

demic practice. If these engagements are sometimes more dialogic if not dialectical than Sahlins himself avers, the strength of the present work is not just to foreground this fact but, in the process, to improve decisively on his own great contribution.

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*Pacific Futures*, edited by Michael Powles. Canberra: Pandanus Books and Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, 2006. ISBN 1-74076-187-1; xiii + 260 pages, tables, appendixes, acronyms and abbreviations, notes, bibliographies, index. A\$34.95.

Most of the papers in this edited collection touch on the future of sovereignty and regionalism. In his foreword, the prime minister of Sāmoa, the Hon Tuilaepa Sailele Aiono Malielegaoi, forecasts the imminent end of the current postcolonial era. He predicts this will bring a process of globalization that will carry Pacific Islanders a greater distance from the traditional idea of the nation-state, even as their leaders keep defining their essential interests in relation to the nation. The editor, Michael Powles, specifies that a central theme of the book is the degree to which Pacific people can meet increasing challenges by coalescing in a common identity that will produce greater mutual assistance or even integration.

Part One, "Political and Constitutional Challenges," comprises five chapters, making the following predic-

tions: Political instability will continue until Pacific countries develop their own political systems; alarmist forecasts by impatient neoliberal economic "missionaries" and "one-size-fits-all" governance advocates will probably be counterproductive (Henderson). Indigenous systems will be able to adjust well to political and economic challenges (Teaiwa and Koloamatangi)—particularly where, as in Sāmoa, indigenous institutions show great durability (So'o). Nevertheless, new forces of economic globalization will continue to cause trepidation among traditionalists (Madraiwiwi). Laws will be most successful when they are based on broad participation rather than on model laws ("insert name of country here") or regional resolutions that are not successfully implemented (Kuemlangan). All these chapters are consistent with one another in viewing indigenous foundations as essential for successful development in the future, but they would be better if they expanded on exactly what this will mean in specific and practical terms.

Part Two, "Social and Economic Challenges," consists of seven chapters, making the following diverse predictions: Pacific languages are extremely vulnerable and parents will play a crucial role in preserving them by speaking the languages with their children at home (Hunkin and Mayer). Current and prospective trade policies will have important consequences (Narsey). If the policies of neoliberal "outsiders" such as Helen Hughes are implemented, these will weaken Pacific state sovereignty, citizenship, and rights to land and other resources (Slatter). Adopting some current Australian proposals for a currency union

will be perilous unless there are much higher levels of economic and political integration in greater Oceania (Jayaraman). Giving Islanders greater access to the labor markets of wealthy metropolitan countries such as Australia will be mutually beneficial (Chand). Aid will probably be shifted toward Melanesia and toward regional programs and away from the smallest Island jurisdictions, where internal markets are so tiny that “neoliberal dogma” is particularly unlikely to succeed; the tiniest microstates may see aid diminished as the result of failing to meet conditions requiring marketization (Naidu). Climate change will have serious consequences (Sem).

The book may reflect the priorities of its supporters (the Pacific Cooperation Council of New Zealand and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and some readers may not expect the book to survey a full range of issues or types of perspectives on the future. Yet it is surprising that one of the most original and influential scenarios to come out of New Zealand—the MIRAB (Migration, Remittances, Aid, and Bureaucracy) model of Bertram and Watters—is neglected in this volume, as are important topics such as population growth, health, tourism, and information technology.

Part Three, “A Developing Pacific Community,” contains four chapters that consider Pacific Island regionalism (Herr); the need for flexible bilateral, multilateral, subregional, and regional responses to the growing Asianization of the region (Crocombe); three visions of future architecture of regional international relations (Fry); and the generational change of focus among politicians from sovereign

nationhood toward greater regional collective action (Aqorau).

The book’s most challenging, thought-provoking, and future-oriented chapter is by Crocombe, who poses subtle and complicated questions about how Pacific countries can respond most effectively to future dominance by the major nations of East Asia. How, for example, should Islanders respond to Asians’ likely attempts to change the multi-sovereign-unit framework of the region (promoted by Australia and New Zealand) to a system where all Island countries are reduced to a single vote in international arenas?

The final section, “Finding Pacific Solutions: Some Pacific Voices from Across the Generations,” incorporates six short papers on cooperation (Morauta); the problem of relying too heavily on imported solutions (Slade); the significance of churches in helping to shape socio-political visions (Bryce); the increasing role of Micronesia in regional identity (Underwood); the growing relevance of human rights (Lee); and the crucial importance of Pacific people developing a vision of the period from 2025 to 2055 in order to work toward achieving their goals (Aqorau).

As a whole, this collection contains various observations and a number of forecasts. As in many edited collections, the connections between the chapters are loose and there is little systematic organization and no real theoretical clarification of the authors’ arguments or the relationships between them. The future of the region is a very important topic. Despite this book’s lack of theoretical development, it is valuable in offering

a number of views of the future of the Pacific.

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*Political Parties in the Pacific Islands*, edited by Roland Rich with Luke Hambly and Michael G Morgan. Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2006. ISBN 1-74076-173-1; xiv + 229 pages, maps, tables, glossary, notes, index. A\$34.95.

Political parties are a central feature of the political process in most states, both democratic and otherwise, and thus rightly gain considerable attention from political scientists. As in other respects, so here too systematic scrutiny of the topic has lagged behind when it comes to Pacific Island states and territories. This is a gap that this book aims to fill and in many ways it succeeds in doing so.

*Political Parties in the Pacific Islands* brings together respected, experienced academics, many of them from the countries whose politics and party systems they have been commissioned to write about. Others (such as Ron May, writing about Papua New Guinea) have long been associated with scholarly work on their particular country. The result is an informative volume, well written, detailed, yet clear in depicting developments within particular countries and across the group of countries as a whole.

The book also benefits from its conceptual clarity. The contributors endeavor, with much success, to situate their studies of particular

party arrangements—it is, as most demonstrate, too much in every case to talk of party “systems”—within familiar and accepted parameters of the political science literature. This permits comparisons to be made not only between one Pacific entity’s party system and the next but also, of course, between Pacific parties and developments as they have evolved elsewhere—in Western countries, but also in Africa, Asia, and in other island communities (in the Caribbean, for instance).

While the title of the book suggests a panoramic coverage of “the Pacific Islands,” as is often the case with such ambitions the final product is somewhat less comprehensive. For the most part, the focus is largely on Melanesia, no doubt reflecting, at least in part, the publication’s Australian origins. The very useful case studies, in which historical perspectives supplement contemporary assessments, review the origins and functions of political parties in Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor), Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, and Fiji, with the closing chapter on Sāmoa perhaps allowing the editor, with his publishers, greater scope for deploying “the Pacific Islands” in the title.

An additional three chapters introduce the book, one (by the editor) striving to offer an overall analytical assessment of Pacific political parties; a second, by Steven Ratuva, looking at linkages between political parties and “tradition”; and a third, by Jon Fraenkel, examining the impact of Pacific electoral laws on Pacific politics and political parties. The themes and