

rides. The author feels that Australian sub-imperialism paralleled similar developments in New Zealand and South Africa, involving a combination of economic ambitions, missionary hopes, and fear of foreign incursions into adjacent territories.

The research for this study is comprehensive, but the author's use of the language is impaired by a tendency to avoid using the article and to make nouns into verbs.

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CLIFFORD GEERTZ. *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1980. Pp. xii, 295. Cloth \$18.50, paper \$5.95.

In this book the well-known anthropologist Clifford Geertz sharply criticizes the application of misleading Eurocentric models ("feudalism," "Oriental despotism," and so on) in interpreting indigenous Balinese political life. In four detailed chapters he discusses Bali's geographical and ecological situation; the Balinese system of social stratification; the nature of cleavage and alliance within the ruling class; the relations between rulers, villagers, and alien traders; and the extraordinary ceremonial density of Balinese religious life—both to reinforce his criticism and to develop a (fundamentally Weberian) model of his own, which he calls the "theatre state." He argues that the petty states (*negara*) of precolonial Bali were not primarily systems of governance, but rather organized spectacles designed to dramatize the ruling obsession of Balinese society—competition for pre-eminent status. The *negara* was not a mechanism for extracting surpluses from the peasantry nor an administrative tool for the coercive execution of policy, it was a continuing *tableau vivant* of Bali's cosmologically based conceptions of hierarchy. In a theoretical conclusion, Geertz suggests that his model is extendable to most of the "Indic" states of ancient Southeast Asia and that it provides an essential corrective to the overly coercive-administrative view of the state dominant in Western political theory since the sixteenth century.

Geertz's aim—to enrich Western political theory by confronting it with Bali—is both ambitious and admirable. And the book's four main chapters display their author's unmatched eye for telling detail, his gift for lucid exposition of the most intricate social organizations, and his ability to bring out hidden symmetries between different aspects and orders of Balinese life. Yet *Negara* suffers from weaknesses already intimated by its subtitle.

First, it is soon clear that nineteenth-century Bali really means pre-Dutch, traditional Ur-Bali; the date refers less to a specific period of Bali's history than to Geertz's resource base—Dutch records and

the memories of aged Balinese informants, not indigenous Balinese records of that era. The real nineteenth-century Bali was already deeply enmeshed in nineteenth-century world history: as Geertz himself notes, by 1830 the Dutch and British had ended Bali's profitable exporting of slaves; by 1849 the Dutch had begun the conquest of the northern part of the tiny island; and by 1859 Bali's largest import item was British-Indian opium. Reconstructing the *negara* from this Bali indicates the ahistoricism of Geertz's method.

Second, the arresting image of the "theatre state" is neither carefully explicated nor systematically applied. (Contrast the magisterial, systematic meticulousness of Louis Dumont's equally ambitious *Homo Hierarchicus*.) It ends up scarcely less arbitrary (and much less precise) than, say, "feudalism." Furthermore, the "theatre state" is not only not translatable into Balinese, but it turns upside down the Balinese idea of the relationship between their politics and their lively theaters: namely, that the latter are marginal to and derivative from the former. (It is curious that Geertz nowhere discusses Balinese theater.)

Finally, *Negara* also suffers from a florid, mannered prose that too often calls attention to the author rather than to its subject; and it contains too many thin "bon mot" generalizations for a text that takes other scholars to task for theorizing about what "they can not know."

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UNITED STATES

ARTHUR MANN. *The One and the Many: Reflections on the American Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1979. Pp. xiii, 209. \$12.95.

In a series of eight pithy yet informal essays Arthur Mann dramatically depicts the historic interaction between ethnic pluralism and American nationality. In deftly elucidating a theme central to the American experience, Mann ranges eclectically across the whole gamut of American history from the Revolutionary generation to the present.

Not "ancestry, soil, church, soul, or folk" (p. 68), those familiar icons of nationalism, but an abstract and potentially universalistic idea inspired the unique legal and ideological charter that united the diverse peoples of a nation created *de novo* by a common adoptive American citizenship and identity. It is about this principle and its pluralistic ramifications, refreshingly explicated in the book's pivotal sections, that the discussion repeatedly returns. Aptly illuminating the differences between the United States and other multiethnic countries, Mann explores the various theories that have been designed, especially in the twentieth century, to re-