

Government by the Gun: the unfinished business of Fiji's 2000 coup

Robbie Robertson and William Sutherland, 2001, Pluto Press, Sydney, 372pp, ISBN 1 864 03139 5

Compared to the 1987 military coup, a relatively small number of academic publications have resulted from the May 2000 putsch.¹ Among the reasons were that the 1987 coup was totally unexpected and a new phenomenon in the political process in Fiji. Driven by curiosity and excitement many writers took the opportunity to explore the intricacies and speculate about the underlying forces, which led to the coup. The 1987 coup literature amazingly proliferated as if it was a 'gold rush' of sorts by authors competing to produce the most convincing, most colourful and most conspiratorial versions for public consumption. After the almost predictable May 2000 putsch, the excitement had waned and interest in the subject of political takeover had died out because the general feeling was that takeovers had become a stale 'normal' political event, just like an election, in Fiji's political process. Only academics with a serious interest in Fiji's political system and change continued to write on Fiji. One such book is *Government by the Gun*.

The book has two broad approaches. The first is a historical narrative of the political developments during and after the 2000 putsch. The second is a more in-depth examination of the political and economic forces, which led to the crisis.

The book coherently pulls together diverse roles and significance of the opposing and aligned players in the complex politics of the putsch. There were five dominant categories of players in the crisis: the putschists, the hostages, the military, the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) and the ordinary people themselves. The putschists, who consisted of an array of individuals with different backgrounds—army officers, politicians, businessmen, civil servants and

businessmen—driven by ethno-nationalist sentiments to overthrow an Indo-Fijian-led government in favour of Fijian political supremacy. The hostages, most whom were members of the deposed Labour Coalition government, were perhaps the 'passive' participants. The military played one of the most complex and difficult roles in negotiating with George Speight and the hostage takers, responding and countering the psychological warfare techniques of the putschists and maintaining security at the same time. On top of this was its effort in maintaining its own cohesion in the face of internal divisions, which later culminated in a failed mutiny. The GCC's position was in limbo with some members supporting the putsch, while others were against it and still some sat uncomfortably on the fence. The ordinary people were also direct participants in many ways, either through organisations such as churches and non-government organisations, or as loose collection of individuals, either in support or opposition of the putsch, or involved in community confidence and peace building.

The thrust of the argument is that the putsch itself was a result of 'unfinished business' relating to the inability of the past governments and Fijian establishment to adequately address the political and economic interests of indigenous Fijians. Part of the problem, it is argued, is that the interests of the Fijian élites have always been represented as communal interests. This reinforces ethnic antagonism while concealing the fundamental class interests of contending élites. Socioeconomic issues have either been deliberately or unconsciously expressed as ethnic issues. This diversion plays well into the hands of nationalists and Fijian élites who play on race as a part of their political agenda.

Attempts to address the nationalist grievances have been in the form of affirmative action in education and business. Education affirmative action has produced an expanded class of educated middle class

Reviews

Fijians. Economic affirmative action has not really addressed the socioeconomic situation of ordinary poor Fijians who still live within the ambit of semi-communal existence within the broader dynamics of globalisation. Part of the reason for the failure is that affirmative action has been closely associated with 'communal capitalism', the mobilisation of communal human and material resources through communal networks for capitalist enterprises. Part of the process is that chiefs become directors and legal shareholders of companies on behalf of the people. Capital is subsumed under communal patronage and usually no dividend trickles down to the ordinary people.

The strength of the book lies in how it links together ethnic and class factors in a coherent and comprehensive way to provide the broad backdrop to the 2000 putsch. The ethnic discourse tends to blur fundamental socioeconomic issues and diverts attention away from people's material grievances. Ethnicity and class in Fiji relate in complex ways, in some cases they are parallel but in most cases they intersect and cut into each other. The book also highlights some of the contradictions within the Fijian community (such as individualism versus communalism, traditional governance versus democracy, communal identity versus national identity, élites versus commoners and Fijian homogeneity versus intra-communal diversity), which continue to provide the dynamics shaping and driving Fiji's ethnic and political relations. Fiji's future stability would very much depend on how these dichotomies are addressed and reconciled.

However, like other recent books on Fiji, the book has two potential areas of improvement. The first is the need for greater substantive empirical research and analysis at the micro level. This is important in terms of anchoring arguments on the complex intersections between ethnicity and class on empirically verifiable trends. The theoretical

framework in relation to the relationship between class and ethnicity is well developed in the book but it still needs a bit more empirical 'body' to give it the complete form it deserves. Secondly, when dealing with highly emotive and complex notions such as identity, nationalism and ethnicity, more discourse analysis should be done, especially in trying to unravel their complexities in particular circumstances, as in Fiji, rather than assuming their 'given' characteristics. For instance nationalism in Fiji takes various forms, some of which are contradictory to each other. Also identity is an extremely complex phenomenon and shifts its cultural and political characteristics in given circumstances. These shifts need to be understood. It is also very important to gauge and analyse the ethnic, cultural and religious perceptions of the ordinary people themselves, and examine the ongoing prejudices, debates and discourses rather than simply describing the institutions and 'visible' political processes as seen from a macro perspective.

Despite these and the few editorial errors, the book is indeed a very useful contribution to the ongoing debate on Fiji's political discourse and in particular to the crisis of May 2000. Its enlightening analysis should provide the framework for critical examination of Fiji's complex configuration and to dispel certain ethnic and communal myths, which have been crystallised and have blurred perceptions over the years.

Steven Ratuva
The Australian National University

Note

- ¹ Distinction must be made here between the terms 'coup' and 'putsch'. A coup is usually associated with military takeover while a putsch is associated with civilian takeover. The takeover in May 1987 was a military coup, while the takeover in May 2000 was a putsch. The term coup has been consistently used wrongly by academics and journalists to describe the May 2000 takeover.

Tuna: a key economic resource in the Pacific

Robert Gillett, Mike McCoy, Len Rodwell and Josie Tamate, 2001, Asian Development Bank, Manila, 95pp, ISBN 971 561 335 7.

This publication was prepared by consultants to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the ADB and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). Two of the authors are employees of the FFA. The other two are long-time researchers/consultants on fishing in the Pacific.

The stated purpose of the report was to '... highlight the dependence of the Pacific Islands countries on their tuna in order to show the importance of this resource and possibly to help justify allocation arrangements and assistance related to its management' (p.1). The report goes about this task by compiling available information on tuna fishing in the Pacific island countries including catch volumes (by vessel type, country, and distant water fishing nation), volume and value of exports, access fees, direct and indirect employment, taxes and fines for illegal fishing paid to Pacific island governments, extent of subsistence fishing, and role of tuna in the diet and culture of the Pacific island countries. The importance of tuna to these economies is demonstrated in terms of the total value of the catch, the amount of access fees and the share of these access fees in government revenues, the share of direct and indirect employment in total employment, the share of tuna exports in total exports and the benefits to the economies from foreign tuna vessels being locally-based or from forced transshipment of fish in Pacific island ports.

Aside from illustrating that tuna are an important resource for most Pacific island countries none of the data compiled is applied to how well the resource is being managed. The report does not include any discussion related to its stated purpose of helping to 'justify allocation arrangements

and assistance related to its management'. These objectives relate directly to how well the resource is being managed and whether it could be managed better to the benefit of these countries.

Of what relevance is it to know that the value of the tuna catch was US\$1.9 billion in 1998 and that this was equivalent to '11 per cent of the combined GDP of all the countries in the region'? The important issue is whether the resource is being managed to maximise the revenues over time and whether they are maximising their share of the economic rent from exploitation of this resource. The report gives details of the access fees paid for foreign fishing activity in their exclusive economic zones and notes how the access fees have grown over time and their importance as a share of government revenue. But a simple calculation from the figures presented shows that access fees as a share of catch value have declined from 4 per cent in 1982 (a share of US\$15 million of a catch value of US\$375 million) to 3 per cent in 1999 (US\$60.3 access fees from total catch value of around US\$2 billion). Instead of being impressed by the '402 per cent' increase in access fees over the period, one would like to know why the Pacific island countries' share has fallen. To what extent is the US\$20 million a year that the Pacific island countries are not getting in access fees due to the side-deals—in the form of having foreign fishers undertake other economic activities in the region—or bribery of politicians with power over access allocations, or to the higher costs imposed on foreign fishers through forced transshipment in the Pacific island countries?

Of what use is it to know that 'access fees in the Marshall Islands amounted to about 25 per cent of Government revenue in fiscal year 1992–93' or '45 per cent of total Government revenue of Kiribati in 1991' (p.14)? The report notes that: 'Fortunately, those Pacific island countries that are in the most desperate development situation

Reviews

appear to be the countries with greatest tuna resources available for future development' (p.49). Rather than reflecting on the good fortune of being among the world's poorest countries yet with such large resources, one might question whether better resource management could have prevented these countries from being so poor.

The report summarises the results of various studies that have attempted to estimate the economic value of tuna fishing in the Pacific island countries, particularly of the values contributed by foreign fishers. The estimates made are so different in approach and in the results that one has to wonder about the quality of economic advice that is being fed into decision-making on resource management in the Pacific tuna fishery. There is no attempt in the report to analyse these various exercises critically or to draw out any useful information from them. A study by the Palau Conservation Society and the Forum Fisheries Agency of the locally-based foreign tuna fleet in Palau—claimed as 'the most comprehensive ever on the economic impact of tuna development on a Pacific island country'—estimated that of the fishery's US\$28 million gross value, around US\$9 million was the 'net economic rent'. That is, the total economic rent was 32 per cent. The government received about US\$1.2 million in various taxes, that is, essentially access fees of around 3 per cent. However, there is no questioning in the report of whether this is an appropriate share for the country. It is beside the point that of the remainder about US\$1 million was retained as profits by the part local ownership of locally-based firms, leading to an estimated US\$2 million of 'direct net benefits'. What is important is the opportunity cost of this particular arrangement. How much better could it have been through the introduction of some competition between foreign firms?

The main frustration with the report, and indeed with much of the economic analysis

produced elsewhere of the management of the Pacific fishery is the absence of any consideration of the opportunity costs of the policies being adopted. Another illustration of this basic shortcoming is the praise—twice, in fact—that despite the fact that the Solomon Tanjo Limited processing plant in the Solomon Islands has 'rarely paid dividends and income tax on profits', it has generated substantial revenues for the Government in the form of other taxes such as import/export duties, withholding taxes, taxes on wages and licenses, and that these revenues are 'of prime importance to a government that is chronically short of funds' (p. 25). What is the opportunity cost of such an activity being allowed to continue, obviously either with government support of one kind or another or being allowed to avoid paying tax on profits through transfer pricing?

Ron Duncan
The Australian National University

The People Trade: Pacific Island laborers and New Caledonia, 1865–1930

Dorothy Shineberg, 1999, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 310pp, ISBN 0 824 82101 7 (pb)

This book represents a valuable piece of scholarly research, filling a gap in the history of the Pacific labour trade, which had formerly focused on Queensland and Fiji. The author has examined archives in New Caledonia, France, and Australia as well as extensive literature on the recruitment, transportation, and use of Pacific Island labourers. She has managed, from various sources, to provide the first estimate of the total number of recruits over the period covered—more than 15,000—most of them from the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), and to track down the experience of a number of those workers from the time they left their island.

Reviews

Although the book covers the period 1865–1930, the last recruiting ship sailed in 1899 and thereafter the arrivals of ‘Oceanians’ dwindled, as Asian workers were increasingly replacing them. The heydays of the labour trade were the 1870s, when it is estimated that arrivals of island workers averaged 570 a year.

The author describes the recruiting in the New Hebrides, the age and gender of the recruits, and their life in New Caledonia. Her book is a strong indictment of the labour trade and of the regime of indenture, which has been called ‘disguised slavery’. The authorities from metropolitan France tried on various occasions to put a stop to the most blatant abuses, suspending the labour trade on two occasions and promulgating regulations on the treatment of immigrant workers. They met strong resistance from the European settlers, eager to get cheap labour for their plantations and mines. The settlers succeeded in getting the trade revived and often managed to circumvent the regulations.

Historians have heatedly debated the degree of coercion involved in the recruitment of the island labourers. The author sides against those who argued that, with the exception of instances of kidnapping in the early years of trade, most workers came of their own free will and that the practice of ‘beach payments’ was not tantamount to a purchase. Her case is based on two main arguments. First, ‘young children formed a substantial proportion of imported labour for the first thirty years of recruiting’ (p. 116). Second, it is shown that recruiters from New Caledonia succeeded in overcoming their bad reputation (due to the bad treatment of workers) by offering rifles, which were in high demand, especially after British recruiters were forbidden to engage in arms trade. It is not clear, however, who got the rifles, the ‘big men’ who ‘encouraged’ the men to enlist, or the recruits themselves, as the book mentions in one instance.

The second half of the book, which describes the work and the life of the indentured workers in New Caledonia is grim reading. It details their appalling treatment: long hours, bad food and clothing, failure to be paid wages due, arbitrary fines and detention, high rates of sickness and death, and delays in repatriation. As the evidence comes mainly from court cases and the reports of official inspectors or constables, it is possible that they overemphasise the worst instances, but this is probably too much to hope. Some of the testimonies, quotes from newspapers or letters, are quite damning, and so is the photograph of the infamous fence that quarantined the area of Noumea most affected by the plague epidemic of 1912.

As is inevitable, the book leaves some questions unanswered. It is written from the New Caledonian side of the trade and does not deal with its impact on the New Hebrides, although it is claimed it must have been negative, largely on account of the imports of arms, which fueled intermittent warfare on the islands. One interesting question is the impact of the labour trade on the population of the New Hebrides. A figure of 125,000 is quoted as the population of the New Hebrides in 1882. It is also estimated that, by 1929, net immigration of island workers, most of them from the New Hebrides, totalled about 8,000, which cannot account for the decline in the New Hebridean population over that period.

A similar question relates to the importance of the labour trade for New Caledonia itself. The author claims that workers imported from other Pacific islands formed ‘the backbone’ (p. 8) and the ‘staple’ (p. 238) of the colony’s labour force in the nineteenth century. Yet, by 1911, the year of the first official census, the population of New Caledonia was 51,000 and the estimate of the Oceanian population given by Shineberg for that year is less than 1,000. Her

Reviews

highest estimate of the Oceanian population for the last quarter of the nineteenth century is 2,800. Even if all Oceanians were part of the labour force, and only one third of the total New Caledonian population could be counted as working, they represented only 16 per cent of the labour force, a significant proportion, especially in some sectors, but not an overwhelming one.

Another puzzle is the respective roles of the local indigenous population and the New Hebrideans. Both groups were subjected to the same indenture status, both were Melanesian and called 'canaques' by the Europeans. Yet, the first group did not suffice to meet the settlers' demand for labour or, as Shineberg suggests, there was a strong preference for the other group viewed as more 'docile' and 'less threatening'. One factor mentioned without explanation by the author (p. 230) was that local workers were 'almost twice as costly as the New Hebrideans'. This is surprising given that the employers of imported labour had to pay the price of transportation to the Immigration Office. There was also a long established practice on the mainland of using workers from the Loyalty Isles, which are part of New Caledonia. The author herself recognises this lacuna, writing 'I hope that this work will soon be followed by a study of indigenous Melanesian workers in New Caledonia, whom the administration was eventually to succeed in coercing into the labour force, for their story also remains to be written'. One can only concur and hope that this new study will be of the same quality as that reviewed here, and as enjoyable to read.

Patrick De Fontenay
The Australian National University

Pacific Forest: a history of resource control and contest in Solomon Islands, c. 1800–1997

Judith Bennett, 2000, The White Horse Press, Cambridge, and Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden, 512pp, ISBN 1 874 26743 X (White Horse Press), 9 004 11960 4 (Brill Academic Publishers)

Islands of Rainforest. Agroforestry, logging and eco-tourism in Solomon Islands

Edvard Hviding and Tim Bayliss-Smith, 2000, SOAS Studies in Development Geography, Ashgate Publishing Ltd., Aldershot, 371pp, ISBN 0 754 61233 3

The subtitles of these two books, both published during 2000, on aspects of tropical forests in the Solomon Islands, highlights the differences between them.

Bennett's voluminous work is avowedly a history, but more than just a history; it also documents in great detail the process of natural forest depletion. *Pacific Forest* begins with a description of forest types, forest dynamics, adaptation of forests to periodic cyclones and provides a history that follows the impact of humans on this complex environment, their use of its various values and elements, and their adaptation of it to their needs.

It sets out the colonial context and the beginning of forest clearing for coconut plantations and timber exploitation. This leads into a detailed rendition of the progressive manipulation of privately-owned natural resources (that is, held under customary resource rights regimes, usually by traditional social groups such as clans) for the financial benefit of only a few. Elected leaders representing many such traditional social groups across the country were often at the forefront of such exploitative activities throwing into question the notion of representation.

Associated with this progressive depletion of the resource base has been an

Reviews

inadequately resourced and staffed government Forestry Department that has been unable to withstand pressures from the top down, unable to reject a culture of corruption, violence and manipulation and so unable to carry out its mandate to properly manage the country's forest resources. All this is clearly documented in this fascinating publication.

Bennett's book is also excellent background reading for Hviding and Bayliss-Smith's volume. Hviding, a social anthropologist based at the University of Bergen, and Bayliss-Smith, a human geographer working out of the University of Cambridge, can rightly claim between them to have studied the whole range of rainforest-related activities over extended periods of time.

Though this volume embraces the whole of the Solomon Islands in terms of its discussion of rainforest and Melanesian agroforestry, it focuses in particular on the Marovo Lagoon area and its environs in the New Georgia Islands area of the country. The authors also take a historical look at resource depletion especially through a period they call 'The Great Transformation, 1880–1910', through colonialism and the 'Age of Development'.

They examine the adaptation of the indigenous system of agroforestry and 'subsistence affluence' to modern times in four villages. Some of these communities have also included the growing of cocoa as a cash crop and the re-emergence of hamlets and what the authors term 'homesteading' in the search of new lands and new or adapted ways of living. Their use of the forest was transitory and of relatively superficial impact—a great contrast to the visible transformations brought about by large-scale logging, including heavy silting in waterways and into the sea.

The authors note (p. 206) as 'extraordinary' that the logging industry in the Solomon Islands should be so poorly documented, though Bennett's scrupulously

documented volume now fills much of this gap. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka's PhD thesis from the Australian National University's Department of Political and Social Change, currently being examined, will also bring to bear an indigenous documentation of this industry and its wider ramifications in the Solomon Islands. Interestingly, as a keen observer of the Solomon Islands forestry scene and columnist for some years, Kabutaulaka (or 'Tarcisius Tara' as he signed himself as a journalist) does not warrant even a bibliographic reference in the second publication.

The authors quote a strong local voice in condemning large-scale logging operations: as only serving the interests of foreign capital and so not meeting the real needs of local people; as being inevitably destructive of the environment; as jeopardising the dependence of rural people on natural forest products; and the social effects of large-scale logging being also mainly negative largely through the influx of 'foreign' workers (Tausinga 1992: 57–62).

This leads into a discussion of what might take place after logging—perhaps reforestation or other kinds of activities (Chapter 10). This is followed by a careful exposition of the steps, in this kind of geographic and socio-political context, towards sustainable forestry. Here a vision of Utopia as put by environmentalists is contrasted with another vision, that of small-scale logging. This kind of activity has already begun on various island groups with the assistance of non-governmental organisations and a marketing link with New Zealand. Some of the costs and benefits of this kind of alternative are discussed (pp. 274–290). Yet another alternative is also examined, that of conservation and ecotourism with associated up and down sides.

This volume ends with an epilogue, appropriately headed 'Rainforest Narratives'. The authors note that these forests are no longer the subject of dialogue

Reviews

between indigenous rainforest owners and colonial masters. Viewed by outsiders the clearance of rainforests 'may look like a simple struggle between insiders and outsiders, small and big, goodies and baddies' (p. 321). But, as they have shown in this volume, the situation is much more complex and multi-faceted. The authors see this book as a sustained plea for 'indigenous use' narrative to be given more attention. In Marovo Lagoon today can be seen the coexistence of an increasing number of competing narratives none of which has pre-eminence, but all of which have to be understood in order to have a clear understanding of events.

In summary, then, there is some degree of overlap in the two publications with each constructively informing the other while approaching its subject with a different focus and drawing on different material. Both books will repay careful reading by anyone who wishes to understand something of the complexity of Melanesia in general and of the Solomon Islands in particular.

Hartmut Holzknecht
The Australian National University

References

- Kabutaulaka, T. *Paths in the Jungle: landowners and the struggle for control of Solomon Island's logging industry*, PhD Thesis, Department of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra (unpublished).
- Tausinga, J.D., 1992. 'Our land, our choice: development of North New Georgia', in R. Crocombe and E. Tuza (eds), *Independence, Dependence, Interdependence: the first 10 years of Solomon Islands independence*, University of the South Pacific/Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, Honiara:55-66.

Social Impact Analysis: an applied anthropology manual

Laurence R. Goldman (ed.), 2000, Berg, Oxford, 347pp, ISBN 1 85973 392 1 (pb)

The minerals boom that swept the Asia Pacific region during the 1980s and 1990s, accompanied by growing international scrutiny of resource industries in general, has created a specialist field of applied social science for which there is little or no formal training locally available. A wide range of social scientists, including anthropologists, geographers, lawyers and environmental scientists, have been approached by resource developers, government agencies and communities for advice on the management of novel social impacts. This self-styled 'manual' in applied anthropology is a useful distillation of much of the wisdom acquired over the past two decades; developed through trial (and often error), produced in the form of unpublished reports, and communicated by word of mouth amongst a relatively small team of professional consultants and researchers. Although the individual contributors to this volume are unfortunately not introduced to us, they are all leaders in their own specialist areas and their essays convey a sense of the authority which derives from their substantial collective experience.

Social impact analysis (SIA) was initially regarded as an adjunct field, or appendix, to the more established (and better-funded) analysis of environmental impacts. However, the tendency for major resource projects to be derailed by failings in social as well as environmental planning (most famously mining projects such as the Panguna mine on Bougainville) has gradually forced some re-evaluation of the significance of social impacts. In their broad-ranging introductory chapter, Goldman and Baum identify three principal phases in the SIA process: 'screening', which determines the need for SIA and the parameters for its implementation; 'scoping', which

Reviews

establishes the issues and impacts specific to an individual project; and 'assessment', in which the analysis is conducted and reports produced. Western and Lynch provide a more substantial overview of the SIA process in the second chapter, mapping the individual stages of analysis from literature review through to report production. They illustrate this sequence through instructive reference to an analysis performed on the impact on local timber industry communities of the 1987 World Heritage listing for the Wet Tropics of North Queensland. Two chapters on 'scoping' follow: Whimp's review of legal frameworks which draws on PNG and Solomon Islands case studies; and a very thorough introduction to the role of scoping more generally by Branch and Ross, with reference to North American and Australian materials.

The bulk of the volume is devoted to chapters on the requirements of the assessment phase. Simpson describes a series of SIA tools that are designed to yield practical structures and measures for impact mitigation in the actual implementation of SIA recommendations: the Scoping Matrix, Impact Assessment Profile, and Environmental Review and Management Programme (ERMP) Project Submission. Goldman details the process of Social Mapping, a set of ethnographic techniques for profiling impacted communities developed largely through work for the mining and petroleum industries in PNG. In one of the book's more insightful contributions, Stoffle focuses on the nature of community participation in SIAs involving Native American communities in the United States, where highly structured negotiations between federal agencies and community representatives reflect the US government's formal recognition of tribal sovereignty. Liebow's chapter on environmental health questions the customary ancillary role of social studies in the analysis of environmental impacts by

demonstrating the value of understanding cultural perception in the identification of hazards and characterisation of risks. The last chapter in this section, by Howitt and Jackson, is an excellent study of the unique challenges posed to SIA by large-scale linear projects, a largely overlooked if not uncommon category of development which often involves an unusual range and diversity of stakeholders. Their case study, a 1998 assessment of the impact on Aboriginal communities of the proposed rail link between Alice Springs and Darwin, is a lucid and highly informative reconstruction of their methodological choices and rationales for recommendations. The final section, on monitoring, consists of a single chapter by Banks on the role of household surveys as a tool in monitoring changing impacts over the life of a project. The fact that neither of the author's two case studies of monitoring, at the Porgera and Freeport mines, has resulted in an ongoing monitoring program, is indicative of the political difficulties all too frequently encountered in implementing the recommendations of SIAs. However, if the current interest in project termination succeeds in establishing events such as the closure of a mine as the appropriate horizon for initial SIA studies, we can expect that monitoring will increasingly become standard procedure.

There is an exceptional wealth of experience evident in both the general reviews and case studies on offer in this volume. The areas of overlap between different papers and repetition of certain themes are useful in illustrating both the diversity of approaches and the obvious and inescapable common elements. Certainly, the volume achieves its stated goal of supplying a basic manual to those seeking some grounding in SIA methods, but the deliberate eschewal of some of the more difficult (and hence more interesting) questions surrounding SIA is perhaps to be regretted, particularly as several of the chapters offer

Reviews

intriguing leads. A summary of the history of SIA development might have provided readers with a keener sense of the trajectory of development in SIA theory, and thus an implicit critique of current thinking. The emergence of fundamental human rights as a framework for the analysis of impacts has the additional effect of casting a harsh light on the critical questions of ownership and resource sovereignty which threaten to undermine many of the assumptions of established SIA practice, an issue raised in passing in several of the volume's chapters. For anyone interested in either applied anthropology or Impact Analysis, this is an invaluable first point of reference. What we need now is a companion volume with a series of more searching, critical essays addressing the sorts of questions that are not broached here.

Chris Ballard
The Australian National University

He Served: a biography of Macu Salato

Robert C. Kiste, 1998, University of the South Pacific, Suva, 120pp, ISBN 982 02 0133 0

This is a book that had to be written. Not only because it concerns a man of unusual character but also because he represents a generation whose mores no longer appear to exist.

Macu Salato was born a commoner in humble circumstances and rose, through his own indomitable character, to fill positions of seniority and sensitivity in both his native land, Fiji, and the Pacific. He was a Fijian who truly represented what was great and honourable in his race. These comments may seem trite to readers of the present generation when education and political acumen can offer rapid advancement in most fields of endeavour and when custom counts for not a great deal.

For a village lad to achieve what Salato did on his own considerable merit, aided in later life by a charming and devoted wife was no mean feat. In the Fiji of colonial times, and for a period thereafter unless one was a traditional chief from a senior *mataqali* or clan there were really only two ways to achieve distinction—through the armed services or as a Native Medical Practitioner. Salato followed both these routes, and then moved on, serving both his country and the Pacific with calm distinction.

I had the privilege of knowing Macu during the greater part of his career and read with critical interest Robert Kiste's biography which tells the story of a man who, while receiving recognition in his lifetime, should also be seen as a model worthy of emulation by later generations. Kiste has adopted what might be referred to as a chatty style of writing and this makes for easy reading, and a ready ability to appreciate just what Salato achieved throughout his life.

The chapters dealing with Salato's education present an accurate picture of the limited scope for personal development open to young Fijians prior to the more enlightened approach to education in the years following World War II. The place of the Central Medical School in the upgrading of health services both in Fiji and the Pacific generally is recognised and described in sufficient detail to allow readers to appreciate the critical role it played in providing health services throughout the region, services which sadly do not appear to be so readily available in rural areas today.

Fiji was unique in the form of its memorial to those who served in the First World War: the Colonial War Memorial Hospital in Suva. It seemed fitting therefore that the memorial to those who served in the Second World War should also have a medical flavour, but of a different value. The memorial was ambitious—to bring under control and possibly eradicate the then scourge of village communities, tuberculosis. Following his

Reviews

return from the Victory Parade in London in 1947 Salato helped launch a campaign for public funding of the anti-TB Campaign and then became closely involved in the implementation of the program. His efforts in this direction were obviously well recognised as he was seconded to conduct a similar program in the then British Solomon Islands.

Following his return to Fiji from the Solomon Islands, Salato travelled to England for postgraduate training, no mean achievement considering that his basic training in medicine was not recognised to the extent that he could use the honorific of 'doctor'. This lack of a title did little to detract from the professional progression of Macu Salato, as on return to Fiji he became involved in both medical administration and education, ultimately filling senior positions of Assistant Director, Medical Services (Health), Director of Curative Medical Services and acted in the position of Permanent Secretary of Health before moving in 1972 to the acting position of Fiji's High Commissioner in London.

At this juncture I wish to introduce a personal note. My relations with Macu were limited at the official level but as an active member of the same religious persuasion our paths crossed constantly. This was a man easy to like, a man who fitted readily into Fiji's multi-racial society, a man who spoke his mind freely and always made good sense. He was well respected by both clergy and laity making an enormous contribution to the Anglican community in Suva. His work in helping establish, and then support the work of the church in the parish of Samabula where Indo-Fijian worshippers predominated was quite outstanding. His wife Tabua, a lady of quiet dignity, provided constant support in his community work associated with the Church and must have helped shoulder many of his official and unofficial duties.

While serving his Government Salato also served his city of Suva as a Councilor and ultimately Mayor. These civic duties coupled with his professional career provided a perfect training ground for the politically taxing position of Secretary-General, South Pacific Commission to which he was appointed following retirement from the Fiji public service. To manage the diverse interests and priorities of regional governments, to balance the claims of self interested bureaucrats while fending off increasing pressure from other regional bodies anxious to take over the Pacific limelight was not a task for the faint hearted as evidenced by others in a similar position. That Salato filled the position with distinction for some six years, and then left not under a cloud would seem to confirm his skills as diplomat and bureaucrat extraordinaire. His time in the early 1980s with the East West Centre in Hawaii, where he filled a number of positions, was well earned.

As a reviewer of Robert Kiste's book on Macu Salato I may seem to have been unduly generous: I feel no embarrassment if such is the case. I enjoyed reading the life story of a good and faithful servant of the people of Fiji and the Pacific region. People of Salato's ilk are few and becoming fewer—let us salute him and thank the author for the pains he has gone to in order that we might share a little the life of Macu Salato.

Rodney Cole

Samoa: mapping the diversity

R. Gerard Ward and P. Ashcroft, 1998, Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva and National University of Samoa, Apia, 144 pp, ISBN 9 820 20134 9

Within a single year the South Pacific has gained two new atlases (this and Rajesh Chandra and Keith Mason's *An Atlas of Fiji*,

Reviews

USP, Suva) and both of them are excellent. Hopefully they will be models for more to come. Not only do they both do the basic tasks of any atlas—elegant and useful displays of valuable spatial data—but they interpret all of it to allow new understandings of the recent structure of development.

Samoa contains over 60 maps, ranging from geology to fresh fish consumption, most recording data from the late 1980s, for each of the 48 *fipule* districts in the country. They concentrate on agricultural activities, largely derived from the 1989 Census of Agriculture, and cover everything from chemical use to banana production. Every map has at least a couple of pages of explanation and linked bibliography, tracing changes at least back to the 1950s when Ward first undertook research in Samoa. Thus the map that covers agricultural wages links the census data to the few recent studies of agriculture in Samoa and emphasises how the wage economy has permeated areas closest to Apia. Whilst various economic and anthropological studies merely hint at this possibility the atlas elegantly demonstrates it.

A significant part of the material, including much of that on fishing, has hitherto been buried in obscure unpublished reports. Excavating these files has been in itself valuable and also shows how commercial fishing has some similar patterns of distribution with those of commercial agriculture. Through maps and words the atlas reveals that even for a small island state there are clear indications of uneven development, and probably increasing inequality. It also indicates the gradual shift of people towards northern Upolu.

Necessarily the atlas is data driven, and the main sources have been standard census data on agriculture and people. There is very little data in Samoa on several aspects of human life, from housing stock to income levels, and from nutritional status to mortality rates, hence there are great gaps in knowledge. *Fipule* boundaries mean that

Apia can scarcely be distinguished from nearby rural areas. Had this been possible and had the data existed they would surely have been here, since the atlas is as comprehensive as disaggregated data allow. Perhaps in years to come there will be more valuable statistical data that can provide an even more detailed and valuable record of the status of basic human needs, and a means of analysing temporal change.

As its subtitle indicates the atlas reveals something of the diversity of Samoa, not least the extent of forest cover that remains in the largest island Savai'i, and hints at the more limited development there. Other than in the distinctions between the capital city Apia—which does have its own section of the atlas—and the rural areas (which the atlas can only imperfectly reveal) the major distinctions are in access to services, such as water and health care (but the latter too is hard to calibrate). The atlas thus points to an emerging structure of greater diversity—or inequality—but one that is not beyond redemption.

This has clearly been a labour of love for Ward, in his own retirement, as a mark of his concern for Samoa and its National University. It is a simple demonstration of how geographers and their maps may be both elegant and useful. Hopefully others will take up the baton and produce new maps, and new atlases, for Tonga, Vanuatu and elsewhere where similar data exists, now that the Geographic Information System has made this so much easier.

John Connell
University of Sydney

Pacific Forest book. Read reviews from world's largest community for readers. This book addresses the contending views of the uses of Solomon Island forests. Goodreads helps you keep track of books you want to read. Start by marking Pacific Forest: A History of Resource Control and Contest in Solomon Islands, C. 1800-1997 as Want to Read: Want to Read saving... | Want to Read. Currently Reading. Read. Pacific Forest: A Hist by Judith A. Bennett. Other editions. Want to Read saving... | Error rating book. Refresh and try again. Rate this book. Clear rating. 1 of 5 stars 2 of 5 stars 3 of 5 stars 4 of 5 stars 5 of 5 stars. Open Preview. See a Problem? We'd love your help. Let us know what's wrong with this preview of Pacific Forest by Judith A. Bennett. The Contemporary Pacific: A Journal of Island Affairs covers a wide range of disciplines with the aim of providing comprehensive coverage of contemporary developments in the entire Pacific Islands region, including Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. It features refereed, readable articles that examine social, economic, political, ecological, and cultural topics, along with political reviews, book and media reviews, resource reviews, and a dialogue section with interviews and short essays. Each issue highlights the work of a Pacific Islander artist. Pacific Forest: A History of Resource Control and Contest in Solomon Islands, c. 1800-1997, and: Islands of Rainforest: Agroforestry, Logging and Eco-tourism in Solomon Islands (review). Pacific Forest : A History of Resource Control and Contest in Solomon Islands, c. 1800-1997. 5 (1 rating by Goodreads). Hardback. Pacific Forest explores the use of the forest of the Solomon Islands from the pre-historic period up to the end of 1997, when much of the indigenous commercial forest had been logged. It is the first study of the history of the forest in any Pacific Island; the first analysis of the indigenous and British colonial perceptions of the Melanesian forest; and the first critical analysis for this region, not only of colonial forest policies but of later policies and practices which made the governments of independence exploiters of their own people. Pacific Forest. A History of Resource Control and Contest in Solomon Islands, c. 1800-1997. Judith A. Bennett. Brill leiden - boston - koln. The White Horse Press Cambridge. Acknowledgments Introduction Chapter 1. Solomons Forests Chapter 2. To Open the Forest Chapter 3. A Great Coconut Estate Chapter 4. From the Shortlands to Santa Cruz: Beginning the Timber Industry Chapter 5. The Vanikoro Kauri Timber Company Chapter 6. World War Two: Focus on Forests Chapter 7. Domestic Needs and Overseas Markets, c. 1950-1963 Chapter 8. The Government is but a Stranger Chapter 9. The Forestry Department and the Control of Species, c. 1960-1980 Chapter 10. Contest for the Forests, c. 1963-1985 Chapter 11. Attempts at Control? c. 1980-1990 Chapter 12. Bennett, Judith, Pacific Forest: A History of Resource Control and Contest in Solomon Islands, c. 1800-1997 (Brill Academic Publishers Inc, 2000)Google Scholar. Bennett, Judith, Roots of Conflict in Solomon Islands - Though Much is Taken, Much Abides: Legacies of Tradition and Colonialism, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Discussion Paper (Australian National University, 2002)Google Scholar. Frazer, Ian, - The Struggle for Control of Solomon Island Forests (1997) 9(1) Contemporary Pacific 39Google Scholar. Gay, Daniel (ed), Solomon Islands Diagnostic Trade Integration Study 2009 Report (Solomon Islands Government, 2009)Google Scholar.