

## Book and Media Reviews

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*The Contemporary Pacific*, Volume 26, Number 2, 555-587  
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Pacific (Micronesia and Polynesia) are almost absent in the volume, except for some brief references in the introduction and the afterword. This is unfortunate, as a regional interdenominational comparison would have revealed several issues. For example, while some chapters emphasize the relationship between Christianity and national identity, the internationality of Roman Catholicism is often problematic, with the authority of Rome decreeing or influencing local and national practices and belief. Likewise, the relationship between kastom and Roman Catholicism has seen a dynamic profoundly different from that between Protestantism and kastom. An indicator of such denominational strife is elucidated in Scott's chapter, wherein Seventh-Day Adventists see the Catholic/kastom underground as Satanic. Significant is also the extent to which Protestantism seems to influence the anthropology of Christianity. By focusing on texts and words (Tomlinson and Keane), and by suggesting a break with tradition and the past (Robbins), the volume seems to follow the Reformation's agenda, which is closely related to notions of modernity. Another issue is that while, as Handman notes, Protestantism emphasizes the individual's inner belief and "making immediate a transcendent God" (24), the contributors here tend to focus predominantly on the more accessible outward manifestations, such as politics in the public domain. In other words, the volume also raises questions about the (Christian) politics of the anthropology of Christianity with regard to Oceania. But this said, there is much to be lauded in this volume, especially

the diverse insights into what local people make of Christianity, as well as the distinctive forms that local politics take in the wake of contemporary religion.

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*Mr. Pip*. Feature film, 130 minutes, DVD, color. 2012. Written, produced, and directed by Andrew Adamson; distributed by Focus Features International. English with subtitles. DVD/BLU-RAY available April 2014.

"Imagine" is the key message in the film *Mr. Pip*, which brings Charles Dickens's novel *Great Expectations* into a Bougainville village classroom amid the turmoil of civil war and trade blockades after the Bougainville Copper Mine crisis. In the film, set in the 1980s, when the rebels were fighting Papua New Guinea forces known as the Redskins to regain control of the island of Bougainville, the village school reopens with the one European on the island, Mr Watts, also known as Mr Pip, leading the few remaining students through a reading of *Great Expectations* each day. In a period of disruptions and disjunctions, "Mr Dickens" becomes a key figure for the students as they seek to imagine life in nineteenth-century England, half a world away. "Fiction can be dangerous in times of war," as the film's publicity slogan underlines.

The plot of *Mr. Pip*, which is based on Lloyd Jones's Booker Prize-listed novel of the same name, explores the expectations of one student in

particular, Matilda, as she tries to imagine the life of Mr Pip in England a century before and is building her own expectations of a life beyond her island. Through their classes, the students get a glimpse of Mr Pip's experiences growing up a hundred years earlier, exploring his expectations for his life, moving from an English village forge, and becoming apprenticed to a lawyer in London. So Matilda in Bougainville in the 1980s dreams of a life far away from her village, perhaps with her father in Australia. Mr Watts, the schoolteacher, encourages her imagination (and that of the other pupils), not the least to understand his own relationship with a terminally ill village woman whom he met while she was studying dentistry in New Zealand and who was the one who drew him to Bougainville. Each day he pulls his wife, standing on a wooden carriage, well dressed, through the village, until she becomes too sick and eventually dies, leaving unfulfilled her hopes of bringing her dentistry skills to the village. As Mr Watts becomes more bereft, he takes on the image of Mr Pip in the students' eyes, and the combined image allows Matilda and the other pupils to reach beyond the crisis that surrounds them. Seeing Bougainville through the eyes of Matilda and the other students enables us to share the many interwoven complexities of life during the crisis.

The rebels want to seek out this strange white man (Mr Watts/Mr Pip/Mr Dickens), but when none of the village people can produce him or the book the students are talking about, the rebels torch all their possessions and their houses, with the perverse

exception of Mr Watts's. The Redskins continue to pursue this complicated stranger until he is caught, killed, horribly mutilated by machete, and bodily fed to pigs. Matilda's subsequent escape encompasses many of her imagined expectations.

The cast of the film is impressively drawn from Bougainville Islanders, while Mr Pip is portrayed by the well-known British actor Hugh Laurie. Matilda, the fourteen-year-old student played with extraordinary expertise by newcomer Xzannjah, is supported by her mother and other young people cast in the schoolroom. The logistics of filming in a Bougainville village with an untrained cast posed many challenges for the director, Andrew Adamson, who was able to draw on his own life as a youngster growing up in Papua New Guinea. He based the film crew aboard a ship anchored in the bay off the village. Lloyd Jones told the audience at the initial release of the film that he was happy with the way the director of the film had adapted the ideas from his award-winning novel.

The personae, mainly Bougainvilleans, play out complex layers of confrontations between the murky morality of Dickens's book (*Great Expectations*) and the locally far more familiar morality of THE book (the Bible). The characters of Matilda as a bright school pupil, her hero Mr Pip, and Mr Dickens in nineteenth-century England are skillfully played out in times 150 years apart. In the twentieth-century Bougainville crisis situation, *imagination* provides individuals and communities with a way of coping with the crises they face everyday during the blockade. In the wake of the

many intersecting expectations, *Mr. Pip* takes the audience through many mental contortions as we appreciate the arts of imagining and remembering in the face of war's destructive intrusions.

The film runs for over two hours but could be shown to classes in two screenings. It offers many challenges and raises many issues for discussion. Produced by the New Zealand Film Commission, it was originally shown at the Toronto Film Festival, where it received acclaim, as it has done following its recent release in New Zealand. It is definitely unique and falls in the "must see" category.

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*Breadfruit and Open Spaces.*

Documentary film, 30 minutes, color, 2013. Written, produced, and directed by Lola Quan Bautista. Available for purchase from <http://breadfruitopenspaces.com>, US\$299.00 (universities and colleges), US\$99.00 (high schools, libraries, and community groups).

*Breadfruit and Open Spaces* is a short film written and directed by Lola Quan Bautista that uses the breadfruit as a metaphor for the setting down of roots by Chuukese families and for their growth and development as they struggle for autonomy through landownership on the island of Guam. Bautista's narrative is both a recognizably broader story of immigration, community formation, and empowerment and a memorable and nuanced

glimpse into the cultural and social norms of the Chuukese people.

The film begins its journey with close-ups of breadfruit trees, the sounds of a rooster crowing nearby, and chickens clucking excitedly. A woman slowly walks along a long dirt road. As the camera pans out, the view lingers for a moment on a road running through trees and the seeming openness of the landscape. We are in the Gil Baza Subdivision in Yigo village, located in northern Guam. A boy walks with a dog toward a small shack where a woman is sweeping outside. A guitar plucks out a cheerful island melody in the background as we meander through the sights and take in the apparent tranquility of the social and natural setting. Our protagonists are members of the United Pacific Islanders' Corporation (UPIC), who reside in the subdivision. Most have come from neighboring islands in Micronesia. We meet a Chuukese man, who lists all the things he grows on the land: "I grow my breadfruit, I grow my banana, I grow my sweet potato, I grow my tapioca, whatever I can consume, I grow it. That's part of me, the soil." He learned his view of land when in Chuuk from his grandmother, who told him, "You have to take care of your land because you cannot survive on this island unless if you take care of the land." But this intimate, living relationship is threatened when the residents are faced with eviction due to noncompliance with Guam Environmental Agency sewage management regulations. The land developer who sold the subdivision lots to the residents had failed to install the required sewage system. Faced with eviction because