Book and Media Reviews
Micronesians, it will have provided an important and felicitous service.

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Polynesian Outliers: The State of the Art will likely be the definitive general reference on Polynesian outliers for years to come. The so-called Polynesian outliers consist of two dozen widely separated and generally small islands that lie outside of the Polynesian triangle and whose inhabitants speak Polynesian languages and display a variety of customs and traits often associated with Polynesian cultural contexts. This volume skillfully brings together fifteen leading experts from varied disciplines including cultural anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, and cultural geography in an exceptionally productive synthesis.

In their introduction, Richard Scaglion and Richard Feinberg present a comprehensive and detailed overview of the “state of the art” in Polynesian outliers that includes sections on “Outlier Groupings and Relations” and “Studies in Polynesian Relations.” The authors recognize that the outliers comprise a residual category rather than a unified group of islands and associated sociocultural phenomena. Complementing the text are a useful table and two maps locating the Polynesian outliers in cultural and regional contexts. Unfortunately, a couple of the outliers described in the text could not be found on either map.

Chapters 2 and 3 concern the prehistory and archaeology of the Polynesian outliers. Together, these two chapters present a comprehensive overview of past and recent archaeological investigations on these islands. In chapter 2, Patrick Kirch reviews the more recent archaeological work performed in the Northern Outlier Atolls, the Southeast Solomon Islands outliers, and the Vanuatu outliers. Using detailed archaeological evidence, Kirch amply shows that the prehistoric sequences of investigated outliers reveal varied and complex settlement histories of these small islands. He goes on to argue that while the outliers are not simply remains of early Polynesian migration, neither are they isolated enclaves of Polynesian drift voyagers who arrived following the settlement of the Polynesian Triangle. Kirch points out some important theoretical concerns: “First, it is clear that outlier culture histories are often as complex as those of major southwestern Pacific archipelagos, and that no single framework or theory can account for outlier settlement as a whole. Each outlier must be investigated on its own terms. Second, the very term ‘outlier’ (while too ingrained to abandon) is misleading, a misnomer. Though they are outlying with respect to Triangle Polynesia, these islands are central to the prehistory of the entire southwestern Pacific, and their sequences mirror major cultural currents that have created distinctive patterns of ethnic diversity in eastern Melanesia” (25).
In Chapter 3, Mike Carson notes that long-term archaeological research has focused on three main topics: 
“1) the timing or dating of Polynesian outlier settlement chronology; 2) interactions between outlier populations and other communities; and 3) maintenance or creation of a distinctive cultural identity in an outlier context” (27). His overview of these three topics is replete with detailed discussions of the prehistoric material culture based on currently available data. He uses these data in proposing a useful summary of similarities and differences in regional patterns and chronological trends for the outliers of Nukuoro, Kapingamarangi, Tikopia, Anuta, Taumako, West Futuna, Mele-Fila, and West Uvea.

In Chapter 4, Robert Early presents an extremely comprehensive review of prior Polynesian outlier linguistic research and new trends. After cataloging the outlier languages and offering demographic information about them, he discusses linguistic relationships. The theoretical issue of the extent to which contact between the outlier languages and their non-Polynesian neighbors has had an effect on the languages is addressed in detail. Early also examines other language-related issues, especially the current status of outlier languages with respect to their functions, their potential endangerment, and the extent to which they have been studied. The author adeptly marshals a variety of linguistic data that reveal similarities and differences among fifteen outlier languages. He includes an excellent discussion of existing and new information sources, including indexes, for outlier language research.

Chapter 5 on seafaring, by Feinberg and Marianne George, is a short but comprehensive chapter, replete with photos of various forms of Polynesian outlier seafaring. The authors provide detailed discussions of canoe construction and design, sailing techniques, navigation, social relations, and change. They note that it is difficult to make generalizations about Polynesian outlier seacraft, owing to variation in technical developments. The section on “Canoe Construction and Design” offers an especially interesting and detailed technical description of the making of traditional seacraft.

Chapters 6 and 7, by Paul Roscoe and Tim Bayliss-Smith, respectively, present overviews of economic concerns during the eras of colonial and postcolonial contact. Rather than focusing on subsistence production or the modes and techniques of manufacturing tools, infrastructure, transportation, ornamentation, and dress, Roscoe instead addresses the social and cultural aspects of production among some of the Polynesian outliers. In contrast, Bayliss-Smith emphasizes the quantitative aspects of subsistence production on Bellona, Tikopia, Anuta, Ontong Java, Takū, and Kapingamarangi by examining the production of yams, various forms of taro, and other aroids. However, he also discusses the kinship links through copra-making groups, fishing groups, and trading networks, such as on Ontong Java.

In Chapter 8, Feinberg and William Donner present a highly informative and detailed discussion of kinship and social structure in the Polynesian outliers. They present a thorough review of
early kinship and social organizational studies and go on to consider kinship terminology, social relations between kin, adoption and fosterage, changing systems of social relationships, and comparisons. Perhaps the most interesting section concerns “Flexibility and Structure: Symbolic Foundations of Outlier Kinship,” in which the authors demonstrate not only how social structure varies from one outlier to another but also how anthropological methods for documentation and interpretation of symbols of outlier kinship systems have changed over time.

Chapter 9, by Scaglion, picks up where Chapter 8 leaves off by addressing the sociopolitical organization of Polynesian outliers. Specifically, the author examines outlier social stratification and political organization in ways that show how the precontact outliers, in contrast with other Pacific groups, seem to have more in common with each other with respect to the other forms of social behavior addressed in this monograph. Scaglion also provides a thorough theoretical review of the concept of “chiefdom” in Polynesian cultures and then examines it in the different outliers throughout the region.

In Chapter 10, Richard Moyle examines performing arts in Polynesian outliers, specifically, the place of singing and dancing in outlier ritual. He also discusses the influence of Christianity on expressive culture among the people of the outliers. In terms of singing occasions, both sacred and secular performances are described in detail. This is followed by a long section on song performance in terms of instruments and nomenclature, performance categories, imported instruments, and song structure.

Chapter 11, by Feinberg, Judith MacDonald, and Roger Lohmann, offers an extensive literature review of prior research on religion in the outliers. The authors note that comparative studies of religions practiced in the outliers prior to Western contact and Christianization suggest patterns founded on a shared cultural ancestry. Reviewing what is known of Polynesian outlier religion, both past and present, they offer comparisons between the outliers and elsewhere in the Pacific. The authors usefully frame religion in a manner that encompasses “a variety of metaphysical beliefs and related practices” (187), and they deftly show how spiritual beings and spiritual powers, as manifestations of spiritual will, persist and change through time.

Chapter 12, by Anne Chambers and Keith Chambers, highlights a number of important issues pertaining to some inconclusive efforts at comparison and generalization raised in the preceding chapters. The authors remind us that, owing to numerous points of divergence, we can understand that the outliers form a series of loose cultural configurations. Their similarities tend to be consistent with a generally shared origin in the western portion of Polynesia; however, their differences are also substantial. Thus it is not possible, they argue, to make simple sociocultural generalizations of various outlier phenomena. The authors show that because an updated baseline (this monograph) has been developed regarding outlier languages, kinship, prehistories, economies, sociopolitical organization, and other cultural attri-
butes, the opportunity now exists for exploring new issues in these islands.

A significant contribution to Polynesian research specifically and Oceanic anthropological research in general, *Polynesian Outliers: The State of the Art* will indeed serve as an essential baseline for present and future outlier studies. As a teaching tool, this collection may be too advanced for many undergraduate contexts but would be excellent for graduate students with prior coursework in Pacific Islands studies or Oceanic anthropology.

**MARK A CALAMIA**

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The origins of *The Haus Tambaran of Bongiora* are arresting. Between 1972 and 1977, Godfried Gerrits was a doctor and the provincial officer for leprosy and tuberculosis control at the hospital at Maprik Town in the East Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG). In early 1973, people from Bongiora village, a few miles to the northwest of Maprik, offered to sell him some carvings associated with a korombo (haus tambaran in Tok Pisin) that had been built in Bongiora in 1965. In 1972, these carvings had been used in the Utmandji and Kimbi male initiation sequences, and in offering the remnants to Gerrits, Bongiora people appear to have been hoping for a novel recycling of their art production. Instead, Gerrits negotiated a deal through which they would reconstruct and restore the two initiation chambers involved in the 1972 initiations. Subsequently, he had these reconstructions removed to European museums: the Putilaga chamber, in which the Kimbi sequence was staged, went to the Museum der Kulturen in Basel, and the Lungwallndu chamber, used for the Utmandji stage, to the Linden Museum in Stuttgart. Anyone who has been fortunate to see either of these truly breathtaking displays will know how indebted we are to Gerrits for his efforts in documenting Abelam culture.

Following an introduction, the book’s second chapter provides an extremely detailed description of the Bongiora korombo, which was still standing and in relatively good condition in 1973. As many readers will know, the Abelam became famous for these remarkable structures. Their enormous, cantilevered facades, painted with row upon row of looming, ritual faces, constitute a civil engineering triumph and, together with the profusion of other graphic and plastic art that adorned them, an exemplar of just how spectacular artistic production can be in small-scale societies.

The greater part of the book, though, is taken up by the topics mentioned in the subtitle—the initiation sequence associated with the Abelam Tambaran and yam cults, both of