

Book and Media Reviews

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Making Micronesia: A Political Biography of Tosiwo Nakayama, by David Hanlon. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0-8248-3846-1; 328 pages, illustrations. Cloth, US\$55.00.

Biography, in a conventional Western sense, tends to follow the trajectory of an individual from birth to postmortem legacy, focusing on the individual's linear path through the world. In *Making Micronesia*, historian David Hanlon reconstructs the life of Tosiwo Nakayama, the pioneering first president of the Federated States of Micronesia, yet he does so in terms of a grand oceanic voyage that is anything but linear or individualistic. Hanlon shows how, like all Pacific wayfaring, Nakayama's career involved immense wisdom and navigational skill that triangulated between social and intellectual genealogies, multiple sites, sometimes-conflicting trans-Oceanic affiliations, and major superpowers. This is thus not only a biography but also a Pacific Islands studies-informed history of the cultural contexts and eras linked by Nakayama's life and by the literal and metaphoric ocean worlds he inhabited. It encompasses the lives of whole communities and a worldview that visualizes myriad islands and atolls as part of a larger global neighborhood.

Hanlon, who knew Tosiwo Nakayama personally and had the opportunity to interview him in the years before his death in 2007, describes his surprise in learning that Nakayama had discarded all of his presidential papers. Their absence compelled Hanlon to embark on a journey far beyond the archives,

resulting in a meticulous and insightful study of a true Oceanian leader and the perspectives that influenced him. As in his other books, *Upon a Stone Altar* (1988) and *Remaking Micronesia* (1998), Hanlon here is passionate in his critique of the European, Japanese, and US regimes that gave birth to the colonialist construct of "Micronesia" in the first place. He contrasts this limiting notion of region, however, with the Micronesia that Nakayama imagined—an archipelagic world that was vast and diverse but localized to the needs of its people (5). In retracing how Nakayama realized this vision, Hanlon thus provides both a long-overdue portrait of a major Micronesian leader and a detailed look at the challenges of decolonization and the intricacies of affiliation, land, and power in this part of Oceania.

Tosiwo Nakayama was born in Namonuito, one of the largest atolls on earth and the eastern edge of the precolonial sawei, an expansive exchange and voyaging network of islands that extended all the way to Yap. Narrating the interlinkages between Nakayama's home island of Piserach and the other places he grew up—the Mortlock Islands and different islands in Chuuk Lagoon—Hanlon weaves between deep time and precontact histories of voyaging and Islander settlement to illustrate an intricate genealogy of places and people. Through his mother Rosania, Nakayama inherited a strong navigator heritage and an affiliation to a clan that was widely dispersed throughout Micronesia. It is into these ancestral islands and oceans that Spanish first trespassed in the sixteenth century, followed by Germans and Japanese in

the nineteenth century. A subsequent wave of migration from Japan brought Nakayama's father Masami to Chuuk in 1915; coming from Yokohama at the age of seventeen, Masami got a job working for Nanyō Bōeki Kaisha, a trading firm that would over the next thirty years become a pillar of Japanese commerce and infrastructure throughout the region. Masami married Rosania, and the couple had six children, the third of whom was Tosiwo. Although Tosiwo was never formally schooled in Japanese (despite his entitlement to a higher standard of education), his Japanese citizenship within the former empire enabled him to have a different perspective and, indeed, yet another affiliation that stretched even further across the Pacific Ocean.

Reading about the childhood of Tosiwo Nakayama through to adulthood, one gets an intimate and personal sense of the turbulent transitions that ensued throughout the twentieth century in the islands. Though relatively brief, the section on the prewar Japanese era under the League of Nations Mandate provides a sense of the relative peacefulness and prosperity that Micronesians experienced from the 1920s through the mid-1930s, despite negative experiences of racist policies and harsh discipline. The shift to fortification of the islands and the influx of Japanese military personnel completely transformed Chuuk Lagoon into the epicenter of the Japanese Pacific Fleet. The Nakayama family, with its Japanese father, fared better than most during the war, and the hardships of battle and ruin actually resulted in more closeness between Chuukese and Japanese residents (55).

After the war, however, Masami—who had wanted to remain in Chuuk—was repatriated to Japan along with all other Japanese survivors, painfully separating the family until Tosiwo reunited with his father fifteen years later. The several decades that followed brought yet another wave of imposing and disempowering colonization, this time from the United States, which frustrated the future leader and encouraged him to think deeply about the need for Micronesians to govern themselves (60).

The long era of US rule, first with the Navy Administration and then under the Trust Territory—so riddled with mismanagement and neglect that Hanlon jokingly refers to it as the “rust territory” (92)—was in itself a classroom for Nakayama in the political education he would later use to steer Micronesia toward self-determination. He studied in the American school system in Weno, eventually excelled in English and his other studies, and was noticed by US officials who offered him jobs working in the Island Affairs office. He worked first as a clerk and later as a district tax collector and translator, positions that earned him trust from all sides but challenged him to negotiate the tricky balance between Islander and American hierarchies. In 1955, he moved to Honolulu to study at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where he studied with other future Micronesian leaders and was deeply influenced by the struggle of Native Hawaiians. He returned to Micronesia and served as advisor to the Trust Territory; he was involved in training local officials in political procedures as part of its move toward democratic self-rule.

He later participated in the Council of Micronesia, which evolved into the Congress of Micronesia, through the 1960s–1970s, where he was quite outspoken in his criticism of the Trust Territory administration and about his support for self-government.

During his time as a senator, Nakayama believed strongly in a Micronesia-wide identity that was organic to the islands, not imposed from the outside, and Hanlon draws on several of his speeches to illustrate Nakayama's unflagging sense of vision. He imagined all Micronesians in the Trust Territory as sharing an identity that transcended their diverse languages, from Palau all the way to the Marshall Islands, and he held onto the hope that this solidarity would lead to economic prosperity as one sovereign nation. He played a pivotal role in the drafting of a constitution that emphasized this united vision and full independence from the United States. When the question of whether to adopt this constitution was put up to a plebiscite, the people of both the Marshall Islands and Palau rejected it, leading to their own trajectories as new nations. However, the positive results in Chuuk, Pohnpei, Yap, and Kosrae paved the way for the creation of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Nakayama was elected to be the first president in 1979, serving for two terms, and was instrumental in bringing about the approval of the Compact of Free Association in 1986. He later served as a consultant to the FSM government.

Making Micronesia consistently evokes metaphors of voyaging and Nakayama's oft-used idea of the Micronesian nation as a canoe, and in doing so this book gives its reader

a view of contemporary Micronesian history that honors the ingenuity of trans-Oceanic relations, Island leadership, and commitment to places and people. While this book does not delve deeply into the hierarchies of female power that are so important to the many matrilineal societies of Micronesia, it is no doubt a nuanced study of the world of interisland politics so dominated by men. In that sense, it offers a portrait of Island masculinities and consensus leadership that contrast sharply with US paternalism during the Trust Territory period. As Hanlon writes, the voyage of the Federated States of Micronesia invites us to see possibilities of the nation-state beyond "the limiting framework of Euro-American understandings of nationalism" (246). Nakayama constantly negotiated personally and politically across the sheer distances between myriad Island communities at the local, district, and regional level; between chiefly and democratic power; and between the United States and Japan. It is remarkable—despite his many critics—how gracefully, courageously, and patiently he managed to navigate often-choppy waters.

David Hanlon, not unlike Tosiwo Nakayama, is a humble but assertive navigator; he is deeply committed and rigorous in his approach. His research took him from Hawai'i to multiple Micronesian islands, Japan, the continental United States, and many other sites. I was fortunate to see him present his work on two separate occasions in Tokyo, where it was clear that his research resonated with Japanese scholars who had personally known Nakayama as well. Especially given that *Making Micronesia* was awarded the prestigious 2015 Terada

Mari Japan Study Encouragement Award in honor of its contributions to scholarship that bears on Japanese history, I think a Japanese translation of this book, including a refinement and expansion on the Japanese dimensions of Nakayama's life and career, would be welcome in Japan. Such an edition might highlight the often overlooked stories of Pacific Islanders of Japanese heritage in Micronesia, while exploring the complex transitions between prewar Japanese and postwar US domination in Northern Oceania.

Modern leadership by Islanders has long been framed, coached, or measured by the discourses of policy makers in metropolises like Tokyo, Washington, Canberra, Paris, or Wellington, but the careers of leaders like Tosiwo Nakayama demonstrate how this not need be the case. In bringing forth this book, Hanlon has given us not only a political biography but also a refreshing and bold revisitation of Nakayama's questioning of what it means to be Micronesian in the first place. This could not be more timely: in recent years, the future of the Federated States of Micronesia has become more and more uncertain as the termination of compact funding approaches in 2023, and even Nakayama's childhood home of Chuuk has been considering secession. *Making Micronesia* provides a much-needed infusion of Nakayama's innovative and hopeful spirit. But more importantly, this book is an empowering story of the fight for sovereignty and unity amid incredible adversity, with potential to inspire readers throughout Oceania.

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The Kanak Awakening: The Rise of Nationalism in New Caledonia, by David Chappell. Pacific Islands Monograph Series 27. Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies and University of Hawai'i Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0-8248-3818-8; xx + 289 pages, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, us\$60.00.

On the verge of a referendum concerning New Caledonia's possible self-determination, *The Kanak Awakening* provides useful insight into the country's recent political history, offering purchase on the historical complexity of the contemporary situation. A primary strength of this volume is the nuanced methodology employed by David Chappell, a long-established specialist in Pacific history. The various dimensions that led to the events described by the author are carefully contextualized as he navigates between individual trajectories and collective reverberations, local struggles and large national issues, while keeping the global context in sight. Revelatory focal events are situated historically, and repercussions in the present serve as harbingers of issues that arise over time.

As the title announces, the Kanak political awakening is the book's singular and salient focus. Chappell highlights the fault lines of this evolving identity along various dimensions including key actors' life courses, stances on independence or autonomy, reformist or revolutionary orientations, and positions vis-à-vis the urban-rural divide. Outside influences in consolidating this emerging Kanak discourse—for instance, the prominence of socialist influences—are shown to operate in parallel to the revival of custom in Kanak political