outside of the academic realm. Perhaps it is time for a similarly comprehensive work, aimed at those with policy and political interests, to promote greater understanding of the monetary issues facing Pacific island economies over the next few decades.

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Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands


Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands forms part of Prentice Hall’s wider Exploring Cultures reference series. Assembling many of the best anthropologists of the region, the collection seeks both to ground globalisation in the actual experiences of Pacific islanders and to address globalisation in the Pacific in all its discordant guises. For the most part, the collection succeeds in its mission. In that it relates these experiences to the comparatively culturally homogenous countries of Polynesia, the diverse Melanesian states and Micronesia, it provides an important bridge between development studies, area studies and anthropology.

In addition to introductory chapters by Lockwood and Robert Borofsky, the contributions are organised into sections about nation-states and ethnic conflict, global economic integration, transnationalism and the environment, identities and cultural representations, social relations, community, well-being and global and local religions.

Lockwood begins with the premise that globalisation ‘has become the hallmark of the twenty-first century as it articulates new forms of social organisation—an increasingly borderless world where flows of capital and new technologies are propelling goods, information, people, and ideologies around the globe in volumes’ (p. 1). She continues: ‘[t]he complexities and scale of these processes oftentimes precludes an understanding of...how the forces of globalisation are experienced and shaped by real people in...diverse regions’ (p. 1). Lockwood’s greatest contributions are in situating the succeeding chapters in global perspective, highlighting the effects of colonialism, the flows of capital and the major debates on globalisation, and in introducing the areas under consideration.

Given the unique opportunity to explore these issues in Pacific contexts, Borofsky laments that too few scholars consider the Pacific islands. He makes compelling arguments for why they should. Researchers can engage in dialogue with individuals who experienced the initial encroachment of the West firsthand. As Borofsky notes, in the Papua New Guinea highlands, where whites arrived only in the 1930s, personal memories and global forces collide: there are still living people on both sides of the encounter who remember ‘first contact’. According to Borofsky, Pacific islands ‘represent, if anything, the dynamic, changing cultural formations we are coming to associate with globalisation—as nation states become reconfigured in new forms’ (p. 41). They offer ‘the most...regionally condensed historical timelines of the global changes that have taken place in recent millennia—from human settlement to European contact to colonialism to postcolonialism’ (p. 41).

For the most part, the collection refuses to characterise Pacific islanders as present and future casualties in the path of the unstoppable advance of Western cultures, religions and capital, seeking rather to
examine the complexities and creativity of local strategies of resistance and appropriation. Considering the number of ethnographers who have contributed to the collection, this is barely surprising.

A personal highlight was John Barker’s comparison between local responses to Christian missionaries among the Maisin, in present day Oro Province, Papua New Guinea, from 1890 onwards and the arrival of a new kind of missionary: the environmentalist. Developed to counter ‘the massive intensification of resource exploitation...mainly by transnational corporations’ (p. 449), the message of environmentalism had become pervasive in Oro. Yet, like Christianity before it, that message was taken by local people as an ‘import, but one that Maisin [could remould] to fit their own cultural orientations, the contingencies of interacting with outsiders, and aspirations for social and economic improvement’ (p. 440). Indeed, Barker offers an exemplary case of the clash of different forms of globalism—environmentalism and resource exploitation—and the myriad ways these forces are understood and synthesised by Melanesians.

Similarly, in exploring the practice of ‘killing time’ and ‘hitting the road’ in peri-urban Port Vila, Jean Mitchell portrays the growing importance of the exclusion of young people from the wage economy stimulated by Vanuatu’s offshore banking centre. Many young ni-Vanuatu depict themselves on the margins of town, killing time; a non-class of non-workers on the fringes of the global economy. Economically disempowered, they exert their cultural agency by forging new identities and forms of sociality from their partially globalised and fragmented urban existences.

The tendency on the part of the contributors to outline these strategies is a strength, but occasionally the claims to cultural agency appear hollow when compared to the absolute economic dominance of the West over the region’s small and weak states.

Personally, I find those chapters where ‘power’ is addressed directly the most forceful. The asymmetries of globalisation are explicit in the contribution by Martha Macintyre and Simon Foale on competing global imperatives and local desires surrounding resource exploitation in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. They note bleakly that, in Melanesia, ‘the claims of global “exchange” sound thin as the situation...looks and sounds much the same as old-fashioned...imperialism’ (p. 151). Melanesians have been excluded from the ‘notable benefits’ of globalisation, such as telecommunication advances and improved information flows. Driven by their desire for development and material wealth, Melanesians are drawn into unbalanced cycles of consumption and exploitation, while enjoying few perceptible benefits from the ‘trickle-down effect’. Most of the wealth accumulated from resource exploitation in Melanesia goes straight back to Western countries. In detailing local epistemologies, and the disjunctures between Melanesian understandings of the benefits of mining and that of the mining companies, Macintyre and Foale mount a persuasive argument that Melanesians ‘do not generally understand the mechanisms whereby their economy is drawn into the global sphere, much less have any control over its direction’ (p. 151). By the time that Melanesians realise the lop-sidedness of the relationship, the authors argue, their mineral and ecological resources might be entirely depleted. It is a salutary warning not to perceive globalisation as entirely beneficial.

Individually, the contributions are of an excellent calibre. Some have been reprinted from elsewhere, belying the collection’s
genesis as a reader on globalisation and culture change. Despite Lockwood’s excellent introduction, the collection occasionally feels a little disjointed, a condition that could have been remedied by the inclusion of a concluding chapter to draw out the common themes and highlight the dissonances. However, as it stands, Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands offers an invaluable teaching and reference resource for all students of the Pacific.

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Pacific Island Tourism

Tourism—which in this context means international tourism—forms a significant component of the foreign exchange earnings of a number of Pacific island states. Recent data from the South Pacific Tourism Organisation indicate that the tourism sector comprises over 40 per cent of GDP in the Cook Islands (a sudden legacy of a diversion of tourists from post-coup Fiji), and around 15 per cent in Vanuatu and Tonga. The same source lists tourism employment as accounting for about 10 per cent of the labour force in Fiji and Samoa. Even if a little rubbery, these are impressive figures, indicative of the importance of the expenditures of foreign visitors to the economic well-being of countries in many parts of the region.

But while tourists may bring financial benefits to island communities, they also impose costs, seen most directly in the adverse impact their presence can have on the natural environment and on the societies and cultures of host countries. Such a negative impact is particularly acute at the mass-tourism end of the market, where high-volume low-yield tourists can easily overwhelm the environmental, social and cultural resources of a local area, as has happened in a number of popular tourist destinations in other parts of the world. Fortunately, the Pacific has so far largely escaped the worst excesses of this sort of tourism but, with tourism operators constantly searching for new locations to exploit, continuing global expansion of the mass-market industry holds many threats for the future.

At the other extreme lies the phenomenon of ecotourism, involving low-volume high-yield tourists who are drawn to a particular location in order to experience at first hand its specific environmental or cultural features. Typically these tourists are well-informed and sensitive to the effects they may have on host communities and on the natural resources they encounter during their visit. This is not to say, however, that they do not create problems; indeed even the most sensitive ecotourists can, wittingly or otherwise, leave quite a noticeable footprint behind them.

It is this latter type of tourism that is the principal concern of this book. Despite the generality of its title, this is a book mainly about micro-level ecologically aware tourism management. There is little in the book about the macroeconomic implications of tourism in the Pacific, or about the economic benefits and costs of tourism development, either actually or potentially, across the region as a whole. The book grew out of papers initially presented at sessions on tourism at the Pacific Science Association Inter-Congress held in Suva as long ago as 1997, and the contributors are primarily anthropologists, sociologists and geographers with specialised interests in sustainable tourism. Indeed, it is the overarching concept of sustainability that binds the disparate