

markets like the United States. While Papua New Guineans are consuming more soft drinks in such urban contexts as scheduled “lunch” breaks or during pleasure outings with friends, Coke is not yet a household staple or a desired part of individual consumption. Demonstrating that drinking soft drinks is a social and not an individual practice, a university student—when asked when he last drank a soft drink—replied, “The last time I had a soft drink was on 27-07-97 [3 days earlier]. I had a Coke. It was for lunch. At about 1 p.m. . . . I was with two other boys who bought me the Coke. . . . Actually the guys bought the Cokes. I had half of each bottle” (160–161).

Written over a ten-year period from 1991 to 2000, each chapter has its own theoretical concerns. Chapter 1, for example, clarifies Benedict Anderson’s point (in *Imagined Communities*, 1991) that “the nation” is a model capable of being copied anywhere in the world by demonstrating the hybrid nature of PNG nation making, with the state not quite rejecting the national custom of betel-nut chewing but rather favoring “delicacy” in choosing where to spit the juice. In chapter 2, Foster then shifts to a complex theoretical discussion of “fetish discourse,” colonial education, and state efforts to merge traditional fetishisms with the “modern economy” in the form of its “new money.” Foster largely succeeds in preparing the reader for such theoretical disjunctures in his introduction. College teachers, however, may wish for a concluding section where each chapter is more clearly related to a general theoretical discussion. This minor

quibble aside, the book is a must for both those PNG scholars who whisk through Port Moresby and other PNG cities on their way to “the field” as well as other scholars and students interested in nation making.

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Dismembering Lāhui: A History of the Hawaiian Nation to 1887, by Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002. ISBN 0-8248-2549-7; x + 310 pages, tables, figures, notes, photographs, glossary, bibliography, index. Paper, US\$21.95.

Jon Osorio’s *Dismembering Lāhui* marks the coming of age of the Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. It signifies continuity and progress in Hawaiian scholarship and bodes well for the future of Pacific scholarship: continuity in that Osorio builds on the passionate, consciousness-raising studies published in the early 1990s by his mentors, Haunani-Kay Trask and Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, who sought to galvanize and rally Hawaiian sentiment, and to articulate their contemporary feelings of disempowerment, loss, and anger; progress in that, while addressing his own people, Osorio’s passion is also channeled into quite profound scholarship that examines neglected sources and adds a new dimension to our understanding of the Hawaiian past that has wider methodological and theoretical implications. In this respect, Osorio’s work resembles that of his colleague Kanalu Terry

Young, whose *Rethinking the Native Hawaiian Past* (New York: Garland, 1998) offered a new and multilayered examination of the world of *kaukau-ali'i* (lesser chiefs in the service of higher chiefs) in traditional society, just as Osorio's work reveals an indigenous society during a crucial transition period in which sovereignty was not so much seized by Europeans as whittled away. Osorio and Young have built admirably on the solid foundation laid by Trask and Kame-*'eleihiwa* to make Hawai'i one of the leading centers for indigenous scholarship in the Pacific.

Osorio examines the effects of introducing western-style law codes on Native Hawaiians between the first constitution in 1840 and the so-called Bayonet Constitution in 1887, which marked the constitutional transfer of political power to resident westerners. While focusing on legislative measures, Osorio never loses sight of the human dimension to the story. I have read and admired the works of Davida Malo (David Malo) and Samuel Kamakau for over a decade, but it was only after reading of them here—as legislators caught between trying to balance the good and the bad within both their Hawaiian past and a future modeled on western institutions—that I began to understand them as both historians and historical figures. Another highlight of this work is its focus on lesser-known Hawaiian legislators who sought to come to terms with these dynamic and turbulent times. Native Hawaiians become people rather than just a uniform culture, and this allows Osorio to explain the divisions of opinion within their communities. Osorio

openly admits that this *mo'olelo* (history) was shaped by his own life as a Native Hawaiian. He says little about his genealogy, although one gets the impression that his sympathies lie with the *kaukau-ali'i* (lesser chiefs) and *maka'āinana* (commoners).

The first chapter begins by noting that although the death of Captain Cook and the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy in the 1890s are more dramatic than the period he is covering, the period 1840 to 1887 marked a profound change in Hawaiian circumstances. It was a time characterized by a “slow, insinuating invasion of people, ideas and institutions” which featured “racial and legal discourse that crippled the will, confidence and trust as surely as leprosy and small pox claimed their limbs and lives” (3). The remainder of the chapter deals with the early years of the Kamehameha dynasty, when introduced diseases decimated the Hawaiian population, including much of its chiefly elite. Religious beliefs were disrupted by the rejection of the *kapu* in 1820 and the introduction of Christianity.

The next chapter deals with the first bout of legislative changes in the 1840s that transformed government at a time when most of the Native Hawaiian population still looked to their *ali'i* (chiefs) for leadership and did not expect a direct say in government. Osorio makes good use of legislative records and native petitions to government to ascertain the outlook of those outside the elite. The new legislative body brought commoner and chief together, although the former remained cautious of confronting the latter at this early stage.

The next chapter deals with the Great Mahele, which transformed traditional land tenure into a system more amenable to western priorities. The commoners in the legislative assembly were opposed to this move, but deferred to their chiefly colleagues and allowed the legislation through. This occurred alongside legislation allowing non-naturalized foreigners to buy and sell land. Osorio explains that the king hoped that these measures would gain foreigner obedience to the laws of the land once they had a stake in the system after it became apparent that the kingdom could not resist the west militarily. Most Hawaiians, however, were reduced to the status of tenants.

Chapter 4, entitled "A House Divided," details how westerners sought to make the House of Representatives more efficient and friendly to western commercial interests in the early 1850s. Osorio contends that the western representatives' better understanding of House procedures allowed them to dominate, assisted by the ali'i's preference for stable government over one they could totally control. The king sought to curb the power of the legislature but was also mindful of the need to keep foreigners on his side.

Chapter 5 deals with the reign of the next king, Lota Kapuaiwa (Lot, Kamehameha V). Lota tried to rein in the legislature by increasing his own power within the constitution. Foreigners did not confront the king directly, as they realized he had much popular support. Although his reign did achieve some of its objectives, the importance of the kingdom's finances still meant that the interests of west-

ern businessmen could not be ignored. The next chapter examines contrasting views of sovereignty and nationhood in the late 1860s and early 1870s. Most Hawaiians continued to see the legitimacy of government in the ruler, while westerners saw it as residing in the elected legislature. Lota's successor Kalākaua did not have the same genealogical legitimacy as his main rival, Emma, but was the more acceptable candidate for foreigners in the absence of their preferred option of an all-white government. Kalākaua therefore inherited both foreign and Hawaiian opposition.

The next chapter, on the Bayonet Constitution, reveals deep divisions within the Hawaiian community as they struggled to decide which western residents they could trust to deal fairly and honestly with them. These divisions and the uncertainty underlying them explain the relatively limited resistance to a white takeover. Deep divisions over Kalākaua's legitimacy prevented the king from acting as a rallying point, while his measures to reassert traditional cultural practices and promote pan-Polynesian unity also came to nothing.

The book concludes with a reflection linking the current situation of Hawaiians with their historical past. Osorio asserts that, ultimately, Hawaiian identity lies beyond how the law defines it, and that the reassertion of Hawaiian sovereignty does not necessarily lie in seeking compensation. "In the end, nationhood is identity. A nation's constitutions, laws and elections are never more than symbols of the will of the people to think, worship, and behave as a people" (260). To Osorio, such a will ulti-

mately comes from empowering individuals (256).

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Hawai'i Nei: Island Plays, by Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002. ISBN 0-8248-2539-X; xxviii + 227 pages, bibliography. Paper, US\$19.00.

Distinguished playwright Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl's newly published collection, *Hawai'i Nei: Island Plays*, comes during a time when the Hawaiian Renaissance is flourishing. The movement has engendered a sustained interest in Hawaiian culture and history. Kneubuhl's plays dramatize, in exciting and intriguing ways, some of the birthing pains inherent in the attempts of contemporary Hawaiians to find our place in this redefined world. The plays are a welcome means to celebrate our culture, arising as they do from our own backyards, relating our history, pondering our choices. This is unquestionably good drama as well, living up to the substantial burden of being designated a "distinctly Hawaiian theater."

We have spent the last few decades in Hawai'i building a new identity, which remains inexorably linked to the past. So, too, all three of the plays in *Hawai'i Nei* center on connections to things past: historical figures whose choices shaped Hawai'i's religious climate (*The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu*, which premiered in 1988); our obligations to kūpuna (ancestors) to maintain both the land and cultural practices (*Emmalehua*, which pre-

miered in 1986 and was revised and restaged in 1996); and reverence for the mana found in the bones of those who have gone before us (*Ola Nā Iwi*, which premiered in 1994). The plays embody the very pulse and ideas that drive the Hawaiian Renaissance. They reflect a very Hawaiian way of thinking, with the past boldly maneuvering into the present, affecting the actions of Hawaiians today. Kneubuhl makes no apology for this, for she is Hawaiian, and she knows that for our people, this is how events, and those embroiled in them, will find their way.

In *Hawai'i Nei*, the past resonates with present concerns to make the issues contemporary and vital. Moreover, the themes of respect for the past, reverence for the wisdom of kūpuna, and the need to preserve cultural fragments take on new depth and shape. This is because Kneubuhl writes from a woman's perspective, full of nuances about each character's nature, the importance of relationships, and the ability of women to have one foot in this world and the other in a sensual, spiritual, and emotional realm. Sometimes they battle that duality, but most often, the women at the core of each drama come to recognize how important it is to acknowledge influences beyond the temporal plane. We are asked to share their experience at a raw level, because these people—some royal, many quite ordinary—are trying to fulfill their daily lives even when faced with extraordinary influences.

Kneubuhl knows her history and can make the stale and overworked details breathe again with an alluring immediacy. Yet her plays are utterly contemporary in style, episodic,