

church—particularly the Samoans, who dominated the pastoral ranks after 1884—was probably nowhere so controversial or profound.

As the Papuan case suggests, the situation of Pacific Islander missionaries raises important questions about the history, sociology, and cultures of Christianity in the Pacific. Not least among them, as Michael Goldsmith points out in his essay on a contemporary Tuvaluan pastor in Tuvalu, is the meaning of the term *missionary* itself. Institutionally, its use is a window on often-contested relations of race, gender, and power in the church. During the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century, for example, white missionaries tended to call their Pacific Islander colleagues, “teachers,” “pastors,” “catechists”—almost everything *but* “missionary.” As Jeanette Little observes in her valuable contribution on Mary Kaaialii Kahelemauna Nawaa, they also withheld that title from the wives of Pacific Islander missionaries (just as they did from the wives of white missionaries) for a very long time.

Of course, use of the term *missionary* has also implied perceptions of social and cultural distance from an “other”—even when that relationship is, strictly speaking, confessionally or spiritually defined (Christian or not Christian, and so on). Here, too, the perception among mission leaders that Pacific Islanders were not all that different from each other appears to have contributed both to their heavy use in frontier fields and to their low profile in official historical and photographic records.

No one could deny that retrieving

these missionaries for a wider audience is a humane and worthy goal. One can only regret that in so doing, these essays make little reference to literatures beyond the immediate historical and documentary sources for their particular eras and areas. It will be up to the reader to make the connections with the growing body of ethnographic work on missionaries and Christianity in the Pacific (or elsewhere), not to mention the more general fields of colonial, postcolonial, mission, or gender studies.

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Narratives of Nation in the South Pacific, edited by Ton Otto and Nicholas Thomas. *Studies in Anthropology and History*, 19. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997. ISBN 90-5702-086-6, xv + 256 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, name index. Cloth, US\$58; paper, US\$24.

A sense of national identity is often thought to be weak, or absent, in the South Pacific. Here a group of anthropologists, historians, and a political scientist look at how “narratives of nation” are, or are not, expressed in different kinds of text. Stephanie Lawson finds parallels between propaganda texts for the Fiji coups and Western European criticism of the French Revolution. But her target is the ideology of traditionalism, rather than nationalism itself. Ton Otto uses content analysis of Bernard Narokobi’s newspaper articles to show that his

philosophy is strongly opposed to introduced values, but offers something more fluid and dynamic than “tradition” as the indigenous alternative. His “Melanesian Way” is also supra-national, embracing a region of people, rather than any particular state. The late Jeffrey Clark turns to letters to the *Post Courier* newspaper to illustrate the absence of grassroots nationalism in highlands Papua New Guinea. This absence is expressed in highlanders’ nostalgia for colonial rule, cynicism about politics, and self-criticism toward history, as well as in the absence of unifying events to celebrate. Clark characterizes PNG highlanders’ worldview as “Melanesian Gothic,” in the way it is strongly inflected by Christianity. If so, the Bible may be a founding text for Melanesian non- or anti-national identity. Michael Young explores the competition between Christian and national identities in his comparison of large public events commemorating the arrival of missionaries in Dobu, in the D’Entrecasteaux Islands of Papua New Guinea, and in Epi in Vanuatu (and he helpfully appends the programs of events as texts). Margaret Jolly also goes to large public events, using texts, including poems, produced for a Nasonol Festival Blong Ol Woman in Vanuatu in 1990. She goes on to deconstruct national logos for what they tell about the role of women. Jeffrey Sissons relies on newspaper reports, interviews, and government documents to tease out different periods in Cook Islands nationalism, then civic, now ethnic, corresponding to different relationships to the global economy. Jocelyn Linnekin compares oral and written histories of Samoa,

and the way they contribute to a sense of political unity and centeredness.

Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* provides the main source on nationalism for several of the authors. Eric Hobsbawm is also referred to on nationalism, as well as for the earlier “invented traditions.” Both these writers emphasize the modern, constructed character of national identity, and its civic rather than ethnic side. This choice of sources rather loads the dice against ethnic and racial nationalism in the South Pacific. To take the argument further, I’d turn to Anthony Smith’s writing on nationalism and ethnicity. He argues that while “nations” are clearly modern, some have attached themselves to much older political and cultural unities he calls “ethnies,” and others are still challenged by them (eg, in Catalonia or Brittany). If valid, Smith’s argument has implications for thinking about Bougainville and whether other provinces would try to secede if it was allowed to. Supporters of secession argue that Bougainville is a “special” case, with a greater degree and depth of ethnic difference from mainland Papua New Guinea than is found in other provinces—a precolonial “ethnie” in Smith’s terms. Skeptics argue that each and every province could, and would, make similar ethnic claims.

Smith can also help explain the unease several of the authors feel about the role of anthropologists and historians in South Pacific nationalism. The introduction by Otto and Thomas notes that the typical anthropological stance of relativism and respect for the subject fitted easily with sympathy for

nationalist aspirations and decolonization. But they also note that it does not provide a good guide to taking sides over the Bougainville secession, or the Fiji coups, where different nationalisms collide, or contradict other values. Clark describes his surprise at hearing his Papua New Guinean fieldwork collaborator, when asked what he thought of belonging to the state, say "I hate Papua New Guinea." Outsiders may be more nationalist on others' behalf than they are themselves. Or, by preempting a moderate nationalism, they may leave no space for insiders: Linnekin notes how "liberal revisionist" historiography has already occupied the nationalist position that graduating Samoan historians might have expected was theirs to fill. If they want to be different they must adopt a more extreme nationalist position or take a different route to more local, decentered history.

Smith puts indigenous intellectuals into the story of nationalism, where their narratives have played a critical role in the transformation of backwater "ethnies" into nation states in Europe, and perhaps in the Pacific. Confronted, and sometimes rejected, by a dominant imperial culture and institutions, indigenous intellectuals have turned back to the villages to regenerate, reconstruct, and revalue local languages and folk traditions. In the South Pacific, the rediscovery and reevaluation of "kastom," land tenure systems, and vernacular languages took place under the auspices of the University of the South Pacific's Institute of Pacific Studies, the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, the East-West Center, and the Research School

of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. Liberal academics in the human and social sciences encouraged it. Now we feel uneasy with the next stages of national regeneration identified by Smith and sometimes embraced by our students—politicization of the rediscovered culture, and purification of the community.

Politicization took place in the various "micronationalist" or "new" social movements that brought together educated leaders and rural villagers; of these, the Vanua'aku Pati was the most conspicuously successful. Such movements proliferated around the first generation of university students in Papua New Guinea. "Purification" took place in the aftermath of the 1987 coups in Fiji, and in Bougainville after 1989, and was directed as much against indigenous moderates as against outsiders. In summary, ethnic and civic nationalism offer different career paths for their leaders. Francis Ona followed Anthony Smith's trajectory of regeneration through the grassroots, rather than the upward spiral through provincial postings to the national capital that Anderson proposed as distinctively "national." Sitiveni Rabuka's career has successfully combined civic and (after the coups) ethnic trajectories, but is for now on a civic track.

This is a fresh, stimulating, and original collection, crossing disciplinary boundaries and engaging big issues in a subtle and reflexive way. It is strongly recommended for anyone interested in the human and social sciences, or day-to-day politics in the

region. A preface describes how the book grew out of a project on the Politics of Tradition in the Pacific at Macquarie University. Jeff Clark's reference to Papua New Guinea's "weak state" also looks forward to the Australian National University's current project on State, Society and Governance in Melanesia. The contributors show that "narratives of nation" in the South Pacific compete with other stories and do not necessarily generate popular attachment to existing states. Jeff Sissons shows how actively leaders have to work to generate such attachments. Jocelyn Linnekin's discussion of the theme of "centeredness" in Samoan history addresses another aspect of "state-ness." Impatience with nineteenth-century Samoan political chaos sounds remarkably like current fretting about "governance." Margaret Jolly's animating intelligence links these projects. The smart conclusion by Nick Thomas links the chapters to wider arguments about consumption and globalization.

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Think of a Garden and Other Plays, by John Kneubuhl. Talanoa: Contemporary Pacific Literature. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997. ISBN 0-8248-1814-8 (paper), ISBN 0-8248-1773-7 (cloth), viii + 268 pages, glossary, notes. Cloth, US\$39.00; paper, US\$18.95.

John Kneubuhl's trilogy of plays, *Think of a Garden*, *Mele Kanikau: A Pageant*, and *A Play: A Play*, from University of Hawai'i Press is a publishing event that must be saluted and celebrated. It makes an extraordinary achievement in dramatic writing available to theatre practitioners, to teachers and students, and to general readers.

Whereas the trilogy of Aeschylus's *Oresteia* provides a logical continuity of story, event, and characters, Kneubuhl's trilogy is idiosyncratic and, at first, seemingly lacking in coherence. *Think of a Garden*, the last written, comes first; *Mele Kanikau*, written first, is the central play; and *A Play: A Play*, composed between the other two, comes last. The trilogy took Kneubuhl, a professional Hollywood screenwriter for twenty years, who would have been used to writing to deadlines, more than a decade and a half to complete. None of the characters from one play appear in either of the other two. The settings are variously American Sāmoa 1929, Honolulu "mid to late twentieth century," and Hawai'i in some indefinite present. What binds the three plays is personal (surreptitiously autobiographical), thematic (all at once, the theme of loss—historical, political, and cultural loss, private and temporal loss, and artistic and creative