

BOOK REVIEWS SECTION

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Ratuva, S. and Lawson, S (Eds.) (2016). *The people have spoken: The 2014 elections in Fiji*. Canberra, Australia: ANU Press. 282pp. ISBN: 978-1-7604-6001-3. AUD\$45.00.

Small states are much more likely to be democratic than large ones but the Pacific island state of Fiji, which experienced military coups in 1987, 2001 and 2006, has long been an exception to this global trend. What makes the Fiji case especially interesting, however, is that despite the prevailing ‘coup culture’, democracy invariably returns to the islands. Stephanie Lawson and Steve Ratuva’s book *The people have spoken* provides a timely analysis of Fiji’s first election since the 2006 coup with contributions from a wide array of fields. As the title suggests, the people of Fiji spoke at the ballot box and handed the incumbent military ruler turned Fiji First Party (FFP) leader, Voreqe Frank Bainimarama, a landslide victory. In capturing the issues, events and trends that emerged in 2014, the book also sheds important light on the post-colonial history of this small state.

The September 2014 elections introduced significant ‘firsts’ to Fiji’s politics due to the significant changes in the new 2013 constitution. The voting age has been reduced from 21 to 18 and voting is now based on the Open List Proportional (OLP) system with the principle of ‘one-person, one-vote and one value’. One consequence is that the 2013 constitution has fundamentally moved away from the chiefly influence and the previous communal electoral system. For the first time, the traditional chiefs whose power was institutionalised through the Great Council of Chiefs have been totally removed from the formal political process. The implications of the above are thoroughly analysed by the book contributors.

The book begins with Steven Ratuva’s analysis of the elections held Fiji under the three electoral systems respectively – first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, Alternative Voting (AV) system and the OLP - exemplifies the causes and consequences of electoral engineering in this ethnically diverse nation. While elections under the FPTP and the AV system reinvigorated ethnic configurations, the 2014 elections under the OLP system to a large extent appears to have reversed that trend and ‘Fiji’s culture has shifted away from ethnic polarity towards moderation’ (p. 38). Brij Lal’s analysis of the Fiji Indian voting shift from traditionally ethnic based parties to moderate FFP is a vindication of this change. However, as Ratuva contends, whether this trend will continue remains to be seen with the next election the real test.

Fiji’s politics since independence has revolved around three core pillars – chiefs, land and religion – which provided a sense of identity and cohesiveness to the indigenous Fijians (Taukei). For better or worse, these pillars were shaken in the 2014 elections. The influence of the chiefs who held significant leverage in the past, as Stephanie Lawson’s chapter illustrates, was undermined by the 2006 coup and their marginalisation was reinforced by the 2014 elections. Consequently, the issue of land, which traditionally played a pivotal role in Fiji politics through the chiefly influence, as Sefania Sakai points out, gained less traction with Taukei voters. Similarly, the Methodist Church, which has the largest number of Taukei members and played significant role in the previous coups, according to Lynda Newland, was sidelined by the military regime and hence could not assert much influence over its followers. While the three pillars may have held a chord with the elder Taukei voters who mostly voted

for the right leaning Social Liberal Democratic Party (SODELPA), Patrick Vakaoti's chapter demonstrates that the young voters played a significant role in the FFP victory as the majority were attracted by a campaign based on development and 'bread and butter' issues (p. 9).

The book highlights some disturbing impositions by the military regime leading up to the 2014 elections that ultimately favoured the FFP. David Robbie's chapter laments on the barriers to the freedom of information provisions within the 2013 constitution, the draconian media blackout law, and specifically the limitations within the 2010 Media Industry Development Decree. According to Robbie, the sheer enforcement of this decree meant Fiji could 'hardly claim to have a truly free and fair media' (p. 83). Apart from the media, the Bainimarama military regime's new electoral laws became problematic to the established political parties, such as SODELPA, which according to Pio Tabaiwalu favoured the FFP. The benefits of incumbency included the Attorney General and the secretary-general of the FFP being the Minister for Elections, and the regimes sympathisers holding key positions such as the Supervisor of Elections. In such a climate the odds were stacked against SODELPA and the other established parties, including the Fiji Labour Party and the National Federation Party. Despite this disadvantage, Scott McWilliam argues that SODELPA's own strategy of clinging to the old guard contributed to its poor election performance. Perhaps this is a wakeup call for next elections for the SODELPA management which is now led by a former coup leader, Sitiveni Rabuka.

While the environment leading to the 2014 elections were questionable, the conduct of the 2014 election was judged as free and fair by the international community as Leonard Chan, a member of Multinational Observer Group explains in his chapter. Much of this is attributed to the key role-played by the Fijian Electoral Commission which is recounted by Electoral Commissioner Alisi Daurewa in her chapter.

Fiji's 2014 election was a momentous occasion as democracy returned to the country after a lapse of eight years. Overall, the contributors of this book do a wonderful job of reviewing the 2014 elections from a variety of perspectives. This book is thus both an important source of information to the students, academics and practitioners working on strengthening Fiji's democracy but also a timely analysis of the longer term trends that have shaped Fiji's post-colonial history.

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Palmer, C. A. (2016). *Inward yearnings: Jamaica's journey to nationhood*. Kingston, Jamaica; Barbados; Trinidad and Tobago: University of the West Indies Press. 252pp, pbk, ISBN (print): 978-9-7664-0591-5. US\$40.

Could a native political elite's diminished sense of its cultural identity and evasion of its civilisational association with Africa during the fall of the British Empire in the Caribbean become the compelling force that shaped a colony's political destiny for the worse?

Nationalist Jamaican scholars have long declared for the affirmative on this matter as it relates to their country's experience with decolonisation. Their debunking claim – that far from being heroic anti-colonial leaders, Jamaica's culturally-alienated and Eurocentric political elite was complicit in delaying the island's passage to territorial statehood and were guilty of repressing alternative visions of Jamaican nationality – has long been at the centre of the Jamaican Fanonist critique of the brown and black middle class personalities that led the political movement to end colonial rule on the island.

History and scholarship have been kind to this interpretation of the cultural and political orientation of Jamaica's political leaders at a time of post-World War II anti-colonial upheaval. Recent studies on the politics of Jamaican decolonisation, including Deborah Thomas's *Modern Blackness*, Colin Clarke's *Race, class and the politics of decolonisation* and Colin A. Palmer's *Freedom's children* have added archival research sustaining the classical thesis elaborated in Trevor Munroe's *The politics of constitutional decolonisation* and Louis Lindsay's *The myth of independence: Middle class politics and non-mobilisation in Jamaica*. The latter two pieces were published in the 1970s during the resurgence of anti-colonial sentiments on the island and growth of nationalist scholarship, primarily emanating from the University of the West Indies.

Colin A. Palmer is a political historian of the modern Caribbean. This book complements his *Freedom's children* that analysed Jamaican political history between 1938 and 1944. He brings his prodigious scholarship and authoritative voice to bear on this new work concerning the cultural orientation of the native political elite between 1944 and 1962.

Far removed from the political fervour of the Jamaican 1970s and eschewing a Fanonist interpretation of political events, this book adds irrefutable evidence that Jamaica's political class abetted the persistence of colonialism in the crucial run-up to the island's political independence in 1962.

Palmer's careful documentation of the cultural politics of the 'nationalist' elite confirms earlier radical interpretations that the social class steering Jamaica's passage to political statehood and cultural selfhood displayed a startling Eurocentric cultural bias, poverty of leadership and a bewildering lack of vision. This much is clear from *Inward yearnings*, even though its main concern is with the making of Jamaican cultural identity and its political nationalism. As Palmer states, the book is about "the island's anguished discovery of Africa as it tried to discover and accept its racial self" as a country with a black majority (p. 3).

Over the course of eight chapters on the disputed quest for self-government, the Rastafarians' assertion of an exilic black nationality, political rivalries between the two main political parties, the doomed search for a pan-Caribbean identity and the collapse of the West Indies Federation, Palmer reveals a political elite's allegedly crippled cultural sensibilities in stunning detail. Eurocentric bias, unflinching empire loyalties, anti-black cultural scorn and

insular Jamaican nationalism defined those sentiments. Such attitudes, Palmer implies, repressed available alternative options within Jamaica and the Caribbean's protean political culture and historical traditions. They included Marxist activism, working class militancy for democracy and freedom, and unapologetic black consciousness movements.

Inward yearnings shows Jamaica's political elites rejecting these options and repressing dissidents who favoured them. Thus, political elites' lingering ties with Britain and the West trumped nationalist protests from below. Nowhere was this fawning Jamaican Eurocentrism more apparent, Palmer suggests, than in the embarrassing 1955 'Jamaica 300' tercentenary celebration put on by the Jamaican government of the day to commemorate the island's three-hundred-year ties to Britain.

Given such shocking evidence, observers might rightly ask: "With nationalists like these, who needs European colonisers?" Yet, this is the dreary conclusion from reading Palmer's study. In probing elite expressions of Jamaican nationality, Palmer has drawn an unflattering portrait of political leadership at a critical juncture in the island's history.

The two political leaders – Alexander Bustamante of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and Norman Manley of the People's National Party (PNP) – do not escape unscathed from Palmer's archival research and ensuing criticism. He finds Bustamante rejecting for long periods the PNP's call for Jamaican self-government, then later accepting it; Palmer also shows Bustamante denouncing British political rule, then warmly embracing it later. Political opportunism, not principle, typically defined Bustamante's position on critical issues and Palmer depicts him as a uniquely divisive figure who went from undermining unity within the anti-colonial movement in 1942 to upending the West Indian Federation in 1961.

Norman Manley did not fare much better. We see him in Parliament heaping cultural scorn on a black member of his party who dared challenge his leadership. After standing for self-government and the Federation, Manley delayed in seeking the former once in office and by 1961 had retreated to Bustamante's insular nationalism on the latter. After leading a socialist PNP for some 12 years, the PNP leader adopted Bustamante's anti-communism and his rejection of an African-centered nationalism for the island. Worse, in the final years of British rule, Palmer shows governments led by Jamaican leaders crushing Rastafarian protests, harassing communists, banning subversive literature and condoning the turn to a national security state.

In all this, *Inward yearnings* is notable not so much for disclosing these events: others had long commented on them. Rather, this work is valuable for its insights into the turbulence and uncertain racial sentiments afflicting the political elite's summoning of a Jamaican selfhood against stiff grassroots challengers who offered an alternative vision of Jamaican nationality tied to an African civilisation identity. This volume is a convincing review of the linkages between Jamaican state formation and the crafting of a peculiar form of Jamaican nationality defined by the evasion of a black racial selfhood. Notwithstanding its neglect of the Cold War and the impact of powerful external forces on these developments, *Inward yearnings* is a fascinating account of state formation and nationalism in Jamaica.

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Macintyre, M. and Spark, C. (Eds.). (2017). *Transformations of gender in Melanesia*. Canberra, Australia: Australian National University Press. ISBN (print): 978-1-7604-6088-4. ISBN (online): 978-1-7604-6089-1. Free to download.

Transformations of gender in Melanesia is co-edited by Martha Macintyre and Ceridwen Spark, both of whom have made significant contributions to the anthropological study of gender in the Pacific. The volume examines the complex shifts in gender and gender relations, both positive and negative, occurring in contemporary Melanesia. It engages with the debate around tradition versus modernity in the region, and the manner in which external ideas influence how gender is perceived. The volume originated from papers delivered at the 'State of the Pacific' conference held at the Australian National University, Canberra, in 2014.

In her introductory chapter, Macintyre first reflects on the often-sidelined contribution of women leaders in the decolonisation era in Melanesia. She goes on to consider how Western models of economic and political development have shaped gender relations, and provides a thorough literature review of the study of gender in the region. She makes a convincing case for the importance of the volume, in that gender relations have transformed significantly in an increasingly urbanised, modern and internationally engaged Melanesia. The seven chapters that follow cover a range of case studies in Papua New Guinea, West Papua (Indonesia) and the Solomon Islands, as well as regional comparative studies, examining how and why gender roles and relations are changing.

The first two chapters – on modernity and masculinities in Papua New Guinea and West Papua, respectively – are two of the highlights of the volume. Gender is, of course, often framed as if synonymous with women, and the volume should be commended for its focus on the shifting nature and complexities of masculinities as well as femininities in Melanesia. The chapters by Stephanie Lusby and Jenny Munro draw attention to how gender transformations involve a perceived loss of power and status by men, and how anti-violence against women discourses are complicated by both institutionalised violence in the law and order and security industries as in Lusby's study of security guards in East New Britain, and state-sanctioned violence in the case of Munro's of young indigenous men in West Papua.

Macintyre's introduction draws interesting links between political leadership at all levels and community leadership in discussions of gender. Yet, readers are left to draw these links themselves in the following chapters. For instance, Pauline Soaki's analysis of barriers to political representation for women in Solomon Islands, and John Cox's study of a community kindergarten run by women in rural Solomon Islands, do not expand on these links through reference to each other, or other work on the intersection of political and community leadership in Melanesia.

The story of shifting gender relations in contemporary Melanesia is intrinsically connected to the story of urbanisation. While the majority of Melanesian people live in rural areas, the rapid expansion of urban areas such as Honiara, Port Vila and Port Moresby is sparking an increasing body of literature that this volume contributes to. The processes of urbanisation figure largely in Spark's chapter on the agency of urban women. The complexities of navigating an urban identity as well as retaining connections to culture and place are perhaps best expressed in Michelle Nayahamui Rooney's afterword, which provides an important first-person perspective that navigates the space between insider and outsider.

A key question is what advances in information and communication technology (ICT) mean for everyday gender relations in Melanesia, especially in urban environments, and this is explored most comprehensively in Tait Brimacombe's chapter on regional women's organising. This chapter, a very worthwhile piece of research, does constitute somewhat of a departure from the tone and narrative of the volume which is pitched at both an anthropology and development studies audience.

One of the most interesting aspects of the volume is its examination of gender relations in broader terms than simply marital or sexual relations. In Spark's chapter on the lives of urban-based women in Melanesia, she reflects on the salience of the wider familial support system on women's lives, and in particular their relationships with their mothers and sisters, a theme further explored in Rooney's chapter. Brimacombe's chapter floats the idea of a pan-Pacific 'sisterhood'.

A common trap in discussing Melanesia tends to be an overemphasis on Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands at the expense of everywhere else. In this respect, Munro's chapter on West Papua is a key contribution to this volume, but other areas of Melanesia are neglected. Discussion of Vanuatu is limited to half a chapter on women in a generalised 'urban Melanesia', while Fiji is only briefly mentioned; New Caledonia is not mentioned at all. This heavy focus on western Melanesia gives us perhaps a slanted view of gender transformations, given the immense diversity of the region. Issues of size and scale, and how they intersect with the key themes of the volume – in particular, urbanisation – would have been more fully understood with a broader comparative perspective. Other interesting points of comparison – shifting gender relations in the contexts of secessionist movements in West Papua, Bougainville and New Caledonia, for example – are also left unexplored.

Nevertheless, a volume on the shifting nature of gender roles and relations is a welcome addition to literature on modern Melanesia.. The thorough consideration of the gendered implications of urbanisation available in this volume is a significant contribution to a growing body of literature on urbanisation in Melanesian and other small island states.

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Hoefte, R., Bishop M.L. and Clegg, P. (Eds.) (2017). *Post-colonial trajectories in the Caribbean: the three Guianas*. London: Routledge. 210pp, ISBN: 978-1472480453. Hardback, £115.00. Kindle edition, £39.98.

Scholars of the Caribbean have intellectually charted beyond colonial boundaries. For example, there has been an effort to study the Dominican Republic and Haiti as a single unit. A line of inquiry regarding the “Three Guianas” has pushed beyond colonial borders to explore the expanse of French Guiana, Suriname (formerly Dutch Guiana) and Guyana (formerly British Guiana) in the same conversation. Several conferences have followed this intellectual journey, including “Imagining the Guyanas: Ecologies of Memory and Movement,” at the University of London in 2016. This dialogue follows patterns previously generated by everyday people: crossing porous borders; traversing the Amazon; establishing networks of trade, communities, political alliances; small-scale mining and tourism; and the expansion of the informal economy. These three small states – with combined populations of less than 1.6 million – cover almost 465,000 km² in South America, with topography ranging from rain forest to savannah to coastal cities. Overwhelming majorities of their populations live on the coast, and they share vast ‘interiors’, including the Amazon Basin. Considering these three countries without ignoring differences imposed by empire and language, is the fundamental project of *Post-colonial trajectories in the Caribbean: The three Guianas*.

What is generative about examining the ‘Three Guianas’ side by side? These neighbouring countries were creations of three different empires. Guyana and Suriname are independent nations, gaining independence in 1966 and 1975, respectively. Meanwhile, French Guiana remains an overseas territory of France: its borders are literally European borders, and it has the highest GDP on the South American continent. Despite their location, by virtue of their histories and cultures, these countries are usually associated with the Caribbean and boast some of the most diverse populations in the region. Their geographic proximity to each other, however, has not integrated them, even though internal decisions made in one country can fundamentally affect the others. As several authors in the edited volume note, integration will be critical to their survival in a globalised world.

The first three chapters of the book examine each country’s political history, noting colonial context, the independence period, political culture, democratic practice (or lack thereof) and issues of ethnicity. Kate Quinn argues that authoritarianism, constitutional manipulation and ethnic polarisation in Guyanese politics are rooted in the colonial period and that the post-independence era has brought more continuity than change. Hans Ramsøedh’s chapter on democracy and political culture in Suriname argues that politicians have become colonisers of the state, leading to a fundamental lack of public trust in politics. In spite of this, voter turnout at elections is high, largely due to “ethnic mobilisation, clientelism and patronage...” (p. 45). In their chapter, Fred Réno and Bernard Phipps see French Guiana as a “distorting kaleidoscope” because, despite the universalist republican vision of Creoles (a minority that dominates the state), Amerindian and Maroon peoples continue to face exclusion.

Six comparative chapters exploring thematic topics follow the single-country chapters. Steve Garner examines the contested, contingent, and exclusive nature of political ethnicity, concluding that it operates “more as a puzzle to analyse rather than an analytical category” (p. 71). Simola Vezzoli explores factors, multifaceted patterns and regulations that shaped migration across time and territories. Paul Tijon Sie Fat, Ranu Abhelakh and Edward Troon argue the complexity and vagueness of the idea of ‘China’ in these countries, including ethnic Chinese, new Chinese migrants, and enterprises that range from small-scale businesses

to state-sanctioned or state-owned corporations: noting that, often, “Chinese investments are primarily commercial business ventures covered in diplomatic veneer” (p. 108).

Marjo De Theije’s chapter on small-scale gold mining is a fascinating exploration of an industry with growing impact on individual livelihoods and national economies in all three countries but that proves challenging to regulate because of its trans-border, often clandestine and spatially vast nature. Pitou van Dijk examines transport infrastructure and the development and integration of the three Guianas from local, national, subregional and regional perspectives, including helpful maps and noting some environmental, cultural and local risks. The question of energy security is completely tied to configurations of infrastructure development, investment and integration, as Anthony T. Bryan reveals in his chapter “Untapped,” which explores the vast energy resources of the Guianas, recognizing the economic management, border, and social and political challenges.

The introduction and the conclusion, written by the editors Rosemarijn Hoefte, Matthew Bishop and Peter Clegg, argue the central thesis of the book: that, even though the Guianas “have experienced something of a history of estrangement from each other, their post-colonial trajectories have mirrored each other in a great many respects” (p. 155). Although the book has made a convincing case for this assertion, French Guiana often seems to stand apart from the other two countries. The editors also highlight the Guianas’ growing relationships and challenges with Latin America, the weakening relations with CARICOM and regional Caribbean entities, global relations with the EU and China, and the potential for more formal economic and political arrangements among the three Guianas. This volume will find an engaged audience among those interested in small states because the three Guianas are a lesser-known part of the world, and authors delve into the challenges of governance, development and infrastructure, variability in sovereignty, the critical nature of integration, the options for economic diversification and vulnerability to global markets.

The editors recognize that the Three Guianas “have not always fit easily into studies on the Caribbean or Latin America” (p. 1). This is particularly true for Latin America, but Latin Americanists will find this volume interesting because it discusses the growing relationship among the Guianas, Brazil, and Venezuela; the migration of Brazilians and Venezuelans to these countries in search of small-scale gold mining and other opportunities; the road infrastructure projects led by Brazil; and the increasing interface with Latin American countries. On the other hand, scholars of postcolonialism may find less than expected – *Postcolonial* in the title is largely a marker of time rather than a reference to theory – given that, with few exceptions, the authors do not directly engage these debates.

The book will appeal to readers interested in diaspora studies: the Guianas are an extremely rich landscape for this. Moreover, several chapters refer to the challenges of land rights for Indigenous and Maroon communities and the relations that follow when peoples’ movements unsettle borders. This book should urge scholars to continue disrupting borders and see connections that elude due to disciplinary, language and living colonial boundaries.

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Bambridge, T. (Ed.). (2016). *The Rahui: Legal pluralism in Polynesian traditional management of resources and territories*. Canberra, Australia: ANU Press. 269pp. ISBN: 978-1-9250-2279-7 (pbk); 978-1-9250-2291-9 (e-book). Available for free download.

The debated concepts of *tapu/kapu/tabu* (spiritual restriction or sacred prohibition) and *mana* (Austronesian concept of power, effectiveness and prestige) have been something of a crucial obsession within anthropological literature, both in attempts to understand Oceanic underpinnings of power and religion and, in recent decades, in their application towards fulfilling western and global desires for biodiversity conservation. In this edited volume, readers are offered the first work devoted to discussing the related, but understudied, concept of *rahui/kahui/ra'ui* (resource or territory restriction) in multiple Polynesian small states and across deep time. The book is first and foremost a valuable and ethnographically rich resource for anyone studying taboo institutions or contemporary Pacific governance broadly. It also details the unique ways that small jurisdictions assert cultural as well as legal identity while contending with foreign governing powers and large-scale international forces. Finally, the work provides invaluable English language access to French scholarship in Oceania previously underutilised by large swathes of academia.

The concept of *rahui* is practically non-existent in secondary literature compared to its often misrepresented relative *tapu* with which it is often conflated. One feat of this work, although not always effectively overt, is to clarify the nature of *rahui*, not as a form of *tapu*, but as one of two types of prohibition: *tapu* is a prohibition governed by the sacred nature of objects, while *rahui* is a prohibition controlled by strategies linked to political and sacred power. Moreover, argues editor Bambridge, “the political implication of the *rahui* remain relevant today as modern states and indigenous communities in Eastern Polynesia conceptualise *rahui* from a political perspective rather than from an environmental one” (pp. 3-4).

This political and pluralistic dynamism of *rahui* detailed in this book is a compelling contribution that frees its analysis from narrow historical romanticisms, abstract sacred descriptions and contemporary ecological relegations. Bambridge employs the notion of legal pluralism and recent paradigms from legal anthropology, where law is a process instead of a static system of rules, to frame the volume’s collective contributions across Polynesia. Within this perspective, the various chapters outline *rahui* across eleven societies, demonstrating a continuity between traditional and contemporary pluralism where aspects of customary *rahui* have adapted to changing contexts.

The book is laid out in two parts. Part I – *Tapu and rahui: traditions and pluralistic organisation of society* – grounds the work and establishes the underlying central argument: contemporary observations of political ambiguity and pluralism mirror those of the past, and non-centralised networked leadership existed in many Polynesian societies. The chapters here consider various practices of *rahui* from a historical pre-European perspective, reconstructing the institution exclusively on primary sources. The first three deal with the early sacred and religious modality of *rahui* where conductivity and circulation of power, strategically conveyed, came from and enforced genealogical hierarchies and ancestral networks. Chapters 4 and 5 consider *rahui* more directly within the context of resource use and management.

The concluding chapter of Part I by Bambridge returns us to the analytical lens of legal pluralism to establish that (in the Society Islands) authority over *rahui* can be deployed by different individuals and groups in varied contexts. He brings a welcome (but brief) placement of *rahui* in a context of existing Polynesian *tapu* and *mana* literature, establishing

the most significant and anthropologically-challenging conclusion of the volume: “comparatively limited attention in secondary modern sources has resulted in the misrepresentation of *rahui* and related concepts such as *mana* and *tapu*, which, in turn, has resulted in an overly structural understanding of Polynesian sociopolitical chieftainship” (p. 120). His analysis of a diversified *rahui* which “represents a major departure from the standard interpretations popularised by Firth, Sahlins, Keesing and Shore in Oceanian anthropology” (p. 134) calls for exciting and careful re-examinations of foundational works.

Part II – *Rahui* today as state-custom pluralism – transitions to address *rahui* in a contemporary setting, particularly in relation to, and dialogue with, ideological and environmental changes. Each chapter highlights the dialogical processes through which *rahui* as a cultural institution has relevance today amidst French Polynesia’s “presence and potency of the state” (p. 212). The authors demonstrate that, across several small societies, innovative compliance with *rahui* can pragmatically work towards collective local cohesion and make visible contemporary contestations of regional and national legislation. In places where *rahui* or *rahui*-like practices have been encoded into legal frameworks, Part II authors describe their inconsistent interpretations and implementations, and the varying responses to them by local communities. In some instances, the insertion and vague reappropriation of *rahui* has been met with resistance where access bans by the government are felt as impinging upon freedom and making little sense without its historically sacred significance. Alternatively, in locations such as Tongareva, where the use of *rahui* (or *ra’ui*) was prohibited by law, its continued (but structurally different) use by local communities today suggests a pragmatic flexibility of cultural practices and “the ability of the islanders to make the most out of the cracks of recognition that continued to exist in the superimposed colonial systems” (p. 169).

In this book, readers are offered a beautiful spectacle of widespread custom diversely manifesting over time and place, and a “restitution of a rich and nuanced account of *rahui*” (p. 134). The scholarly value of the work is essentially threefold: rich ethnographic evidence of *rahui* across diverse societies; the nature of *rahui* as unremitting and overtly political; and the theoretical inferences of a continuously negotiated plural governance in Polynesia. Some chapters are better than others in hitting these areas; the tone, style, extent of anthropological or legal jargon, and the level of work varies greatly across the book. Only a handful of chapters interact with secondary treatments of *tapu/kapu/tabu* and *mana* in anthropological scholarship; many ignore them entirely. This may leave some readers wanting further exegesis that directly and critically engages with those foundational works. The edited volume must, however, be understood within the progressive work by Pacific scholars concerning decolonisation, indigeneity, emerging epistemologies and the invention of tradition. To this end, the work succeeds in a kind of celebratory exclusion of secondary anthropological literature, perhaps thus eliminating or reducing the scholarly force of previous interpretations within Oceanic anthropology. This must-read collection represents a firmly-planted seedling that will grow to inspire further exciting research on the complex realities of Pacific island customs and their pluralistic reassertions.

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Levine, S (Ed.) (2016). *Pacific ways: Government and politics in the Pacific Islands* (2nd edn.). Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press; 416pp; pbk; ISBN: 978-1-77656-068-4; NZ\$40.

The 2016 edition of *Pacific ways* follows up on the success of the original 2009 book by the same title. It provides an introduction to the political structures and institutions of 27 territories and states of the Pacific island region. Its range includes the major metropolitan countries of Australia and New Zealand as well as the contested provinces of Indonesia that are commonly referred to as West Papua. The collection also includes material on Timor-Leste, one of the world's youngest countries (a new addition, along with West Papua). Its main focus, however, is the island Pacific which includes some of the world's smallest countries, whether in terms of landmass or population size. The coverage that the collection provides is sufficiently wide to allow the reader to gain a sense of the diversity of the region, even without a detailed consideration of culture, language and ethnicity.

Unsurprisingly, the influence of history is very significant in a collection of this type with its focus on government and politics. In particular, the impacts of colonialism are evident. A number of the countries that are covered are ones where the departure of colonial masters is still within living memory. In these cases, colonisers left their mark on constitutional documents, legislation and institutions that form the political and governance architecture that exists today. Describing these institutions is the core aim of the book. In doing so, it also covers those territories with unique sovereignty arrangements, including countries that are in free association with a larger country, such as New Zealand (e.g. Cook Islands) or the USA (e.g. Federated States of Micronesia), and political entities that are still colonies, such as French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna.

This collection provides a very useful and, overall, comprehensive introduction to some of the key political and governmental aspects of the Pacific region. It will be of benefit to students and researchers who are new to the field of Pacific studies. It also provides a very useful starting point for anyone who is looking to work in the region, whether as a researcher, in business, or as a development partner. Its utility is enhanced by the inclusion of additional readings that appear at the end of each chapter.

There are, however, some significant limitations to the collection. One is that the sections that are covered by the chapters are not consistent. So, for example, the chapter on Cook Islands includes a section on the judicial system (p. 46) but this does not appear in the chapter on Solomon Islands (pp. 291-306). Some of the apparent inconsistency can be explained by the need to address issues that are particularly important in the context of an individual country or territory. Nevertheless, this does not explain all of these disparities.

There is also a lack of consistency in the quality of the analysis between the various chapters. Those chapters that are written by people who live in the countries they are writing about (or who have visited them relatively recently) are definitely stronger than those written by authors who do not fall into those categories. So, for example, in the chapter on Vanuatu there is no reference to the role of the Supreme Court, which plays an important role in ensuring that political instability does not lead to more serious consequences. Nor is there any mention of the introduction of temporary special measures to ensure women's participation in politics as members of municipal councils. This is a crucial part of any conversation about women in politics in the region and requires adequate consideration in a volume of this kind. The landmark events of late 2015, when 14 MPs were jailed, are mentioned cursorily in the

conclusion of the chapter: this is quite astonishing, given their significant impact at both national and regional levels.

Fraenkel's concluding chapter, entitled 'Political institutions in the Pacific Islands', goes some way to providing a comparison between different entities considered elsewhere in the book. Pleasingly, this chapter makes some (albeit too brief) mention of the participation of women in politics in the Pacific; this issue is largely underserved in the earlier chapters. This chapter would be stronger if there was greater focus on analysis rather than description.

Now that we have two editions of *Pacific ways*, they can, to some extent, stand side by side. By drawing on them both, it is possible to chart the significant political developments that have affected the countries and territories that are covered in the volumes. We now look forward to a third edition that will allow for an expanded timescale and a greater sense of how the politics and governance of the region are changing. I would like to see issues of political activity around foreign policy given greater attention in the next iteration. This could include an analysis of bilateral relationships, regional political arrangements and, increasingly, global activity with a particular focus on climate change politics. Footnotes rather than endnotes would also make the volume more readable.

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Butler, P. and Morris, C (Eds.) (2017). *Small states in a legal world*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing. ISBN: 978-3-319-39365-0 (hbk); 978-3-319-39366-7(e-book). xii+264pp. £92.00 hbk and £73.50 e-book.

Over the last few years, there has been a surge of interest in small states and territories among legal researchers, with several initiatives aimed at raising awareness and fostering research on the specific legal dimensions of ‘small’ jurisdictions (i.e. those with less than 1.5 million residents, in a commonly accepted notion), or even of ‘micro’ ones (even smaller). One reason for this growing interest is the intriguing features of small places, including their unique legal dimensions and their historically successful efforts to survive and stay viable, despite their lacking several elements and resources associated with ‘regular’ states. Another reason for this interest is the perception that they may serve as laboratories or observatories to analyse dynamics and solutions about governance and the law which may be reproducible – or actually work, if covertly – in ‘larger’ jurisdictions worldwide. Thus, small jurisdictions epitomise current issues of interest for all governance/legal systems and jurisdictions, and feature prominently in offering useful elements with which to devise new models of statehood, sovereignty and good governance for the 21st century.

This collection of essays seeks to demonstrate both rationales for studying small states. It also represents the first issue in the Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), Centre for Small States book series *The world of small states* – the editors, Petra Butler and Caroline Morris are the Directors of the Centre – and includes the proceedings of the inaugural conference of the Centre held at QMUL on 7 September 2015.

The book is structured in three parts: Part I consists of one article only, derived from the keynote speech given at the 2015 Conference by Sir Geoffrey Palmer QC, former Prime Minister of New Zealand. This focuses on the existential threat that climate change presents for a number of small island states in the Pacific and Indian oceans. The main value of this paper is to promote awareness in respect to the coming catastrophe and potential solutions.

Part II is quite aptly titled ‘Small states: challenges and adventures in law’. It is a collection of scholarly essays on specific challenges and characteristics of small states and their legal systems: analyses can be found here on the specific challenges of competition law and policy (Briguglio); and on their strategies to ‘punch above their weight’ in international organisations, such as the UN Security Council and the European Union (Thorhallsson). Flinck analyses specifically how Luxembourg and its small size could gain leverage from EU law, considering that small size, even in a legal and constitutional sense, may become a resource, and even a strategy, in a multinational context characterised by a strong supra-national system. Mumford deals with international tax law: a popular arena for small jurisdictions to develop strategies for survival and viability. This essay focuses on how small states belong to a special group in relation to the negotiation of multilateral tax rules and policies, with different expectations and agendas.

Part II also deals with climate change and the associated risks and survivability issues for low-lying small island states (Costi and Ross), thus resonating with the keynote paper presented in Part I. The focus of the Costi & Ross paper is on small low-lying states’ sovereignty and statehood. Finally, two papers dealing with colonial legal legacy, legal pluralism, politics and democracy round up Part II. The first one analyses the relation between colonial legacy and democracy, highlighting how local circumstances may not produce, beyond the forms of the ‘Westminster model’, a healthy democratic environment

(D. O'Brien). The other takes us to a specific experience in Samoa, where normative pluralism affects politics and the electoral process (Suaalii-Sauni).

Part III deals with legal professions and legal education. Three papers are provided here. The first, authored by four scholars from around the world (Donlan, Marrani, Twomey and Zammit), deals with 'mixed jurisdictions' in the most common categorisation of comparative law: Malta, Jersey, Seychelles. The key theme is how small places borrow from larger ones, and the consequences of these choices. The second investigates the legal professions and legal education 'in a (bigish) small state': Cyprus. Dynamics and patterns of diversity are again skillfully exposed by the author (Hatzimihail), with specific emphasis on how the professional élites act as technical and cultural gatekeepers to stymie change. The third and final piece in this section (Bilimoria) dwells on the development of professional ethics in the South Pacific region, and in Fiji in particular.

The book represents an important step forward for legal research on small jurisdictions. A robust theoretical or methodological frame is lacking: aside from a short preface by the editors, there is no introductory chapter or conclusion, thus indicating that the research remains at an initial stage and is yet to produce a coherent set of conclusive findings of general applicability). The structure of the book does, however, provide elements for an initial framework for approaching the topic: these small places are characterised by constant and serious survivability/viability issues; their legal systems are affected by their size and their often complex and plural (legal) history, warranting specific survival strategies, specific features in their legal systems, specific solutions in a number of areas of the law; and legal education and legal professions in those places reflect their often unique set of historic and socio-legal circumstances.

This text is rich in not-easily-available data and the main theme – the surfeit of scholarship on the specificities of small jurisdictions – is evident throughout the different essays. It thus represents an important beginning for a new strand of legal research on small states that is a welcome addition to the field.

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Fry, G. and Tarte, S. (Eds.). (2015). *The New Pacific Diplomacy*. Canberra, Australia: ANU Press. ISBN: 978-1-9250-2281-0. 305pp. AUD\$50.

The new Pacific diplomacy provides a fascinating look at the changing nature of the foreign affairs of Pacific small island states over the last decade. It is the most important work to be published on this topic so far, and has been influential in its own right in establishing the narrative of Pacific island states as assertive, independent, innovative and influential voices on the international stage.

The edited volume brings together chapters from 23 authors, edited by two well-known international relations scholars based at the University of the South Pacific. It is both an outstanding and inclusive line-up, with several Pacific island leaders (including prime ministers and presidents), academics, students and civil servants providing contributions. Importantly, a majority of the contributors are themselves Pacific islanders: a fact that distinguishes the book from much of the literature on the region.

The various chapters cover a range of topics, including climate change, regionalism, trade, and tuna. The first chapter, by the book's editors, spells out the central premise of the volume: that 'there has been a fundamental shift in the way that Pacific Island states engage with regional and world politics': a 'paradigm shift', in the words of Anote Tong, the former president of Kiribati. The chapters that follow set out in various ways to establish where and how this has happened.

The first part of the book considers regionalism. Dame Meg Taylor, the Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum, details how the new Framework for Pacific Regionalism agreed to by Forum Leaders forms part of an effort to 'bring back the politics' in regionalism, thus moving away from the much-criticised technocratic approach of the *Pacific Plan* that preceded it. New regional actors are also discussed. Fulori Manoa details the rise of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) group at the United Nations, a grouping which she argues has superseded the Pacific Group owing to its membership base (only Pacific Small Island Developing States are members, whereas the Pacific Group comprises all Pacific Islands Forum countries that are UN members, including Australia and New Zealand). Sandra Tarte explores the establishment, by the Government of Fiji, of the Pacific Islands Development Forum, an organisation considered by many to represent a challenge to the Pacific Islands Forum (as well as to the Australia and New Zealand governments, which support the Pacific Islands Forum as non-island members).

Three chapters explore sub-regionalism: the heightened prominence of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (by Tess Newton Cain); the implementation of the Melanesia free trade area (by Sovaia Marawa); and various sub-regional initiatives in Micronesia (by Suzanne Lowe Gallen). All three chapters take a historical view, noting the resilience of sub-regionalism over time. They are positive about sub-regionalism's prospects; though events since publication, including a 2017 trade dispute where Papua New Guinea's Trade Minister called for a ban on imports from Fiji, mean that much of that promise is left unfulfilled. (The same could be said of the Pacific Islands Development Forum, but for different reasons.)

A number of chapters deal with geopolitics. Nicola Baker provides an excellent historical analysis of New Zealand's relationship with its small island state neighbours. Michael O'Keefe discusses the implications of competition between global superpowers for the region. Wesley Morgan and Nic Maclellan write about trade liberalisation and decolonisation in the final two chapters of the book.

Two of the most interesting parts of the book consider diplomacy on climate change issues (chapters by Nicollette Goulding and George Carter) and tuna fisheries (Transform Aqorau and Jope Tarai). Both are issues on which Pacific small island states have become more assertive, with positive results. However, the chapters make clear that in neither case has Pacific solidarity been constant. Tensions exist among Pacific small island nations just as they do between the Pacific and external powers. In the case of climate change, countries such as Papua New Guinea have supported the programme to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+), despite the objections of atoll states. Similarly, in the case of tuna fisheries, the interests of members of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement have often differed starkly from those of countries without a purse seine fishery targeting skipjack tuna, the most important tuna fishery in the region.

It is this divergence of interests that in my view is underplayed in the book's overall thesis. There is a tendency in some of the chapters to emphasise and contrast the interests of Pacific island states vis-à-vis those of external powers, and in particular, Australia and New Zealand. Unsurprisingly, this is especially evident in the chapters on Fiji's foreign policy, which has been shaped by the Australia/New Zealand-led sanctions imposed on the military regime that took power in 2006. The overall argument of the book, as presented by its editors in the introductory chapter, also emphasises this small island state vis-à-vis Australia and New Zealand dichotomy; though, to be fair, differences among island states are also noted.

Least satisfying in the volume are the chapters on the Fiji government's diplomacy. Both chapters (by Litia Mawi and Makareta Komai) portray a very Fiji-centric view of the Pacific, emphasising Fiji as a regional leader and 'hub of the Pacific'. Criticisms of the Bainimarama government by various Pacific island states on issues such as democracy, air space, trade and tuna, are ignored. The chapter by Litia Mawi, a diplomat from Fiji, is especially one-sided, though the fact that the chapter is a government perspective is made clear in the title ("Fiji's emerging brand of Pacific diplomacy: A Fiji government perspective"). The volume would have been better served by including a more balanced assessment of the Fiji government's assertive foreign policy.

The new Pacific diplomacy represents a volume that is more than just an academic work by external researchers removed from involvement in foreign affairs. It forms part of a broader shift by Pacific islanders to establish a narrative in which *they* control their destiny, emphasising the achievements of Pacific small island states on both the regional and world stage. It is an important work, as demonstrated by the fact that the title of the book has become a commonly used phrase among policy makers in the Pacific. It also presents a range of voices that is uncommon in the academic literature, though the analysis of Fiji and its role in the region could be improved. The book provides a timely introduction to the diplomacy practised by Pacific small island states for those who want to learn more about them, with a strong historical emphasis permeating many of the chapters. It is a fascinating read for researchers already familiar with the region.

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Corbett, J. (2015). *Being political: Leadership and democracy in the Pacific Islands*. Honolulu HI: University of Hawai'i Press, hbk, xii +243pp. ISBN: 978-0-8248-4102-7. US\$54.

Jack Corbett has produced a high quality work which takes its cue from an interest in political biography and life-writing, combined with an interpretive approach to political analysis. The choice of Pacific island politicians as subjects for analysis stems from his personal interest in, and connections with, the region. The result is a keen insight into the very human aspects of the professional life of politicians in some very challenging settings, as well as the personal motivations that drive them to seek public office. This insight provides the reader with an appreciation of the difficulties facing politicians at different levels: from the demands placed on them by constituents, as well as by other politicians, to the sacrifices of personal time with family and friends; and, not least, the financial costs involved in pursuing a political career.

The author deals with important issues, such as corruption among politicians; while doing so, he neither excuses occurrences on cultural grounds nor issues any judgemental condemnations. Rather, Corbett explains the pitfalls and temptations confronting politicians and locates these within the context of the demands made on them. What emerges is not a portrait of a grasping, self-interested class of men and women who enter politics for what they can get out of it (an all too common assumption among general publics), but a much more nuanced and sympathetic assessment of people who feel a genuine commitment to public service and who want to 'make a difference'. The fact that they so often fall short of achieving such aims is a source of frustration, above all else, for the politicians themselves.

This is a highly original work, also because there are no other books of its kind, or at least not in the Pacific island region. It therefore adds a new dimension to existing life studies from the region. The latter consist of many individual auto/biographies about some of the better known Pacific politicians; but there is no other study of the kind presented by Corbett. The book is also original in being based on personal interviews with numerous Pacific Island politicians. All interviewees have been guaranteed anonymity, and so what they have to say almost certainly provides more insights than would formal, named interviews. It also offers an analysis of the 'anti-politics' phenomenon, as well as a rich source of material for further comparative work on politicians and politics both in the Pacific and elsewhere.

Corbett's book will appeal to academics and students of Pacific politics, policy-makers in and around the region and politicians themselves. It will also appeal to scholars working with political biography and in comparative politics more generally. The style is very clear and accessible and the material is well organised under various themes. One thing that could have been added is more of an overview of the region: its people, its history and its political systems in particular. But: even without this information, which is useful rather than essential, and more so to the reader without much previous knowledge of the region, this book is an excellent work which makes a very valuable contribution to Pacific studies and small state studies more broadly.

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