

sexual shame even after our so-called colonization. An important part of Merry's evidence is that it can be interpreted many ways. While I don't have a problem with her interpretation, it is important that readers understand that she is using these data to support a very particular academic theory rather than composing new descriptions of *K naka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian) culture.

Frankly, that comes as a relief. It seems to me that Merry is objectifying our culture for the purpose of elucidating a very important theory about states and societies and how they discipline and control human beings. So while I may be dissatisfied with her descriptions of *K naka Maoli* society, I don't think they are the main point of the book, and I don't believe that a different rendering of our culture would make the application of her theory to the changes in nineteenth-century Hawai'i any different. I wholeheartedly agree that law intruded where custom had not, and that the self-images of Hawaiians and Asians were certainly transformed for the worse as a result.

Colonizing Hawai'i is an important and timely work. It has the unusual quality of being intellectually satisfying and plainly lucid. This book belongs in the syllabus of any course that deals with law, neocolonialism, and the history of Pacific Islands.

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Pacific Answers to Western Hegemony: Cultural Practices of Identity Construction, edited by Jürg Wassmann. Explorations in Anthropology Series. Oxford and New York: Berg, 1998. ISBN cloth, 1-85973-154-6; paper, 1-85973-159-7; vii + 449 pages, figures, maps, notes, bibliographies, index. Cloth, US\$57.50; paper, US\$22.50.

This is one of two volumes containing selected revised papers from the 1994 conference of the European Society for Oceanists, held in Basel. (The other is *Common Worlds and Single Lives: Constituting Knowledge in Pacific Societies*, edited by Verena Keck, Berg, 1998.) For readers unfamiliar with but interested in European studies on Oceania this collection conveys in an exemplary manner the many diverse (sometimes confusing) strands of current anthropological research in Europe (let it be said at the outset that this reviewer is himself a "European Oceanist"). The eighteen (mostly male) contributors to the volume represent in one way or another research institutions in France, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland—as well as Australia and the United States, reflecting strong ties between European Oceanists and their overseas colleagues.

An extensive introductory discussion by the editor opens the volume, after which seventeen chapters appear organized sequentially in four parts: "Constituting Historical Knowledge," "Ways of Contrasting Identities," "Australia after Mabo," and "Questioning Western Democracy." While a majority of the chapters are based on

Melanesian ethnography, Polynesian societies are also well covered—and, as noted, there is a special section on Australia. Not uncommonly for “Pacific-wide” collections, though, the Micronesian area is not covered, and little attention is paid throughout to probing for more general Oceanic connections and patterns.

Jürg Wassmann’s introduction ranges across current concerns in anthropology and postcolonial studies, probing critically into concepts such as globalization, consumption, deterritorialization, authenticity, and the tension between cultural processes of homogenization and diversification—subsumed in a broad perspective on identity construction. Wassmann also attempts to clarify the logics of the apparently awkward relationships among the four rather disparate sections of the book, thus explicating the leap from Pacific Islands studies conventionally defined to the complex situation in “Australia after Mabo.” Using maritime metaphors, Wassmann boldly asserts, “The contributions . . . navigate uncharted waters, that wide sea between classic ethnography of the Pacific and contemporary concerns in anthropological theory with global relations and transnational culture. Many of the authors tack across the expanse between what is already known about Pacific Island societies and the new social forms that are emerging in these new states. . . . the contributions aim to represent some current Pacific answers to Western hegemony” (14).

While there is no doubt that the seventeen chapters provide fascinating ethnographically based insights into local-level responses to exogenous fac-

tors (mainly the “three Cs” of colonialism, Christianity and capitalism), the analysis of “hegemony” as a rationale, so to speak, for the volume, remains conceptually unclear and only superficially addressed in the introduction—apart from a generally assumed contestation of hegemonic factors. This conceptual weakness, inherent in the introduction and many of the chapters, is accompanied by a lack throughout the volume of comparative discussion. It remains up to the reader to identify more general patterns in *Pacific Answers to Western Hegemony*.

This said, many of the chapters contain thought-provoking and convincing analyses of quite intense agendas unfolding on the ground, ranging across such a tantalizing range of current topics as the politics of resource control under conditions of capitalist expansion in New Ireland (Ton Otto) and the Western Solomons (Gerhard Schneider), sorcery and conflict management in the Sepik (Nigel Stephenson), ethnic and social differentiation in Manus through sports and games (Berit Gustafsson), media and identity construction among second-generation Cook Islanders in urban New Zealand (Thomas Fitzgerald), representations of historical events in life stories (Philippe Peltier), and debates about democracy (as one facet of “globalization”) in the very different nation-state contexts of M ori (Toon van Meijl) and Samoan (Serge Tcherkézoff) politics. Despite diverging theoretical orientations, these papers contribute toward a broader picture of Oceanic responses to recent and present challenges from “the global.” While some contributions (eg, Schneider’s on “traditional culture” in the

western Solomons) lean toward a somewhat static definition of “tradition” in their attention to the “present,” others (perhaps most notably Ton Otto’s fine analysis of changing conceptualizations of “ownership” of natural resources) combine a conceptual discussion of anthropology’s changing agendas with views of the increasing gap between fashionable anthropology and local concerns over “custom.” This line of thought is also well illustrated in Jens Pinholt’s discussion of the “substantivization of cultural practices” taking place in the context of an anthropological film project in the outlying Eastern Solomons.

Problems of “tradition” in relation to issues of representation and construction and concerns of authenticity are addressed in interesting ways in contributions by Bronwen Douglas (on postcolonial readings of colonial texts on New Caledonia), Ben Burt (on alternative approaches to local history-writing in Solomon Islands) and Gunter Senft (on the representations of Trobriand Islanders in popular literature and media). While these contributions explore theoretical concerns ranging quite far beyond the conventional matters of fieldwork-based anthropology, Jonathan Friedman’s chapter (which opens Part 1 and was originally a keynote address at the conference) addresses broad epistemological issues by juxtaposing a critique of trends in postcolonial cultural studies with a sensitive analysis of confrontation between modes of knowing and representation in the Hawaiian context, expanding to a regional focus by drawing on Epeli Hau‘ofa’s recent efforts to situate

Oceanic ways of knowing in a global context.

Part 3, “Australia after Mabo,” opens with Robert Tonkinson’s excellent analysis of the complex developments following the Australian High Court’s decision in 1992 that Australia was not *terra nullius* when colonized in 1788. Tonkinson’s chapter (also originally a keynote address at the Basel conference) examines the significance of the Mabo decision and its rewriting of history in different segments of Australian society and shows how its major contribution may not be its ability to give Aboriginal people land title, but rather its provision of a “nexus between the ‘political’ and the ‘cultural’ dimensions of Aboriginality” (303). Further chapters in this section by Ad Boorsbom (on the complexity of what in the context of Mabo is called “native title” and “traditional systems of land tenure”), Barbara Glowczewski (on “Aboriginality” in the contexts of national identity and local diversification), and John Morton (on post-Mabo debates involving Aborigines, politicians, anthropologists, and other academics and different interest groups) contribute toward an understanding of phenomena that, despite their high level of legal or political institutionalization in Australia, echo ostensibly different processes in island Oceania (most notably Melanesia).

Pacific Answers to Western Hegemony is a complex volume, and a brief review cannot do full justice to the richness and breadth of the empirical cases presented, nor attempt to suggest the generalizations and theoretical implications whose potential is offered by the volume, if only by

implication. The variation among the chapters concerning theoretical focus and analytical clarity in part reflects their origin as conference papers, and in part must be seen as a result of the definite nonhomogeneity of the participating authors in terms of their academic traditions and intellectual agendas. With its companion piece, this book gives valuable insights into the social and cultural dynamics of today's Oceania.

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Money and Modernity: State and Local Currencies in Melanesia, edited by David Akin and Joel Robbins. ASAO Monograph 17. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999. ISBN 0-8229-4087-6; x + 284 pages, tables, figures, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. us\$45.

Perhaps one of the hallmarks of a good collection is its capacity to dismay readers who are forced to realize how much more mileage, theoretically speaking, others have been able to get out of the topic in question. This has certainly been my own experience in reading this accomplished volume. Here, for example, are some of the scattered entries on "money" from my own field notes from the Wahgi people in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. I record that older Wahgi men tell me how, when they first began to receive Australian coins and notes at the end of the 1940s, they speculated that the designs and watermarks were images of the money's owner or creator who, they

feared, might appear at any moment to reclaim it. Hence they spent their money very fast. I observe Papua New Guinea currency notes being displayed on bridewealth banners in very much the same way that the pearl shells they displaced once were. I log long conversations with people who wished to know exactly how money is made. I record lots of children named Moni (Money); sometimes they have siblings named Beng (Bank).

The papers in this volume offer a rich and tantalizing set of theoretical observations, insights, and comparisons through which my own miscellaneous observations might have been pursued, developed, and contextualized. The editors' meaty introduction starts from the now-accepted point that the arrival of western money did not have the anticipated effect of overwhelming local currencies. Rather, introduced and indigenous currencies remain in restless dialogue: and here the editors insist that there is a virtue to focusing on currency itself (whether local or state) despite arguments that to do so is to essentialize. The fact that money must necessarily be passed on if it is to be "enjoyed" also lends it a special interest in a region like Melanesia, in which exchange is so prominent. Melanesians have often embraced western money, at least to some extent, but they also experience it as threatening. Money is found threatening, Akin and Robbins argue, because much of Melanesian social life consists of separating relationships according to the kind of exchanges appropriate to each, while the use of money potentially renders all relationships the same.

This suggests that Bohannon's early