

Book and Media Reviews

The Contemporary Pacific, Volume 24, Number 2, 433-466
© 2012 by University of Hawai'i Press

Sugita, and Samuel Elbert or Good-enough and Sugita's 1990 supplementary volume for the spelling of important terms and emic concepts used in the book. Key works apparently not consulted that might have strengthened Bautista's fine analysis of mobility in Micronesia include Bruce Larson's 1989 doctoral study of college students from Chuuk as they returned home in search of employment and Alice Oleson's 2007 dissertation on Mortlockese migrants who were relocated to Sokehs on Pohnpei after the devastating typhoon in 1907 that killed over 200 residents on Satowan alone.

Bautista's ethnographic research on Chuukese population movement among their various dispersed communities and households is invaluable. It not only documents but also adds to our understanding of the first fifteen years of FSM migration history (1986–2001) under the Compact of Free Association. Those conducting future studies in mobility, migration, and culture change in Micronesia will find this book a useful starting point for the observation of longitudinal developments among the increasing networks of dispersed Micronesian communities in the United States.

MANUEL RAUCHHOLZ
University of Guam

* * *

Natives and Exotics: World War II and Environment in the Southern Pacific, by Judith A Bennett. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009. 439 + xxvi pages, bibliography, index. ISBN cloth, 978-0-8248-3265-0; ISBN paper, 978-0-8248-3350-3. Cloth, US\$60.00; paper, US\$30.00.

Judy Bennett's *Natives and Exotics* is a superb piece of environmental scholarship that deserves a wide audience. Bennett has long established herself as the best environmental historian of the Pacific with her work on Solomon Islands forestry in particular. Her work is always characterized by meticulous research, precision of detail and expression, and an endearing honesty and modesty. Bennett wryly notes that her research and writing for this book took longer to complete than World War II itself. Her archival research incorporated records in San Bruno (California), College Park (Maryland), Washington DC, Columbus (Ohio), Oxford, Cambridge, London, Suva, Noumea, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Wellington, Waiouru, and Auckland. The result was well worth the wait. With this volume she not only cements her leading role in contemporary Pacific scholarship but also moves up a tier by producing a work that can also serve as a model for reconceptualizing warfare and its environmental restraints and consequences worldwide.

The outbreak of fighting in the Pacific in December 1941 ushered in a new era of warfare in which logistical and technological efficiency were decisive factors. The industrial power

of the United States realized its true potential in the Pacific War and led to a new, nuclear age in the Pacific. *Natives and Exotics* provides the first environmental history of the Pacific War. Most of the numerous studies of the Pacific War focus on combat or the impact of the war on indigenous communities and race relations. The central question Bennett seeks to answer is “what impact this sudden foreigners’ war had on the environment and its native inhabitants and how thousands of the military personnel reacted to them” (xix–xx).

The book is thematically organized with a logical progression of sections and chapters. The preface outlines debate in environmental history over approaches to conflict zones. Environmental historians have written little on conflict zones, perhaps because the destructive and aggressive intensity of warfare draws historians toward the myriad human dramas involved, and diverts attention away from the main focus of environmental history—the destruction, preservation, and rehabilitation of the natural environment. The prologue then shows how the war was part of a long process of engagement by diverse cultures with the unique Pacific environment across millennia.

Part 1 looks at how combatants’ ignorant expectations left them unprepared for the challenges of the Pacific environment, including tropical disease, humidity, heat, and rugged terrain. Technology and resources alleviated much but by no means all of the resulting discomfort and challenges. Cures often led to unexpected and environmentally detrimental results, as with the widespread use

of DDT-based insecticides to counter debilitating mosquito-borne disease.

Part 2 examines the logistics of the war, through both the exploitation of local resources and the massive importation of manufactured resources from Pacific Rim industrial economies to the neglected colonies of Pacific imperial powers. Political considerations competed with military considerations, as a number of the liberating nations in the Pacific on the Allied side were also colonial powers intent on returning to this status after the war.

Part 3 focuses on the legacy of the war in the islands and among their indigenous inhabitants. While the enormous cost of shipping equipment to war zones to ensure victory was acceptable during the war, the cost became less tolerable to the victors after the war had been won. Arguments arose over compensation for war damages and over the removal of munitions and equipment that was no longer needed. Many parts of the Pacific still live with the consequences of rusting and decaying World War II equipment.

Part 4 shifts the focus from material legacies to mental legacies in the form of memories and changing attitudes. Pacific environments were reimagined not only to make sense of or block out the past trauma but also to justify and rationalize current needs and perspectives. The conclusion reflects on how World War II resonates in subsequent events and trends in the Pacific and globally—especially the climatic and environmental consequences of the mindset behind this first high-technology war on a grand scale, in which mass industrialization

and technology seemingly overcame nature and an opponent less endowed with resources.

Throughout the book, Bennett focuses on the logistical and health challenges that remote, scattered, undeveloped, tropical islands posed for combatants and those provisioning them. She shows how this demanding environment spurred the invention or refinement of mitigating technology such as portable refrigeration units, as well as technologically advanced weaponry in an environment where control of the air and sea-lanes determined the fate of troops on land. Transport also enhanced the movement of exotic species into the Pacific, most noticeably the brown tree snake that was introduced to Guam via US transport planes. In the absence of competitors and predators, and with an abundance of prey, the brown tree snake multiplied to unprecedented levels. The refuse of war remains today as silent witness to a violent past and also as environmental hazards in the form of unexploded munitions and fuel. Vintage firearms from the Pacific War have been recycled and reused in recent conflicts on Bougainville. Bennett also interweaves the interaction of preconceptions and perceptions of the environment and the creation of memories of place after events into the interactions of people, technology, and environment.

Bennett has produced an innovative, multidimensional, and highly informative study that should serve as a model for this relatively new combination of environmental perspectives on war zones for years to come. It is also a model for future Pacific studies

in the way it effectively blends environmental and cultural orientations.

PAUL D'ARCY

The Australian National University

* * *

Reconciliation and Architectures of Commitment: Sequencing Peace in Bougainville, by John Braithwaite, Hilary Charlesworth, Peter Reddy, and Leah Dunn. Canberra, ACT: The ANU E Press, 2010. ISBN paper 978-1-921666-68-1; ISBN PDF 978-1-921666-69-8; xiii + 161 pages, map, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. Paper, A\$19.95; free download from http://epress.anu.edu.au/titles/peacebuilding-compared/bougainville_citation

The second monograph of the Peacebuilding Compared Project of the Australian National University, *Reconciliation and Architectures of Commitment* examines the Bougainville Peace Process. The Bougainville peace is tentatively characterized as a restorative peace based on a “virtuous circle” (137) between a top-down political settlement and bottom-up restorative justice. Represented as a model peace in the eyes of many international observers, John Braithwaite, Hilary Charlesworth, Peter Reddy, and Leah Dunn argue that it nevertheless requires international attention. Indeed, according to the authors, preventive diplomacy in preparation is now urgently required.

Taking a strong collective stance, the authors begin with a clear statement of what they consider to be the fundamental strength of the Bou-