

transmitted by Pacific Islanders, to the researcher as well as to the audience of scholarly texts. Andrew Strathern in "A Twist of the Rope" writes about the contrasting experiences of producing a life history, first with the renowned Ongka and then with his contemporary Ru. He concludes, "If autobiographical life history as a genre has something potentially important to tell us, it is because it represents a moment in which the teller makes the transformation from his or her own embodiment to a self-projected objectification" (134). Lisette Josephides recounts complex Kewa "stories" of divorce, remarriage, and dispute settlement, partly in the form of a play to emphasize that people in negotiating these situations "did not merely respond to situations; they responded to their implications for the perception of the self" (164). Once knowledge becomes the object of study, reflexivity concerning all of its transformations cannot be avoided.

It is not possible to discuss each of the chapters that make up the volume. Some stand out more than others, for a variety of reasons. One of the most thought-provoking is Andrée Grau's "On the Acquisition of Knowledge: Teaching Kinship through the Body among the Tiwi of Northern Australia." In discussing Tiwi "kinship dances" the author must consider nonverbal intelligence as expressed in the dance. In the process, she offers a critique of the radical constructivist position and refers to the late John Blackings's concept of "angelic qualities" (75). At issue are old debates about universals based on biology or the propensity for "culture," or both, as well as questions about language and knowledge. This chapter, focusing

on dance as the communication of meaning through the body, exemplifies the boldness of many of the contributors in returning, perhaps in new language, to long-standing concerns.

Common Worlds and Single Lives: Constituting Knowledge in Pacific Societies has much to offer anyone interested in ethnography as a way of knowing the world. It provides a convenient outline of the discipline's struggle with basic concepts and issues, as well as a rich array of ethnographic instances that lead to engaged reflection.

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Theorizing Self in Samoa: Emotions, Genders, and Sexualities, by Jeannette Marie Mageo. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998. ISBN cloth, 0-472-10920-0; paper, 0-472-08518-2; xv + 292 pages, photographs, notes, glossary, references, index. Cloth, US\$57.50; paper, US\$22.95.

Jeannette Mageo has written a book filled with ideas about Samoan culture, constructs of self, socialization, and historical changes. She had the rare perspective of being an insider-outsider by virtue of her marriage to a Samoan and her employment as a college teacher in Samoa. This volume appears to be three different books. The first postulates cultural elements of a Samoan self, the second a construction of elements of childhood socialization, and the third a historical reconstruction of the influences of foreign missionaries and US military on the "reconfiguring" of Samoan ideas or "discourses" of male and primarily female selves and sexuality.

There are competing perspectives in the book, suggesting a postmodern schema for theoretical debunking. Mageo begins by stating that she is working with a Foucauldian discourse theory about the elements of self, which she labels “the premise-discourse series” whereby “socio-centric or egocentric premises are coded in cultural lexicons of personhood. . . . These lexicons are efforts to capture the self in language, which condemn an alternative aspect to obscurity” (7). These alternative aspects are denied or repressed into a sort of id-like “shadow self.” In outlining aspects of the Samoan self, Mageo appears to use a Levi-Straussian concentric dualism with psychoanalytic id-ego elements. She posits that certain key elements of the idealized Samoan self are expressed by two opposing emotions, so that the “idealized premise” is undermined by “contradictory tendencies” of repressed elements or “vices.” For example, the ideal self expression of dignity (*mamalu*) is undermined by abandoned emotionalism (*lotovaivai*), but countermanded by the expression and encouragement of personal restraint (*lototele*). Dignity is not the fulcrum between emotionalism and restraint but a transcendent tertiary ideal.

In her socialization section, she tackles a long-standing issue of Polynesian child rearing: what are the adult effects of early “rejection” of formerly indulged infants and young children. The Richies thought it brought a “cognitive rigidity,” and even later Alan Howard postulated adult conformity and conflict avoidance. Mageo posits that this parental rejection results in insecure attachments and inhibitions of certain

emotions that reappear in adults as “vices.” So the restraint of dignity is “protested” and expressed in an adult with the “vice” of wanton displays of emotionalism at separation events such as departures and funerals—not unlike the childish tantrum that occurs when the mother withdraws from her infant or young child.

The third section interweaves missionary and anthropological accounts with Samoan folk tales and her own fieldwork to give a historical picture of changes in “Samoan discourses on self” and the role Samoans played in those changes. Here she focuses on changing roles and ideas about sexuality and gender, using the transvestite as the transformative element between males and females, particularly as performers in a Samoan theatrical form called Joking Nights. This section is the strongest and most promising of the three, in spite of using early missionary accounts to develop what she refers to as “pre-contact Samoa.” In the references, Mageo notes a manuscript on Joking Nights, and certainly it is worth a book-length examination.

There are several problems with this book, three of which I will highlight. The first problem involves Mageo’s lack of adequate discussion of self and person and how it is situated in Pacific research. She neglects to discuss the extensive literature on the distinctions between the two (for example, as summarized in Thomas Csordas’s comprehensive review); the research on emotion, morality, and self, exemplified by Catherine Lutz’s work; and how her constructs differ from Bradd Shore’s multifaceted, relations-based model of Samoan self. A hallmark of Samoan research is the importance of status and rank, but

Mageo's constructions do not adequately address this issue nor the complications of gender differences. I found her ideas about Samoan competing self-defining emotions, which alternatively could be considered emotional engagement and disengagement, most interesting. It would have been helpful to have understood how she compared her conceptualization of competing self emotions with Shore's ideas of freedom and constraint, and its relationship to the Polynesian concepts of *noa* and *kapu*.

The second problem is with her socialization theory, which again lacks reference to the extensive literature on sibling caretaking (when the "insecure attachment" begins) or attachment theory. The aforementioned psychological anthropologists who were interested in the effects of this rejection of young children after a period of indulgence among Polynesians were unable to find any direct link to adult personality or emotional development. Hence the change of the terms parental "rejection" to caretaker "shift." One of the most important studies of child rearing and adult outcomes, Emmy Werner's longitudinal work with a diverse ethnic population on the Hawaiian island of Kaua'i, indicates that children's outcomes are remarkably "resilient" in spite of a variety of early life stressors. Attachment theory continues to be controversial, both in child development, as per Werner's work, and in psychoanalytic theory as well. Mageo notes that there very likely may be compensatory supportive figures for children in "Western cultures," while this is not true for Samoans. Further, "The Samoan data suggests . . . that insecure attachment lays a basis for resis-

tance/avoidance in later relations" (59). The problem is that Mageo offers no data to support this statement and her corollary assertions. There are no accounts of Samoan behaviors or interpretations regarding child rearing, adult personality types, or emotional attachments. In seeming contrary evidence of her theory, two photos of children taken by her husband, on pages 44 and 45, each depict two children in a common pose with their arms around each other's necks, while one hoists a younger sibling on a hip. They, and the caption, "Children, contact, and caring for a younger sibling" appear to be what one might interpret to be illustrations of "compensatory supportive figures."

The third and most frustrating problem with the book is the source of Mageo's data and the nature of her relationships with the various individuals she used as informants. She obviously had a rare opportunity as both an anthropologist and an affine to give a particularly intimate view of Samoan culture and what Samoans do and think about their culture. However, she spends only a brief two or three introductory pages noting her contacts and her professional and personal activities while living in Samoa. One wonders how her local employment and family ties affected her research, or if sources for anecdotes were from someone she knew for a long time or a brief encounter. Her husband is regularly cited as the source for cultural examples, interpretations, and translations, but it is unclear how influential he was in her interpretations of Samoan culture and how the trajectory of their marriage affected the research alliance.

Samoan culture has been much

studied, generating a great deal of controversy in anthropology and beyond. Mageo has provided a provocative and, as she admits, ambitious addition to that literature. Such a complex work deserves much further review by specialists in Samoan self, socialization, and language.

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Bridging Mental Boundaries in a Postcolonial Microcosm: Identity and Development in Vanuatu, by William F S Miles. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998. ISBN 0-8248-1979-9 cloth; 0-8248-2048-7 paper; xxiv + 271 pages, maps, photographs, tables, figures, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$47.00; paper US\$22.95.

Bridging Mental Boundaries in a Postcolonial Microcosm takes as its starting point the formal colonial boundaries that marked out the territorial and juridical features of the Anglo-French (or, from a non-Anglophone perspective, the Franco-British) Condominium of the New Hebrides. But only as a starting point.

Without denying the reality of natural boundaries, William Miles convincingly describes how other, notional boundaries occasioned by language, religion, gender, age, time, and so on also frame human identity and distinguish communities from one another. As he deftly demonstrates, all such boundaries are characterized by ambiguity and tension—what he describes as “porousness.” To make sense of the situation—to

begin to grasp what the translation from New Hebrides Condominium to Vanuatu Republic can possibly mean in a world where global processes profoundly problematize national boundaries—it is necessary to adopt a cross-disciplinary (not just multidisciplinary) approach. Miles does this, and does it well.

The result is a very satisfying book, accessible to the general reader and challenging to the specialist audience (or audiences). Like its University of Hawai'i Press stablemates, *Cargo Cult: Strange Stories of Desire from Melanesia and Beyond*, by Lamont Lindstrom, and *The Tree and the Canoe*, by Joël Bonnemaïson, *Bridging Mental Boundaries in a Postcolonial Microcosm* fundamentally recasts what is so often taken for granted in the distinction drawn between “colonialism” and “independence.”

To capture the peculiar form of European rule that prevailed over the New Hebrides from the establishment of the condominium in 1906 to its formal abolition in 1980, Miles coins the term *condocolonialism*. Rather than focusing on administrative structure, *condocolonialism* denotes the process of divided and divisive joint rule. In contrast to “classical colonialism,” the condocolonialism of the New Hebrides manifested five distinguishing features:

- (1) foreign rule is extended and maintained over an overseas possession as much to counter and irritate an imperial rival as to benefit the mother country per se;
- (2) infrastructural development is limited and targeted, lest the benefits of such investments accrue to the rival partner;
- (3) the subjects of such rule (the condocolonialized) are neither repressed by a metropolitan