of vanished sovereigns, appeared from the outset to be the ultimate metamorphosis of an old theologico-political model (that of men's submission to

divine entities) that the ruling prince brought back for his own use. Also they were used (consciously or unconsciously) as *instruments of beliefs*, which meant that the rapport between man and the divinity was transferred to the rapport of the people to their sovereign. Thus the authority of the latter was seen as "eternal" and "authentic," working for a stable, just and permanent order that seemed to fit into the very nature of the universe, —all of this lying in an ideological, religious context, backed up by the law. And both the historical Chronicles and the liturgic prayers endowed the ruling prince with titles of "To speak without being contradicted" or "Words without reply" [*ibid.*:57].

But on the other hand, the worship of *regalia* nevertheless kept some characteristics of its distant origin of worshipping archaic ancestors, with which, as has been seen, it was possible to come to terms. The *regalia* were thus also *instruments of politico-social consensus*. Through this consensus, the relationship of man to man this time being a priority, and is even personalised (take, for example, the value traditionally given in the Bugis society to the notion of "fidelity"), and the bond between the governing and the governed was *contractualised* even on the occasion of investiture rituals [Zainal Abidin 1983]. That resulted in the existence, at the prince's side, of representative assemblies of noteworthy people and "freemen," who possessed a real compensation of power — the whole lot resulting here in an exercise of alliances, affinities and clientele, and not without the possible overthrow! Thus, if necessary, this "return" of power could authorise, often after having consulted the *regalia*, the termination of the

rule of a bad or weak prince — and Bugis history abounds with examples of such sovereigns being deposed or even put to death [Hamonic 1987: 207].

In working in this way to set up a type of power that obtained its originality from knowing how to adapt to new historical realities without simultaneously breaking off with very ancient representations of legitimacy, the worship of *regalia* (and their ambivalence on account of the "mixing" between the divinities and the ancestors) thus raved the way for the progressive opening and definition of a new social arena; that of *politics*. And this profound mutation, which began around the thirteenth century, ended finally in South Sulawesi with the birth of an extremely modern conception of history, that was very characteristic of the Bugis area, and perhaps unique in the whole archipelago [Cense 1972].

But if on the one hand, the kingdom and its rulers had from then on the possibility of developing their own political ideology, the beliefs relative to the legitimisation and legality of these governments meant that the political arena would not yet be fully autonomous or "separated" from the guardianship of religion. Also the faith in the *tomanurung* and the sacredness of the kingdom's *regalia* of the kingdom would be maintained for centuries— and almost up until the present day—as a parallel to the Muslim faith. And that, on the other hand, was the second mutation in South Sulawesi, perhaps the more spectacular one. It meant that from the beginning of the seventeenth century, Islam itself was to sweep the politico-historical arena that had previously been left open to the local mentality. In turn, Islam instigated profound upheavals of the

pre-existing religious representations, but without managing to overthrow them completely.

From the Figure of Divinities to that of a Unique God : Islam and the Gods, Islam and the Ancestors

The preceding paragraphs promote the assumption that the implantation of Islam in South Sulawesi acted as a sort of divulger of new politico-social structures that had been established a few centuries prior to this, and that it only precipitated or accentuated, if not exacerbated for a time, the tensions both at work in the ancient religions (that between "divinities" and "ancestors", for example) and that existing between the pre-Islamic religions and the Muslim religion itself [Gervaise 1688].

Certainly, the very adoption of a unique God, and what is more, one common to everybody, was bound in theory to profoundly call into question this sort of "ideological monopoly" of the Bugis clergy and the ruling prince in their relation to what was sacred. In other words, it was the very statute of the Bugis nobility, the cornerstone of the social system, that was overthrown by the implantation of Islam. And in fact, a new religious administration was soon set up where *kali* (*khadi*) belonging often to the nobility, *iman* and teachers (*anrong guru* or *anréguru*) came respectively to play a role in the royal councils—these assemblies for the "compensation" of power, mentioned in the preceding lines— and in the subsidiary religious assemblies [Hamonic 1987: 24; Mattulada 1976a].

However, it would again be a serious mistake to see this profound socio-religious mutation in the seventeenth century as an absolute contradiction. If some of the few detailed studies on this point hint for example at the way in which certain "arrangements" of the Muslim doctrine guaranteed the "semi-mythical" statute of the origin of the Bugis nobility [Pelras 1985b], it should be seen as sort of an "exclusion/recuperation" oscillation of local Islam with regard to the ancestral religions, rather than as a real conflict.

Of course, in this back and forth movement, it is possible to spot diverse periods of tacit consent, or of intransigence. Examples are: the Bugis attacks on the "heathen" land of the Toraja in 1636, 1640, 1667, 1683, 1705. . .; the civil war in the kingdom of Boné between 1640 and 1646 due to the Muslim "fanaticism" of its prince La Maddaremmeng [Hamonic 1987: 43]; removal of the *bissu* clergy in the kingdom of Wajo' during the reign of La Mallalangeng (1795-1817) who was a Wahabi Muslim [Abdurrazak Daeng Patunru 1965]; the persecution and putting to death of members of this same clergy during the rebellion led by Kahar Muzakar, under the banner of Darul-Islam, between 1950 and 1965 [Sillars Harvey 1974]; etc.

Nevertheless, an examination of the concrete Bugis religious practices still seen today, and a development of "mystic" themes specific to South Sulawesi (the term *tasaupe'* is here the vernacular translation of the Arab term *tasawuf*) enable us to put such factual waves back into the history of the mentality that we are concerned with.

It is understood that such a subject deserves an entire, separate volume (at least!). For

now, without making a purely theological analysis, we will very briefly outline some of the processes relating to the "treatment" to which Islam subjected the religious paradigms which were in existence before it. For in truth, just as the *bissu* priests had formerly known how to extract an aristocratic religion from popular beliefs [Hamonic 1987], and just as the Bugis nobility had known tó bring back, to its own advantage, an old mythological model of power (see above), in the same way, Islam, whose implantation in South Sulawesi had been subtended by the existence of an ancient "imaginaire" of what was divine and sacred (the usage of such a term of reference would be most scandalous in the religion of the Prophet) seems to have monopolised an archaic scheme of thinking and to have turned it around in its favour—and it had moreover done this to the Arabs themselves [Chelhod 1964].

The result of such processes could be summed up in a simple way: everything happened, in the Bugis mentality, as if the pantheon of ancient, mythological gods had tended to *"become Islamic,"* whilst the Islam religion itself *"became mythological"* in parts.

This was once again "scandalous" for those who worshipped univocal systems, but it will perhaps be better understood if we recall first that, in South Sulawesi, the conception of a certain uniqueness in the divine seems in no way at all to be due to the Muslim religion. Two ancient terms, that of *Dêwata Sêuwaé* ("God one," to which the qualifying *Topapunna*, "Master of everything" was sometimes added), is present in the very first local Chronicles of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the still more archaic term *Sisiné*

("The Unique") is present in the old liturgies of the pre-Islamic priests, and bear the above out [Hamonic 1987: 98]. So do the traditions in the cycle of "La Galigo," which narrate, for example, how the mythological hero, Sawé-rigading, was overcome with "madness" and engulfed in the floods for having tried to catch a glimpse of this supreme and inaccessible divine entity [Hamonic 1983].

At the same time, and without describing such conceptions as "henotheism" or "monotheism" (which moreover are of little importance), it appears that Islam profited at least from a movement of "unification" of the divine, which was already well underway in South Sulawesi. In a sense, it seems to have been able to establish itself on the island only in a certain relation—however ambiguous—with the local ancestral religions. Thus we find here the type of thinking where the "other" can only be the hidden face of the "same," in which it appears (see above,—about "another" logic). And in this way it is understandable that the Bugis not only place the names of the mythological gods next to those of Allah, Nabi Adam and Muhammed in the body of the *same* prayer or in the *same* mystical story [Hamonic 1983 ; 1987: 94 passim], but that they again assert that "the supreme god has only changed names several times" [Hamonic 1987]. And the Bugis "imaginaire" then *"mythologises"* the God of Islam and believes that *Alla taala* created from "his right thigh" and from "his left thigh," Datu Patoto' and Datu Palingé, who are none other than the superior divinities of the myth "La Galigo" [Hamonic 1983].

On the other hand, the gods of the Bugis mythology appear to have never been de-

throned by the God of Islam, nor even to have been stripped of their principal prerogatives. And according to the esoteric traditions of South Sulawesi, the sole noteworthy fact affecting these divinities seems to have been that, from then on, they were under the orders of the "Very High" (again, as we have seen, this was the place for the gods who had "escaped the power of Allah"); whilst to the former were transferred some of their "attributes" ("Destiny," "Perfect Beauty," "Majesty". . .) or their functions ("breathing life into a soul". . .) [Hamonic 1983].

We would of course be wrong to vastly overestimate the scope of such phenomena, for each of us can quite easily recall the existence of the fervent Bugis Muslims, followers of the Muhammadiyah sect, well represented in South Sulawesi, which professed an open hostility with regard to all religious syncretism. In the same way, it would be possible to gather all the doctrinal texts of several great Islamic sufis who, in South Sulawesi as throughout the archipelago, never stopped cursing "these dissolute, anti-monist mystics, who approved of everything which conformed to their pantheism. . ." (see for example, Nur ul-din al-Raniri and his *Tabyan fi ma'rifat aladjan*). Again in the same way, we could get involved in a debate that is more specifically theological, and highlight for example that the notion of true monotheism could not have been instigated without the notion of "person" or "subject" which relates to it, also appearing to the same extent.

Also, Islam perceives a "Unique" God as being very far removed from men and, in this movement of exclusion/integration oscillation mentioned above with regard to former reli-

gions, it has tended to drive the divinities and ancestors of popular salvation back into obscurity, while disputing the existence of any intermediary between God and man.

And yet, the analysis of concrete, ritualistic, Islamic practices that could be seen in South Sulawesi, even when they closely conformed to the dogma (notably the celebrations of Maulud, see Hamonic [1985]), demonstrates the persistence of a type of relationship that man had with divinity, that official Muslim worship strongly dissociates itself from. The adoration of the tombs of the great local Muslim sufis—such as Seh Yusuf, for example, who is regularly honoured (by unctions of perfumed oil, the throwing of flower petals, etc.) and whose tomb has tended to become an extremely popular place of pilgrimage in the last few years—is, along with other ascetic practices and quests for supernatural powers, a good illustration of this; even if the local Muslim authorities have imposed several vague bans to try and stem the growth in popularity of these practices somewhat (see Mattulada [1976a], Pelras [1980]).

The phenomenon of worshipping saints, prophets of Islam and others "chosen" by the grace of Allah, enables us to partly identify the fate that the Muslim religion reserved, in South Sulawesi, for the Bugis notion of "ancestors"; a similar process can doubtless be recognised in numerous other regions of the archipelago.

Without in the least claiming to be exhaustive in the framework of these few lines, we will confine ourselves to indicating here some of the transformations inflicted upon the local ancestors, and which, in our opinion, all resulted in a new form of administration of the

"space-time" introduced by Islam, and again, it bears repeating: these modifications were carried out much more by additions and withdrawals than by elimination.

The most tangible of these relates doubtlessly to the *cemetery*, since the introduction of this new "space" promoted the general effect of reintegrating the dead and the ancestors into the world of the living, whilst simultaneously keeping them "physically" separate. Moreover, it is known that this was accompanied by another profound transformation affecting the funerary practices, since that soon meant abandoning the ancient traditions of cremation or displaying the corpse, of which there are many accounts from South Sulawesi [Pelras 1981; Hamonic 1987: 201 passim].

Nevertheless, this "reorientation of death" (an expression which can moreover be taken in its strict sense if one thinks of the practice of *kiblat*) will remain poorly understood if we don't also highlight at least three other transformations which are related to it.

The first consists of administering, from then on, the ancestral archaic figures (and their possible return) in the time considered sacred by Islam. That is why, besides certain modifications in "natural" and "spiritual" kinship, which the Bugis came to understand (take for example the genealogical charts of some great Sayyid, the founders of local *tarékat* [Hamonic 1985: 178, 191]), we can assume that the Muslim beliefs in diverse saints or *wali* (of which the whole archipelago possessed many illustrious examples), and even the belief in the *mahdi* (notably the traditions relating to Ali and Muhammad Hanafiayh in Makassar; see Hamonic [1985])

provided some new foundations here for the relations the Bugis were accustomed to maintaining with their diverse "ancestors."

The second and no less important, affects the understanding of the relationship of the "soul" and the "body." For in the ancient plural conception of "breaths of life" (the Bugis language had about ten terms for this notion and its diverse states [Hamonic 1987: 154; Kern 1939: 17 passim]) would now be added to, or substituted for, two other notions with a Muslim "tint," namely *rochul khudus* (the "spirit" who escapes after death) and *rochul idhafii* (the "spirit" which lives on earth and becomes a soul wandering in search of a new body to envelop it). The Bugis fully interpreted this as a pure Islamic heritage (the Bugis term *napessu*, like the Indonesian *nafsu* are taken from the Arab term *nafs*, "soul"; in fact, here meaning "desires").

The third, and perhaps the most fascinating transformation, concerns the representation of the world of beyond. Formerly, this fundamental opposition characterising Indo-European cultures, between "the sky" which was positively conceptualised, and the entrails of "the earth" with their negative connotation, was not present in Bugis thinking, and, as we have seen, neither was there a "god of evil" opposing a "god of well-being." If there is definitely, as depicted in the mythology "La Galigo," a world of dead beings inflicting terrifying torture and where actions are performed "upside down" (see [Pelras in press]), it is as if to better reinforce the positive image of the "rightside up" human world. And the ancient Bugis people, through diverse practices, worked, according to the specific terms of an old liturgy, for the *terrestrial* achieve-

ment of a "destiny of eternal youth" [Hamonic 1987: 154]. In truth, the world of humans and the world of beyond seems to have been conceptualised as veritable neighbours in the Bugis mythical geography, and — doubtlessly helped in this by beliefs close to that of metempsychosis [Gervaise 1688; Hamonic 1987] — it was sometimes possible to "travel in" or to have an extremely precise vision of the latter [Pelras in press]. On the contrary, with Islam, the world, or rather from then on *the worlds* of beyond became an entirely separate belief, and a veritable "selection" was made in reference to merits accumulated whilst living on earth. And beautiful Muslim texts in the Bugis language (presently being translated) recaptured on their own account some mythical images of the archaic world of the dead, casting them in the dichotomy of the Islamic "paradise" and "hell," which moreover were nearly always given the two original Sanskrit terms of *suruga* and *naraka*.

There remains this traditional Bugis figure of *tomanurung*, which we have placed in a median position between that of the divinities and that of the ancestors. The beliefs relating to it have, as we have said, lasted until the present time, and the polyvalence of certain religious paradigms has doubtlessly been at least partly responsible for this durability. It is known, for example, that the notion of "white

blood" (*dara takku'*), so strongly linked with the *tomanurung* and the Bugis aristocracy in general, is also characteristic of some gods in Hinduism and certain Muslim saints. But above all, the belief in the *nabi, rasul,* and others "chosen" by Allah, who acted as civilising heros, is very close, in the register of the local mysticism (which flourishes particulary well in about forty "tarēkat" belonging to South Sulawesi [Mattulada 1976a]), to the belief in the *tomanurung*. All of them receive a mandate from a supreme and/or unique entity; and the teaching which they spread, even the laws they set up, all have primordial and archetypal characteristics [Chelhod 1964: 115-174]. Well before the introduction of Islam to South Sulawesi, the Bugis were already familiar with the sort of action that we will call "prophetic," and many of them could easily traverse the weak line between the noble Bugis prince linking his origin to the earthly descent of a semi-divine being, and the "Sultan", who is occasionally apprehended as "the shadow of God on earth." In the two cases, the direct relationship of man to the divine is maintained, although it was thenceforth more individualised, and could demand the increase in religious aura that a pilgrimage to Mecca brought; as in the past as in the present, it required the pilgrimage to the summits of sacred hills where the *tomanurung* came to "tread" for the first time on the soil of Bugis.

Conclusion

If we now have to define the general argument of all the preceding analyses, we must state that it is like keeping to a narrow path on the ridge between two slopes which are as

steep as they are asymmetrical.

One of these slopes is concerned with the marks left by the pre-Islamic Bugis cults even in the heart of the Muslim religion. It stresses

29

the notions of permanence, of a substratum, of durability, and of polysemy, the accumulations, transformations or metamorphoses of old paradigms of thinking which still persist in the beliefs and ritualistic acts of the contemporary Bugis. In this sense we could quote here J. Le Goff: "A new idea does not really catch on if there is not an 'imaginaire' which develops it further" [Le Goff 1986: 80]. This is a sentence with which I fully agree; for I fully believe that the very coexistence of all the religious figures which have been mentioned reveals much of the historical transformations in Bugis thinking as well as the different attitudes adopted by the society with respect to them.

However, the elements of our analysis do not appear as structures. They are better characterised as cultural norms (or norms of worshipping), and even when the syntheses are perceived (they can sometimes be located historically), these syntheses are not to be seen as closed systems, or complete all-embracing forms.

That is why the other slope of our argument has sought to position itself in opposition to an abusive, theoretical process of reconstructing "totalising" systems, while simultaneously trying to account for a positive and non-reifying conception of a religious *plurality* which, for us, remains irreducible.

Of course, the very allegory of this "path on the crest" implies that the position is unstable, if not untenable, and that it is also susceptible to all kinds of vertigo. There is a great temptation to tumble down one or the other of these "slopes," that would represent either extreme incoherence and muddling, or exaggerated systematisation and logic. Furthermore, a

strange phenomenon of erosion continually works toward joining these spaces, toward erasing their fragile borders; and it is known that the notion of "tinkering with" cultural forms has long been admitted by the structural or systematic way of thinking. At worst, the method underlying the preceding analyses risks, purely and simply, being accused of being "anti-" or "a-scientific," as if every rationalisation should necessarily be set out in the simplifying and unifying framework of a reassuring totality.

It is remarkable to note in effect that, even in the most currrent reflections, the notion of *plurality* or simply *diversity* (be it cultural, ethnic, religious, social, etc.) is always marked with some suspicion, and perceived as negative because it is understood as a multiple compartmentalisation which inhibits interaction.

On the contrary, here we have tried to highlight these dialectic processes (as discussed above in the paragraph entitled "About 'Another' Logic") which finally put together particularly fluid and ramified entities, which from then on are no longer "pre-supposed," but shaped by the very interactions of their similarities and their differences between which they are distributed.

Also, if we must definitely keep the concept of "system" in order to enrich our understanding of an entire society, we should, we believe, like certain mathematicians, physicians or biologists today, speak of "polycentric" or "a-centric" systems. Better still, in our opinion, is the term *"network"* systems which, in the religious field which concerns us (but this in no way prejudges other possible applications, for example in political analysis, and

more generally, in all the studies relating to "indigenous conceptual systems," dear to American anthropology) appears particularly suitable for giving an account of these divine or ancestral entities which are depicted here as "frayed" or "porous," and which are the pieces of a whole *game* of shifts in thinking, allowing them to pass from one to the other—this being so in synchrony as in diachrony.

In short, if we have to characterise the epistemological form of such thinking as "network systems," we should then say that the first process at work is not so much the *inference* (as it would be, for example, in establishing the logical links between structures), as the *manipulation* of the mesh or snares making up an environment, so as to become "*re*-acquainted" with micro-forms that are already known. And it is only afterwards that such handling makes it possible for rational and logical operations to be effected, in an endeavour to draw inferences—thus indirect—from the pre-established "re-acquaintanceships."

The process that we have attempted to portray, awkwardly, is that in Bugis society, the figure of Allah has been "mythologised" on the one part, while the divine and ancestral figures have in part been "Islamised"; in a sentence, they have been constantly reworked to make them mean something other than what they meant at one or another moment of their history (or of their myth). That is also why the idea of suppressing what is transferred from the "other" to the interior of the "same" does not seem to exist in the Bugis thinking. Finally, in our opinion, this is the significance of these "*crossroad paradigms*," such as "the origin," "the navel" or "the

sacred tree" (see above), whose polysemy is particularly revealing of the turning points in the history of a way of thinking. But these turning points are always executed as if a new entity (be it religious, imaginary, conceptual, etc.) could only come to life by being transplanted in or by "living as a parasite" on a more ancient entity, to which it bears a striking resemblance.

Perhaps one might object to similar processes of thinking not exactly coming from logic, but from the "imaginaire," or some other "folly of the mind"; even though, the most recent works of historians have shown (see Le Goff and collective works cited [1986]) the "imaginaire" can be remarkably logical.

There is at least one other theoretical consequence resulting from the approach adopted here, which correlates with the mistrust we have bestowed on all "totalising (re)construction," that is the importance thenceforth given to the notion of "*fragment*" at the heart of systems that we have grasped as "*broken up*."

Fragments, scraps, disconnected bits are initially the data confronting the researcher, as much in his fieldwork as in the observation of ritualistic practices. For instance, a divided liturgic expression is always at work in religions that are flourishing—and the "great religions," like the local customary religions, do not transgress this rule. If necessary, we can recall not only that all liturgic practice is composed of scattered elements (reciting verses, religious refrains, litanies), but that the great "Summa Theologicas" and the Holy Books, when they exist, are themselves often the result of disjointed material and a mosaic of fragmentary documents (collections of "maxims," of "logia," etc.). The Bible of

Esdras, the chapters of the Koran, and the Gospels are all the products of such laborious, synthetic assemblings, an art that the ancient Semites brought to a peak [Ortigues 1981].

Now, any form of rationalisation tends not to be able to consider the "fragment" existing in itself and for itself for what it is worth. This fact is particularly noticeable in myths which alone, very often, are the "ultimate recapitulation," in the words of Griaule, enabling us to finally outline what would be "*a* system of the world." But again, as always, the forced syncretism of conclusions permits the majority of researchers to make all sorts of theoretical extrapolations. The examples in this matter are then as abundant as they are renowned (cf. for example, Griaule and his allusions to the "key of the Mediterranean system of the zodiac" supposedly discovered among the Dogons in Mali [Griaule 1948: 254]; Nadel endeavouring to define the "total Creed" of the Nupe people of Northern Nigeria, when in fact he never stopped describing the fragments of their beliefs [Nadel 1954]; etc.). And on this point we should recall that, in South Sulawesi, no Bugis person has ever possessed, let alone seen, the whole six thousand pages recorded on the great, local, mythical epic "La Galigo," of which one can only get an idea from the collections in European libraries [Kern 1939].

This does not mean we must renounce attempts at conceptualising what could be "the system of the world" of a society (although "systems" would be less risky). Nor does it mean, on the contrary, that we should lose ourselves in a disorganised study of an infinite dispersion of figures. The remarks are made rather to seek to give an account of the specifity of such a conceptual tool, of such a way of reasoning, of such a paradigm, or of such a biased frame of thinking, outside its mechanistic reference to some totality "overhanging" which would supposedly be the ultimate example falsely claiming to be the raison d'être of all rules, criteria and jurisdiction. Briefly, we believe that we should always mistrust the persistence of the old dream of Laplace, where ideally we manage to encase the universe in a unique formula which would embrace the smallest atomic movements, and those of the most distant stars.

The notions of "network systems" can be useful, precisely because it is presented as a differentiated, broken-up, fragmented totality, with a *time* that dislocates it, opens it and gives it movement in constant mutation. That is why we have attached so much importance to the dialectic distorsions which marked such and such religious figure, to the phenomena of dressing them up and transposing them, which change them, and to the changes in thinking which blithely unites them across time and space. And it really is the paths borrowed by such processes (which, as we have said, do not necessarily and initially return to the logical operations between structures) which enable us to define a religious field. For example, the characteristics and richness in the cult and ideas at work in the Bugis "religious" adheres precisely to this movement of incessant coming and going (always present) between 1) the popular archaic beliefs and the setting up of a mythology belonging to the aristocracy [Hamonic 1987: 232 passim] , between 2) the figure of ancient local divinities and that of the God of Islam, between 3) the old Nousanterian terms and the concepts of first

Sanskritic and then Arabo-Persian origin, and between 4) a notion of "the origin" either calling for ancestral genealogies or the idea of revelation, etc. All this happens with a mass of intrusions gradations between the poles distinguished.

The approach adopted here does not mean that it has not been possible to follow other paths to deal with the reality of the Bugis divinities and ancestors. But the exhaustive methodology — and less still its univocity! — is not our intention. On the contrary, we only wished to show in these lines 1) how South Sulawesi managed, in following its own paths, to develop a religious field, and 2) how, although it was determined by the oldest local substrate, this religious field, in its turn, influenced the contemporary Bugis society in a specific way.

By its constant refusal (consciously or unconsciously) of totalising aims, and by its denial of a simplistic division enclosing the universe in nightmarish alternatives, the Bugis religious thinking, up to the present day, attests to the fact that, for it, there are several ways to arrive at a perception and understanding of the world. This could be done with certain divine, ancestral entities, or with other native divinities disguised by Sanskrit names, or else with angels, demons, prophets and a unique God borrowed from Islam, but whose ultimate identities remain changeable and changing, for a divine figure has the privilege of simultaneously being "a forefather" and "another."

Of course, at the heart of these diverse means of understanding this Bugis universe, the following have appeared historically: 1) certain new, relational configurations of the "imaginaire," 2) certain new symbolic figures, and 3) certain conglomerations of paradigms, sometimes thrust into the foreground, sometimes provisionally blurred or as if they had been relegated to the background of the mentality. Yet, everything continues as if the new contributions always measured their weakness with regard to the strength of continuity at work in the local thinking. For instance, the existence of a very real Muslim monotheism that was perfectly integrated into Bugis culture which seems nevertheless to have tolerated the existence of other religious entities, other "polytheisms" in its midst — this is truly the "religious-plurality" which we must take account.

If such a field of the religious appears too fractured and dislocated in the eyes of a number of theorists, it is actually that the individuals in question are everlasting creatures, and not passive products (the violent events in the religious history of South Sulawesi stand as proof of this, if any is necessary). And in fact, "the" religion ripples out in allusive and scattered forms in diverse liturgic or institutional contexts, which are also fragmented. At least we should take similar realities into account in order to develop what could be "a religious system," and to know that "the rags of wisdom have no need for fashion designers" [Ortigues 1981: 81]

33

Cited Bibliography

Abdurrazak Daeng Patunru. 1965. *Sedjarah Wadjo*. Jajasan Kebudayaan Sulawesi Selatan dan Tenggara.

Alwy Mahmud; and M. Jassin Arief. 1951. *Demokrasi sesudah Sawerigading*. Tjetakan I. Penerbit Pengusaha Buku. D. J. Goa Sel.

Cense, A. A. 1972. *Beberapa Tjatatan mengenai penulisan Sedjarah Makassar-Bugis*. Djakarta: Bhratara.

Chelhod, J. 1964. *Les structures du sacré chez les Arabes*. Islam d'hier et d'aujourd'hui. Vol. XIII. Paris: G. P. Maisonneuve et Larose.

Gervaise, N. 1688. *Description historique du royaume de Macacar*. Paris.

Griaule, M. 1948. *Dieu d'eau*. Paris: Editions du Chêne.

Hamonic, G. 1983. Pour une étude comparée des cosmogonies de Célèbes-Sud. A propos d'un manuscrit inédit sur l'origine des dieux bugis. *Archipel* 25: 35-62.

_____. 1985. La fête du grand Maulud à Cikoang, regard sur une tarēkat dite "shî'ite" en Pays Makassar. *Archipel* 29: 175-191.

_____. 1987. *Le Langage des Dieux. Cultes et pouvoirs pré-islamiques en Pays Bugis, Célèbes-Sud, Indonésie*. Ed. du CNRS.

Kern, R. A. 1939. *Catalogus van de Boegineesche, tot den I La Galigo-cyclus behorende handschriften der Leidsche Universiteitsbibliotheek, alsmede van die in andere europeesche bibliotheken*. Leiden.

Koubi, J. 1982. *Rambu Solo', "la fumée descend," le culte des morts chez les Toradja du Sud*. Ed. du CNRS.

Le Goff, J. 1986. L'imaginaire de l'au-delà. In collective book, *Histoire et imaginaire*, pp. 72-83. Poiesis/Payot.

Mattulada. 1976a. *Agama Islam di Sulawesi Selatan*. Laporan Proyek Penelitian, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Hasanuddin Ujung Pandang.

_____. 1976b. Sulawesi Selatan Pra Islam. *Bulletin Yaperna* 12 (III): 76-95.

_____. 1978. The Significance of Kalompoang in the Existence of the Bugis-Makassar Sultanate. in Second Workshop on Malay Sultanates and Malay culture, Ujung Pandang, 4th to 7th May 1978.

Nadel, S. F. 1954. *Nupe Religion*. London: Routledge. Kegan.

Noorduyn, J. 1972. *Islamisasi Makassar*. Djakarta: Bhratara.

Ortigues, E. 1981. *Religions du Livre, Religions de la Coutume*. Paris: Le Sycomore.

Pelras, Ch. 1971. Hiérarchie et pouvoir traditionnels en pays Wadjo' (Célèbes). *Archipel* 1: 169-191, 2: 197-223.

_____. 1980. Quelques aspects de l'islam à Célèbes-Sud. *Annales* 3èm année (3-4): 853-857.

_____. 1981. Célèbes-Sud avant l'islam selon les premiers témoignages étrangers. *Archipel* 21: 153-184.

_____. 1983. Le panthéon des anciens Bugis vu à travers les textes de La Galigo. *Archipel* 25: 63-96.

_____. 1985a. Les éléments de rituel populaire bugis. *Ethnologica Helvetica* 10: 183-201.

_____. 1985b. Religion, Tradition and the Dynamics of Islamization in South-Sulawesi. *Archipel* 29: 107-136.

_____. (in press) Les voyages de Sawērigading au monde des morts et la représentation bugis de l'au-delà.

Sillars Harvey, B. 1974. Tradition, Islam and Rebellion. South Sulawesi 1950-1965. Ithaca, Cornell University (Thesis).

Zainal Abidin, A. F. 1983. The Emergence of Early Kingdoms in South Sulawesi: A preliminary Remark on Governmental Contracts from the thirteenth to the fifteenth Century. *Southeast Asian Studies* 20 (4): 455-491.