BOOK REVIEWS

DAVID PARKIN (ed.), *The Anthropology of Evil*, Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell 1985. iv, 280pp., Index. £22.50.

This volume is the product of a number of symposia and seminars held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. It collects together thirteen essays reporting on various societies and historical periods but, with the exceptions of the essays by Pocock and Macfarlane - who treat English society in provocatively different fashions, there is little thematic progression or interrelation between the articles. While it is evident that the contributors are familiar with each other's work, the superficial cross-referencing of obvious points of agreement does not in itself solve the volume's problem of welding diversely conceived and executed studies into a coherent perspective on evil. This task is shouldered instead by the editor, David Parkin.

In the introduction the study of evil is situated within a putatively 'new' anthropology of morality which, we are advised, is different from the old Durkheimian project. This merely showed how morals create a cohesiveness which allows societies to function smoothly and perpetuate themselves, rather than disintegrate. Parkin asserts that 'social anthropologists have not focused much attention on morality as a field of cultural presuppositions informing and creating, rather than supporting, social relations between groups and persons' (p. 4). In other words, he proposes turning Durkheim back to front; placing the moral before the social. Yet once it is remarked that 'the moral and the social are embedded in each other' (p. 4), one wonders what real difference such an approach could make.

The 'new' anthropology of morality seeks to focus on the individual rather than the collective. It studies individual judgements in the face of moral quandaries rather than concentrating on static descriptions of a society's values. Clearly this orientation does not *replace* Durkheim's conception of values as collective representations, rather it complements it and promotes a welcome degree of attention to performance and negotiation. This perspective stands to reveal more about process, choice and thus change, than the Durkheimian model. The danger is that in its wish to foreground the individual, the new anthropology of morality may merely be calibrating the Protestant-ness of other cultures. And it is surprising to see David Pocock, Dumont's ex-collaborator and translator of Durkheim's essay 'Value Judgements and Judgements of Reality', advancing these notions most strongly (see his 'The Ethnography of Morals' in *The International Journal of Moral and Social Studies*, Vol. I, no. 1, (1986), pp. 3-20).

Parkin's introduction reflects the volume's general

perplexity; rich in insights and suggestive ideas yet lacking any consolidated approach or formulation of its object. Perhaps this is an inevitable consequence of the manner in which the problem has been posed. In itself evil has no essence, as Hobart endeavours to show. It is contextual and pragmatic. Where evil crystallizes into a definite assertion as it does in Christian theology or among ruling groups in Bali, this should not be taken as an immutable essence but rather as a reflection of social relations and the distribution of power. Dominant or ascendant groups are always ready with a definition of evil as a means of labelling and subjugating opposed factions. Indeed, the relation between power and assignations/perceptions of evil should have received more attention as a factor uniting the various studies.

Such an alignment may be remarked in Lionel Caplan's study of disaffected urban Protestants in South India. Fire and brimstone Pentecostalism has been on the rise among these people as a means of coping with their recent economic demise. Protestantism is largely devoid of emphasis on demons working evil on people from without, substituting an interiorized picture of guilt and personal responsibility which was unsatisfactory, in these city dwellers' eyes, as an explanation of their plight. Whether Pentecostalism will confer any economic improvement remains to be seen, but it does provide them, at least ideologically and/or symbolically, with the power to assert that they are on the right way, and that Hindus and ecumenical Christians (many of whom stand above them socially) are no better then demon worshippers.

Southwold remarks that monotheism is a much richer medium for radical evil than polytheism, where evil tends to appear in a weaker form. Thus there is debate as to whether or not radical evil exists in south Asia, while its existence in the Mediterranean is indisputable. The more decisively and singularly lines of power are drawn, the more purified the notions of good and evil which emerge. In this vein Pocock's superb essay begins by noting that the *Oxford English Dictionary* considers the word 'evil', used adjectivally, to be virtually obsolete. He disputes this, not by arguing that the word is frequently heard, but rather by asserting that it is current and important as a pole of moral thought. Evil is excess, beyond the limits of human ethics and often imaged as monstrous. It does not just draw meaning from within the moral system, it transcends the system altogether; it is the total unconcern for morality. Why then does this term have no frequency of use in English? One reason is the rise of individualism and attendant relativism from the late Middle Ages and particularly through the early modern period.

Macfarlane, in his piece, further offers the rise of capitalism as a factor; the convertibility of everything into monetary terms as the absolute leveller of values. We end with the modern situation where there is no constant, defining ethical locus. The European monarchies have slipped in importance or been erased altogether, and in their place stand constitutions which loosely prescribe liberty and equality for all. Concomitantly there is a loss of willingness among the populace to judge events in absolute terms, for to do so would be to violate the boundaries of the self

and assert that one controls the full moral code. Thus the word 'bad' has been substituted, in most contexts, for 'evil'.

The Anthropology of Evil follows many of the leads and concerns of the earlier volume edited by Professor Parkin, *Semantic Anthropology* (1982). Each of the contributors grapples with indigenous terminology on the way to grasping the moral orientation of the people under study. Each then tries, with varying degrees of success, to translate this picture into Western terms. The volume could have been improved as a whole if Western religious and theological notions of evil had been expounded at greater length. Some of the authors make use of Ricoeur's study of evil in Christianity, and some refer directly to Augustine, Aquinas or other theologians, but the exposition of evil in the Western theological tradition should have been more clearly developed and not left to chance. Taylor's chapter covers some of the ground but could have been longer and more thorough. If Western presuppositions and cultural heritage regarding evil had been more rigorously exposed and agreed upon as a starting point, then the results of the various investigations presented in *The Anthropology of Evil* might have achieved a greater degree of comparability.

CHARLES STEWART

MARC AUGÉ, *The Anthropological Circle: Symbol, Function, History* (transl. Martin Thom)[Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology, 37; gen. ed. Jack Goody], Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press / Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme 1982 [1979]. vii, 123pp, Index. £12.50.

Augé's project is derived from the philosophy of science. His is not another addition to the literature on the history of anthropological theory but a reduction of various practices to certain paradigmatic tendencies which are then demonstrated to have functioned in what have been largely mutually exclusive spaces. Indeed, more than this, Augé suggests that the terms of the various problematics that anthropology has taken to constitute its subject have been phrased in such a way as to make the purposes of the discipline fundamentally incompatible. Thus he states, 'The problem with anthropologists is not so much one of knowing if they do or do not agree, but more one of understanding if they are speaking of the same thing or not' (p. 1). The endeavour to penetrate a simple, chronological and cumulative history of the growth of the subject, and to explain the latter-day fragmentation of it by reference to inherent fractures derived from particular and exclusive concerns developed at its birth, is justified on intellectual and moral grounds.

Augé notes that the increasing fragmentation in method has coincided with the discipline's wider recognition. He attributes this wider following to the sense that western societies have that they have lost qualities of some intrinsic importance which can only be recovered by recourse to the 'primitive'. Philosophers expropriate from anthropology 'evidence' to substantiate definite positions, and in certain instances succeed not only in criticising the West for an alienation defined by the presence of a state apparatus, but also in disfiguring indigenous cultures by a presumptive analysis which deduces its absence and prescribes a qualitatively better life to them as being the result. The introduction of the existential qualifications 'authentic', or 'inauthentic', to a society introduce valuations which prise open and exaggerate existing fractures in Western consciousness and misrepresent and posit a qualitative break between what are said to be two types of society which the academic dichotomy anthropology / sociology anticipates.

Augé's essay, which shows ample discontinuities (a mere 115 pages of text, excluding notes, devoted to such a potentially huge subject), revolves around the twin poles of methodological discontinuity and incompatibility, and moral crisis. Considering the first of these, Augé isolates four basic paradigms which have served to impulse practices, each with distinct effects. These paradigms have clustered anthropological discourse according to their concern with one of two basic questions bearing on semantics and function. He thus repeats the often cited distinction between approaches such as 'culturalist', 'psychoanalytical' and 'structuralist' - which attempt to reveal the 'meaning' of an institution, and those that stem from the Durkheimian tradition, and which not only include 'functionalism', but also its extension as represented by Gluckman and Turner. Here, the terms of the non-institutional world are used to explain the institutional. Thus function is explained by its reduction. For Augé, unlike others, both of these approaches are necessary and neither is reducible to the terms of the other.

Morgan, Tylor, Durkheim and Malinowski are taken as exemplars of the four modes through which anthropological discourse has set certain patterns. The schema involves a contrast between structure and function, and evolution and culture. By considering the dominant movement of the practices of these authors he plots the divergencies and contrasts in the construction of their object. This is not to suppose that other tendencies have not revealed themselves in the particular corpus - merely that those represented are the dominant ones. These figurative paradigms clearly bring out the object as it is variously constituted, and if one accepts the position of Augé that the condition of any discipline is that the subject corresponds to the object then it is undeniable that the discipline is in crisis. It is not sufficient to argue that Augé has not given enough consideration to the authors involved or to the traditions which are reduced to the terms of each paradigm - though this is an open question: any digression in the constitution of the subject is potentially dangerous and holds

pertinent repercussions for the designation of the object itself. This is not something that can be easily be denied.

It is on reflection of the discord between subject and object that Augé introduces the claim of history as a means of increasing the awareness of the subject about its incorporation within historical process (as well as that of its object), and therefore of its own determination. Intellectual crisis leaves the subject, and consequently the object, open to misrepresentation and to an ensuing moral crisis about the relation between them.

The moral crisis has been precipitated by preoccupation with difference. Augé considers that the practice of anthropology, by respecting every culture as unique and irreducible, ignores processes by which change proceeds and alienates one society from another. Further, as is obviously implied, given the preceding arguments on determination between subject and object, part of the resulting uniqueness attributed to a society is generally provided by the method. Thus, at another level, societies are alienated from one another by method. The tendency is seen as its most pernicious when the practice inflicts qualitative distinctions between western and indigenous societies, and it is to this that Augé traces the most virulent of moral dilemmas.

Distinctions between western and indigenous societies based on literacy, the character of the state apparatus, historicity, or the opposition between personal and impersonal relations, are conceived as detrimental. Clearly a gloss so general in its characterisation has been created which cuts across the emphasis of difference as it is upheld on an intra-cultural level to reformulate an abstract opposition at the level of western society and the 'other'. The conditions upon which sociology and social anthropology are predicated, therefore revolve around an arbitrary distinction of object.

For Augé, the implications of this practice are exemplified in Tempels' *La Philosophie bantoue*. Tempels was able to expropriate something of the method of anthropology and its findings in constructing an 'indigenous' philosophy which he claimed to be particular to Black Africa. Augé opines that Tempels' abstract generalisations, which impute rather than discover native values, serve not as a contribution to a specific African identity, but as a gloss for the bad conscience of colonial administrators and missionaries. Tempels readily admits that his work is meant to reveal the presence of certain strands of Christian thought, and chart their later submersion in a preoccupation with fetishism, and advises that the task of the missionary is to be concerned with the development of these original tendencies within the cultural tradition which gave rise to them. According to Augé, 'missionary anthropology' and its attendant literature 'invents the myth of a society enjoying total unanimity and solidarity in order to set up recipes for modified forms of development' (p. 84). He finds the remarkable feat of these authors to have been their ability to discover a 'philosophy', the existence of which is unknown even to its supposed originators.

Philosophy is popularly envisaged as necessary in any definition of ethnic identity, but Augé, quoting Hountondji, refutes

this and insists that what is often served as philosophy is better regarded as 'practical ideology'.

Just as anthropological knowledge has been exploited by those institutions which have wanted to widen their hegemony, so it has proven itself susceptible to exploitation by leftist critics both by their reductive approach to it, and by their abstracting indigenous societies as heirs to some ideal equilibrium which we in the West are denied. Augé writes (p. 91):

> Ethnographic description and phantasy have never been mingled in so cavalier a manner as in the last three or four years, and never have philosophers treated such materials so casually. All and sundry, with great confidence and with a subtly arrogant condescension, scan other peoples' ethnographies (done by others, speaking of others) and decide upon meanings.

Anthropological discourse itself becomes polarised by the uses to which it is put by non-anthropologists, some of which are confused and then reintegrated into the discipline, causing an accentuated fragmentation. The polarisation in the use of discourse leads directly to moral panics and the related debate on partiality and commitment.

In this context, Augé distinguishes between the critical and committed aspects of 'revolutionary anthropology'. As regards the first, it is beyond question that anthropologists should exercise a critical faculty, both in respect to political practices that affect groups with which they are familiar, and in response to the use of skewed anthropological categories. However, the success of this critical prerogative is contingent upon the theoretical and methodological maturity of the subject. A historical perspective is almost always necessary to ensure the validity of such criticism.

The call for a committed anthropology is more problematic, and would endanger the professional practice becoming circumscribed into an ideological discourse. The practice of anthropology can perhaps be of revolutionary import, but to restrict it to the needs and manipulations of any particular group is to deny it access to its object in the same way as scientistic or 'missionary' anthropology can produce similar effects: 'Anthropological theorisation is not a guide to action, a theory of revolutionary or counter-revolutionary practice' (p. 98). That 'anthropology has only to be true to be subversive' Augé readily concedes, but he hastily interjects that the converse does not automatically follow.

It is perhaps surprising that Augé, in such a limited space, succeeds not only in bringing a tentative order to the plethora of often contradictory anthropological approaches but also in deriving from them ethical questions inherent in their practices: a consideration of which is necessary for a mature and professional discipline. The explanation of moral dilemma and crisis of purpose by attributing them to their integration in specifically fragmented anthropological discourses contained in a wider

intellectual / pseudo-intellectual field, makes Augé's book an original contribution to the philosophy of method.

ANTHONY SHELTON

MICHAEL W. YOUNG, *The Magicians of Manumanua: Living Myth in Kalauna*, Berkeley etc.: University of California Press 1983. x, 299pp., Glossary, Plates, Bibliography, Index. £19.95.

This is really rather a brilliant book that succeeds in being both a piece of innovative anthropology and a work of art, though in both cases it does so in an unpretentious way. The book is concerned with the relationship between myth, identity and action in Kalauna, a village on Goodenough Island. Michael Young shows how a consciousness of myth is interwoven within the development of peoples' lives and how it acts on concepts of self to the extent that self at times participates in myth. He presents the life histories of a set of Kalauna elders, people of different personalities and structural positions within the society, and shows how the myths relate to the dynamics of the elders' relationships, as well as how their political action can be seen to merge with mythic discourse. The innovative anthropology grows out of Young's excellent long term fieldwork on Goodenough which has given him the background ethnography, and the depth in time, to attempt such an ambitious study linking cultural process with individual consciousness. Indeed the revision of some of his earlier ideas is clearly in part the result of unpredictable developments in Kalauna life and politics that emerged during the later periods of his research and that required a new interpretative framework.

The writing is superb, in particular in the chapters on myth and life history. The myths themselves are quite engrossing, at times almost shockingly so, and the lightness of Young's interpretation leaves them free to act on the reader. The concluding chapter is perhaps the least satisfactory, but perhaps this is because, inevitably, it required a different style of writing. The contours were less moulded by aesthetic considerations than were those of the preceding chapters, for here Young the anthropologist had to play the dominant role in showing how the individuals' myth-integrated life-histories articulated with Kalauna social process and organisation. The analysis here is fairly mainstream symbolic anthropology, relating Kalauna myths to contradictory features and opposed tendencies in Kalauna life.

Overall I felt I had been reading an anthropological classic which not only merits rereading but which will provide new enjoyment on each occasion.

HOWARD MORPHY

DOMINIQUE CASAJUS, *Peau d'âne et autres contes Touaregs* (with a Preface by Geneviève Calame-Griaule), Paris: L'Harmattan 1985. vii, 167pp., Bibliography, Illustrations. No price given.

JASO readers will be familiar with the work of Dominique Casajus through his publications in the Journal during his period of research in Oxford in the early 1980s. Complementing much of his previous work, the present book is primarily a collection of Tuareg folk tales which he recorded during fieldwork initiated in 1976 among the Kel Ferwan of Niger. The nine tales presented here are introduced by him with notes on transcription, orthography and stylistic detail together with a general commentary on Tuareg oral literature. The texts themselves are fully annotated. He presents a clear and concise account of these tales in parallel French translation alongside the original Tuareg texts, and his annotations explain aspects of translation and points of ethnography which might otherwise remain obscure to those unfamiliar with Tuareg custom.

With an element of modesty, Casajus claims that the primary reason for selecting these particular tales was their beauty - a quality which probably few readers would deny. However, this claim belies his analysis of these tales, in comparison with other forms of Tuareg oral tradition, and the common theme he highlights running throughout the collection. As he points out (p. 2), most previous collections of Tuareg oral literature largely comprise comic and moral tales, animal fables or semi-historical texts; but they pay insufficient attention to aspects of the literature concerned with kinship relationships. Neither of the two indigenous terms *emäy* or *eni* specifically distinguishes tales in which these relationships form the primary subject. (The former denotes tales of possibly real but very ancient events or perhaps fictitious tales embodying a teaching applicable to everyday life, while the latter refers to works of pure fiction conveying no moral at all.) He concludes that the Tuareg seem to lack a term to define this type of text, although *de facto* they appear to constitute some sort of genre. Tales involving kinship relations can be compared with the content of certain parts of a cycle of recitals dealing with a culture hero, Aliguran; but apart from these points of comparison, this heroic cycle (epic or extended heroic narrative perhaps) falls into a category of oral literature distinct from that which is presented in this book (*'les contes'*). Five out of the nine texts deal with the relationship between brother and sister, and two deal with a young girl mistreated by her master or her father. The last two are tales of a group of brothers, in one case, and a group of jealous young girls in the other. The jinn feature in five of the tales, and they often abscond with or hold captive one of the characters of the story.

These tales are also distinguished from other forms of oral recital by their performance. The recitor must render them with care and without error less he or she be cut short by the audience. These renditions, whose form is fixed, include narrated as

well as sung passages; and these latter frequently embody key themes of the tale or act as mnemonics for those who wish to request a particular favourite. Few recitors feel themselves capable of performing them, the author says, even if they know the story-line, whereas every adult and some children know at least two or three animal or comic tales, and can recite large parts of the heroic cycle.

All this does not amount to a definitive typology of Tuareg oral traditions, as is pointed out, but it does suggest that the choice of tales in the collection, according to Tuareg conventions, is not totally arbitrary.

Many of the analytical and comparative points raised by Casajus are reminiscent of a style of presentation exemplified, for example, by G. Calame-Griaule's text-based analyses, which are often set into a framework drawing on cross-cultural themes and motifs from other folk literatures. Indeed, in her Preface to this book, she points out a number of such comparative motifs. Casajus draws on this tradition of analysis in addition to trying to treat the themes as specifically Tuareg. He suggests two issues in the presentation of the texts: a comparison with variants collected among neighbouring societies; and a comparison with famous tales belonging to '*la littérature internationale*' (p. 3). Moreover, the choice of the title of this book - *Peau d'âne* - emphasises one of these underlying themes of comparison. Here, however, it is a brother's incestuous marriage to his sister which leads her to flee the homestead rather than, in the French version, the king's amorous intentions towards his daughter which prompt her to leave. These and other differences between the two tales suggest perhaps something of greater anthropological moment than certain apparent similarities (cf. Thomas Mann's *The Holy Sinner* for that matter); and it might be suggested that these differences are not insignificant when considered in the sociocultural contexts from which they are taken.

Dominique Casajus' purpose from the outset was to present a collection of Tuareg tales; and this collection, together with his commentary, is a valuable addition to the corpus of African oral literature. Elsewhere he has published thorough analytical ethnography which relates Tuareg concepts and rituals to the role and meaning of their oral literature. It would be greedy to ask for such a treatment here. He has given us a set of highly readable texts and some excellent annotations to them. This reviewer looks forward with anticipation, stirred by the quality of this collection, to the publication of his more detailed work at present being prepared.

ROY DILLEY

RICHARD J. GOY, *Chioggia and the Villages of the Venetian Lagoon: Studies in Urban History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985. xvii, 312pp., Appendices, Bibliography, Index, Plates. £37.50 / $54.50.

Social and demographic history, as well as the recognition of the relevance of history to anthropological work, have become so well established over recent years that Evans-Pritchard's expressed concern over the divergence of interest between anthropologists and historians, as well as his view that neither discipline could fully exist without the other, now seems almost an anachronism.

Among others, architectural and urban historians of European cities have recently turned their attention to underprivileged or peripheral areas - now appropriately defined with the linguistic term 'vernacular' - which had previously been ignored, since historians generally concerned themselves with the monumental and artistically distinguished parts of cities. At the same time descriptions of building styles and of the use of space, both inside and outside the house, by semioticists have led to a better understanding of social and family customs, cultural traditions and hierarchies. In practical terms, and more specifically in the Italian context, such work is also related to a new determination on the part of planners (unfortunately rather belated) to satisfy people's cultural needs, as well as their simple need for shelter. Thus an expression like *spazio antropizzato*, which may read like a pretentious adoption of sociological jargon by architectural planners, is, in fact, meant to signal respect for both man and environment. In particular, historical cities are no more to be regarded only as collections of architectural objects of greater or lesser distinction, but are to be treated as products of long-standing processes of adaptation, while knowledge of their history is considered essential to their continued life.

Goy's book is thus a welcome addition to a vast but repetitive and rigidly biased literature. His general thesis is that 'there are common patterns of development in all of these islands from the tiny hamlet of Torcello to the great fishing port of Chioggia and to the lagoonar metropolis, Venice itself'. That point, as well as the contrast between 'cluster' and 'long' village structures, which he sees as a basis for understanding the topography of Venetian streets and canals, is explored and illustrated to the full through his (unavoidably repetitive) analysis of no less than seventeen neighbourhoods in and near Venice.

On the basis of municipal documents, Goy reconstructs their different curves of development: thus, while their origins in the high Middle Ages are all rather indefinite, as are those of Venice itself, we learn that Torcello, which by the ninth century was the most important centre in the lagoon, had already begun to decline by the fourteenth, because of silting and malaria. About Chioggia, the best documented of all the communities, we learn that by the thirteenth century it enjoyed a well developed and autonomous communal life, which revolved around a Major and a Minor Council modelled on those of Venice, and with a Governor appointed by the

Doge. We learn that the *Commune* 'owned' most of the land and fishing enclosures, that it was responsible for the upkeep of canals and waterways, saltpans and lagoons, shores, bridges and quays, and that building controls concerning both style and safety had been enforced since the thirteenth century. Properties were customarily sold by public auction from the steps of the communal palace and, after the destruction of Chioggia by the Genoese in the 1379-1380 war, policies for rebuilding the city gave absolute priority to the Piazza, the main street and the centre, while peripheral areas, like the long seashore village of Sottomarina, were left in a state of almost total abandonment for two subsequent centuries.

While each neighbourhood history is intrinsically interesting, Goy's reading of Venetian street life seems blithely to confuse the past with the present; for example, about the *campi*, i.e. 'open squares originally equivalent to the English village green' which are described as the 'focal point for a parish-community', he writes, 'at the most abstract level, they epitomize the identity of the community itself ... just as Piazza San Marco epitomizes the institution of the Venetian State and its Government'. Here, sadly, Goy's description, although it is unequivocally in the present tense, reads about one hundred years out of date, and an uninformed reader would never know that there is no Venetian State any more, and that 'civic rituals' today are mostly organized by the Tourist Office, so that the *campi* are often the setting of activities, which mainly concern occasional visitors and which are sometimes regarded by inhabitants as a disturbance and a nuisance.

What is more, even if we consider Venice as it may have been in its past as a city state, the *campi* could not, at any time, have been 'smaller versions of St Mark's Square', for, precisely by virtue of its being a focus of Venetian unity, St Mark's was essentially different from, and not just a larger version of, other squares, given that parish and neighbourhood loyalties, skilfully pitted against one another in complementary opposition, were different in essence and not just in degree from feelings of nationality and of loyalty to the State.

Moreover, as I learnt during fieldwork, experience of neighbourhoods and parishes as 'villages' in Venice's historical centre is not a very frequent one these days, since the choice of places for outdoor sociability is usually based on far more complex criteria than those of parish and neighbourhood, and preferences vary greatly with age, sex and personal interests. Today very few women sit by their door to thread beads, knit or embroider, while a likely basis for choosing an outdoor place where they may meet a friend is usually the existence of a congenial café, sometimes quite outside their residential area. In other words, far more articulate and complex networks than those based on neighbourhood ties usually determine where and with whom people will enjoy the outdoors in Venice.

On the other hand, contrary to Goy's statement about Chioggia, as well as Burano, that 'because of its highly linear form ... [the Piazza] renders secondary spaces superfluous ... although

there are minor courtyards', observation clearly shows that, particularly in Burano, the Piazza is certainly not the only nor the main focus of sociability, since even more active centres of social life are the neighbourhood courtyards and *calli*, where people, and especially women, do habitually sit by their doorsteps.

Indeed, use of space in Burano is sexually polarized in ways far more visible than in Venice: men are seen in the Piazza much more frequently than their wives and daughters; when women take a stroll through the main street and Piazza on holidays and Sundays, they do so with their husbands, or with a friend, and conversation is usually more formal and reserved than in the neighbourhood. In Burano, then, contrary to Venice, people do frequently interact in their neighbourhood *campi*, and even in some narrow backstreet and *corte*. Characteristically, bits of street space are 'domesticated' and privatized by the placing of flower pots, household objects and chairs; and it is then such spaces which generally act as filters between public and private spheres.

Goy is generally on safer ground when he describes urban development, for his sociology is, at best, rather naïve; key notions like 'ownership', 'bourgeoisie' and 'social class' are used very loosely and they thus confuse and irritate the reader, while the notion of 'clan' is liberally applied to social groups or families bearing the same name, but with no hint whatsoever of any ties, either of a genealogical or of a solidary nature. His book thus clearly points to ways in which research on the urban history of remote or peripheral areas could be further developed through interdisciplinary collaboration.

For anyone interested in the history of Venice and of its 'vernacular' areas, however, Goy's work is an essential starting point and we certainly must be thankful for the originality of his enterprise and for his diligence and perseverance in the collection of vast manuscript materials.

LIDIA SCIAMA

A.D.C. HYLAND and AHMED AL-SHAHI (eds.), *The Arab House: Proceedings of the Colloquium held in the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 15/16 March 1984*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Centre for Architectural Research and Development Overseas 1986. v., 100pp., Plates, Figures. £5.00.

Until recently there was little serious attention given to the vernacular architecture of the world outside of Europe and the United States. Even now, relative to the diversity of building types and the cultures that have generated them, the number of works is still limited. But the position is changing, and to the growing bookshelf are added several on Arab architecture. These include, for instance, J. Warren and I. Fethi, *Traditional Houses in Baghdad*; R.B. Serjeant and R. Lewcock, *San'a': An Arabian*

Islamic City; F. Varanda, *Art of Building in the Yemen*; P. Costa and E. Vicario, *Yemen: Land of Builders*; S.M. Khan, *Jeddah Old Houses*; K. Talib, *Shelter in Saudi Arabia*; and monographs on Kuwait, Cairo and other cities, together with climatic and environmental collections on architecture and planning in the Middle East. Several of these works have European or American authors, but increasingly there are books appearing by Arab authors, though their interest and concern has not always been early enough to forestall the wholesale destruction of traditional buildings, such as that taking place in Baghdad at the present time.

It is almost inevitable that these works concentrate on the more spectacular examples; the Yemen, for instance, is conspicuously represented because the decorated tower houses are both notable and photogenic. Peasant building receives far less attention. This is partly because its conservation appears less urgent, partly because it makes for less visually attractive presentation. Most of the books mentioned above are lavish in their format, often with liberal use of colour plates. This is not to suggest that they are not serious and substantial; by any standards, Serjeant and Lewcock's *San'a'* is a remarkable work of scholarship and architectural anslysis, for instance. But it does indicate the prevalence of the 'great buildings' concept which lies behind western conventional architectural criticism and history, and the perception of the building as art object which arises from it. It is reasonable to question whether this is an appropriate approach to the architecture of other cultures.

A collection of papers presented at a colloquium held in Newcastle in 1984 and published as *The Arab House* suggests some alternative directions for the study of the architecture of the Arab world. It is an unglamorous product with its text typed and its illustrations either line drawings and diagrams or rather grey photographic half-tones. But this austerity strips the subject of superficial gloss and allows the writers to concentrate on a variety of issues: 'Any consideration of the Arab house ... must cover a widely distributed range of environmental situations with which built form is intimately related to geocultural as much as geophysical space and socio-economic considerations,' summarises Roy Gazzard in one of the opening discursive papers by Mohammed Makiya and himself. In general the contributors concentrate more on these aspects within the house than within the urban context, an exception being a case study of housing in Tunis by Richard Lawless. Functional aspects of Arab houses, particularly as to the courtyard, are dealt with in rather abbreviated note form by Magdi Noor, whose own technical research is cited as an example in Miles Danby's thoughtful discussion of microclimatic aspects and their bearing on housing in the future.

To anthropologists these essential considerations may be less their concern than the social factors, which are carefully outlined in Ahmed Al-Shahi's consideration of kinship relations and the values associated with the house, an issue taken up specifically in the context of Baghdad courtyard houses by Subhi Al-Azzawi and pursued somewhat relentlessly in Tarek Shalaby's study of the

temporal, social and behavioural dimensions of space use within the dwelling. These and other papers illustrate the growing awareness of the many factors bearing upon both traditional housing and future housing policy in specific cultural contexts. A subsequent colloquium on the Arab city would be welcome.

PAUL OLIVER

ANGELA HOBART, *Balinese Shadow Play Figures: Their Social and Ritual Significance* [British Museum Occasional Paper no. 49], London: British Museum Publications 1985. vi., 59pp., Appendix, Maps, Figures, Plates. No price given.

This fairly lengthy Occasional Paper is based on two periods of field research in 1970-2 and 1980, totalling three years, and is a preliminary study for a book. About a third of the study consists of 58 finely delineated figures, some of them by a puppet maker, I Wayan Raos, renowned for his skill and knowledge in the area of Gianyar, where Dr Hobart carried out her field research; and of eleven photographs, taken by Mark Hobart, himself a Balinese specialist, the quality of the reproduction of some of which unfortunately fails to do justice to the quality of the rest of the study. Two maps, listed in the 'Contents', were apparently not bound into the present review copy. The rest of the Paper consists mainly of text which is clearly, authoritatively, and unpretentiously informative, and which deals more or less summarily with the history and repertoire of Balinese shadow plays, the social contexts in which they are performed, who performs them, who makes the figures and how, and the types and the features of the figures. References are few though apposite, but do not include Hedi Hinzler's *Bima Swarga in Balinese Wayang* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff 1981), as the essay was composed before its appearance. Doubtless, Dr Hobart's projected book will take account of Hinzler's study and of other work published since the Paper was composed. It is to be hoped, also, that figures, eventually appearing in the book, which show details of matters such as Figure 1 (p. 5) 'Spatial layout for night performance', will be oriented by some indication of the cardinal directions, without which such figures as this, which is not so oriented, lose much of their interest.

The main interest of Dr Hobart's study, from your reviewer's point of view, lies in its emphasis of the order which pervades the Balinese shadow play and which is in consonance (as one would expect) with the order which other aspects of Balinese life evince. Such an emphasis is not only timely (for there is a deplorable trend in recent writings about the Balinese which either ignores or polemically casts aside this order or claims that discerning

such an order is akin to teaching Balinese dogs how to bark in correct Balinese fashion); it is also faithful to Balinese collective representations. Dr Hobart's focus is not this order itself, so that it is quite understandable that her study does not go very far into it. Her study, though, shows clearly that dichotomy (and other modes of classification by division) is a fundamental principle of this order. Alternation, which is a dynamic expression of this principle of order, Dr Hobart points out (p. 15), is evinced in the painting of puppets as it is evinced, with other periodic modes, in other aspects of Balinese life. It is only to be regretted that, in this connection, more detail is not provided for the reader about this procedure.

Symmetry and asymmetry are not systematically employed as part of the analytical vocabulary of the study, but, still, the study and especially the figures are a rich source of information for someone who does so employ them.

For anyone who is concerned with the shadow play comparatively - and 'the shadow play exists or has existed from China in the east to Morocco and western Europe in the West' (p.2) - or for anyone more narrowly interested in the Balinese, whether on Bali or on Lombok to its east, Dr Hobart's paper is a most useful source of data. It does not much detract from it that references in the text are given only by year; nor that at at least one point, there appears to be a tension with what Dr Hobart suggests at another place in the text; nor that her theorising is at best simply unnecessary and distracting. The central core of the piece consists of social facts which are often new. In these lies the value of *Balinese Shadow Play Figures*, which is considerable. The reviewer looks forward to the appearance of Dr Hobart's extended study of the matters which she handles so ably here.

ANDREW DUFF-COOPER