analysis, and instead summarize the media representation of the Ok Tedi crisis in Australia.

Scholarly discourses in the remaining collection of papers prioritize indigenous responses to environmental impact. John Burton, an ethnographer from Pacific Social Mapping in Australia, astutely observed that the \textit{terra nugax} (land of no real value) paradigm that informed \textsc{otml–bhp} operations was not only lost on indigenous people in the socio-ecological region who called their discovered landscapes home, but also misled managers of the political economy in which mining was taking place. John Burton convincingly critiques Ok Tedi Mining’s managed science as bad science because in narrowly complying with government requirements it failed to monitor impact. Compelling experience-near ethnography from Stuart Kirsch, an anthropologist from the University of Michigan, establishes how the Yonggom “became leaders of a global alliance of landowners, ecological activists, anthropologists and lawyers who successfully mounted a worldwide campaign to stop the mine from polluting the Ok Tedi and Fly Rivers” (128). Stories from several other members of this global alliance appear in the book. Alex Maun, the prominent Yonggom plaintiff in the legal action against Broken Hill Proprietary, details the devastating environmental assault that mining has had on his homeland. John Gordon, partner in Slater and Gordon, outlines the involvement of his legal firm in the alien tort court action against Broken Hill Proprietary. Brian Brunton of Greenpeace Pacific in Papua New Guinea and Chris Harris of the Mineral Policy Institute in Australia provide valuable perspectives from nongovernment organizations on the Ok Tedi environmental crisis. The Yonggom-based popular ecological resistance movement has inspired global environmental activism to hold multinational corporations accountable in the home country for their environmental impact overseas. Meanwhile, the mine remains under scrutiny of the global alliance to fulfil its commitment to tailings containment. In their final analysis, Banks and Ballard narrowly view the implications of the Ok Tedi settlement in terms of regional stakeholders, thus failing to appreciate the global emergence of radical and popular environmentalism in the PNG minerals industry.

DAVID HYNDMAN  
University of Queensland


The outstanding political adversaries in Fiji’s transition to independence were Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, now the republic’s president, and Ambalal Dahyabhai Patel, who died in 1969 at the age of sixty-six. Readers who experienced the Fiji of the 1960s will have vivid memories of the brilliant and vibrantly charismatic Patel capti-
vating crowds of thousands and continually keeping his political opponents on edge by his unrelenting campaign in Fiji and abroad for radical constitutional reform. Ratu Mara’s ability to mobilize Fijians behind the Alliance Party owed much to the threatening foil of Patel’s achievement in unifying Indians in the project of replacing the communal or racial electoral system with a common franchise, and ending Fijian and European political privilege. Patel and other Indian leaders had first made their demand for a common electoral roll in the late 1920s. But in the 1960s, as self-government approached, Fijian and European leaders, fearful of Indian political dominance, still insisted the time was not ripe.

In Fiji’s new constitution, promulgated in July 1998, a first step has at last been taken toward a realization of Patel’s vision by making 35 percent of seats in the lower house common roll seats. Brij Lal, himself a Fiji Indian and a professor of history at the Australian National University, helped design this constitution as a member of the 1995 Constitutional Review Commission.

Rarely does a leader emerge with Patel’s combination of intellectual power, oratorical skill, vision, and energetic resolve. Lal’s book evocatively recounts the public life and contributions of this remarkable personality. After sketching the emergence of Indian society and politics in Fiji, the setting into which Patel stepped at the age of twenty-five in 1928, Lal describes aspects of life in Patel’s natal Gujarat state in India early this century that profoundly influenced his outlook and goals. Patel was the pampered firstborn in a landed family of the Patidar group, the most economically and politically powerful class in the Kheda district. Here Gandhi launched his peaceful resistance to British rule, and the Patidars became famous supporters of the movement. Patel, more than anyone else, brought the spirit of the movement to Fiji, having witnessed its birth as a youth.

While studying law in London, Patel befriended the Anglo-Jewish lawyer Henry Polak, champion of the overseas Indians, who inspired him to serve the cause of Indian welfare in Fiji. Foregoing what would certainly have been an outstanding professional and public career in India, Patel settled in Fiji and joined the campaign for political equality with the minority European settler community, working closely with another young lawyer from Gujarat (S B Patel) who had been a secretary to Gandhi. For many years the “leverage of India,” exercised especially by these two men, was important for Fiji Indians as a counter to the colonial government’s favored treatment of Fijians and Europeans.

Lal’s account emphasizes that the impact of India on Patel’s public life in Fiji was not merely political. Patel had grown up in the Vaishnav tradition of Hinduism, which encouraged sympathy with the “the lower castes and classes.” Particularly in his work for the South Indians’ cultural and educational body, the Sangam, based in western Fiji, Patel combined his passion for spiritual values with a commitment to social reform. Though devoted mainly to assisting Indian groups, he generously helped indigenous Fijians in difficulties with courts and officials.
This social commitment energized Patel’s leadership of cane farmers in their struggle against the Australian company (Colonial Sugar Refining Company) that monopolized the sugar industry and was inclined to treat its Indian contract farmers and laborers like serfs. In Parliament he focused especially on social reform issues: “At the core of his vision,” Lal observes, “was the call for an open, equitable, and non-racial society.” Some readers will doubtless be impatient with Lal’s very detailed accounts of Patel’s contributions in the industrial conflicts and in the colonial parliament. But this material is worthy of close reading, for Lal’s astute treatment of it vividly illuminates Patel’s exceptional intellect, courage, endurance, and strategical skills.

For all these qualities, Patel’s enthusiasm for aggressive leadership against colonialist hegemony flagged in the 1950s, partly because of rivalry with other Indian leaders who at that time controlled greater organizational resources (particularly the Northerner Hindu Vishnu Deo). Further reasons Lal adduces for Patel’s temporary political eclipse were the surprising decline of newly independent India as a force in support of radical challenge to colonial rule, and splits among the South Indians who had become a major base of his popular support. Patel returned to public life via the sugarcane farmers’ boycott of 1960. But he had to be persuaded to join the strike leadership by Siddiq Koya and Swami Rudranand, who then pressured him to resume his political career just as the British began to prepare Fiji for self-government.

In the last four chapters, Lal discusses Patel’s role in the politics of decolonization, particularly his leadership of the Federation Party, based initially on the farmers’ unions, and his renewed arguments for common roll in the petitions, conferences, and parliamentary debates concerned with constitutional change. In his work as member for Social Services in the mid-1960s, in the trial cabinet that preceded the ministerial system, he quickly won the respect of colonial officials for dedicated work on educational and other social reforms.

Lal goes so far as to suggest that Patel was the decisive force for the ending of colonial rule. In support of this claim Lal emphasizes Patel’s steadfast commitment to the vision of a united nation based on a common franchise, his being the first local leader to call for independence from British rule, and his efforts from the mid-1960s to maintain United Nations pressure on the UK government.

However, on the basis of my own field study of political change during the late 1960s, I believe that the author’s deep admiration for his subject has led him to a rather one-sided account of the forces for and against change at that time. While Patel was off the political stage in the 1950s, other Indian leaders began to press for an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council. By 1961, partly due to pressure from the United Nations, Britain wished to end its rule, and became impatient with the indigenous Fijian leaders’ resistance to change. Steps toward self-government were being taken before Patel’s reluctant return to political life. His adversaries were the Fijian and European leaders, far more than the colonial
government. While, as Lal notes, Patel’s opponents acknowledged the virtue of his vision, their quarrel was with the uncompromising urgency of the demands, for they feared that in a common franchise the Indians’ demographic majority would result in their political control.

In particular, Lal has missed the strength of popular Fijian distrust and antagonism toward Patel and the Federation Party. Although the challenge to European power and prejudice held some appeal, the common roll demand and the criticisms of Fijian chiefs and the Fijian Administration did far more to alienate Fijians than to encourage their interest in reforms. In fact, Patel admitted to me after the 1966 elections that his first strategic aim was not to forge interethnic unity but to demonstrate to influential authorities outside Fiji (the UK Government and the United Nations) that Indians, then 51 percent of the population, were united in his party.

The strident militancy provoked the crisis of 1968—a Fijian protest movement that came close to violence. The episode induced Patel to begin to replace intransigence with conciliation. But many observers familiar with the period would argue that it was most of all Patel’s death a year later, and the passing of leadership to his more pragmatic Fiji-born lieutenant, Siddiq Koya, that facilitated the rapprochement with Fijian leaders that led remarkably quickly to independence. It might thus be argued, against Lal’s theme, that in the achievement of self-government and independence, Patel’s final campaign was redundant if not obstructive, for all its brilliance and drama.

Nonetheless, many who knew Patel, including some of his staunchest political opponents, were moved by the power of his intelligence and vision, and by his simple humanity. Lal succeeds admirably in conveying these qualities to the reader. I highly recommend the book, as a lucid, informative, and stimulating contribution to scholarship on Fiji’s political history. It is a fine complement to Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara’s recently published memoirs, and maintains the energetic engagement and eloquence that we have come to expect in Brij Lal’s work.

ROBERT NORTON
Macquarie University


Griffen’s With Heart and Nerve and Sinew is a collection of poems, stories, essays, letters, speeches, excerpts from diaries, copies of newspaper and journal articles and letters to the editor, photographs, color reprints of oil paintings, a play, personal reflections, an editorial cartoon, an editorial, and a transcript of a taped conversation among a panel prompted by the question “Where were you on the day of