

personalities but also the sailors aboard the *Nimrod*, a number of whom, including several New Zealanders, signed on at Lyttelton. It is perhaps necessary to emphasize that this expedition, like other British expeditions of the period, was intimately involved with New Zealand in various ways, a point illustrated by an enthusiastic letter from Mackintosh, written aboard the *Nimrod* in Lyttelton harbour, to his sister, which Newman gives in full in the prologue.

Although the editor has been assiduous in sieving the spare entries for clues, Mackintosh's diary does not resolve such vexed questions of Antarctic historiography as Shackleton's controversial decision to turn away from King Edward VII Land and use McMurdo Sound as a base, and the intensity of his disputes with Captain Rupert England, master of the *Nimrod*. For those who are curious about the Edwardian mores which impelled young men to seek fulfilment in the southern wastes, however, and for those who are steeped in Antarctic literature, *Shackleton's Lieutenant*, with its evocative photographs and clearly-designed maps, will be enlightening and entertaining.

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*Labour in the South Pacific*. Edited by Clive Moore, Jacqueline Leckie, Doug Munro. James Cook University of Northern Queensland, Townsville, 1990. Published 'as the first of a series provisionally entitled Studies in Melanesian History'. li, 335 pp. NZ price: \$66.60.

SINCE I AM currently involved in editing a multi-authored volume, I have nothing but praise for the editors of this collection who have coped with twenty-four authors. Editors get what they inspect, not what they expect. And the rather prolonged and uncertain publishing history of this collection must have been very frustrating. That the book exists at all is a considerable achievement.

*Labour in the Pacific* has for some time been a fashionable topic and the literature is now huge — but it also has several limitations. Among these is its rather spotty local and regional coverage, a concentration on Melanesians as labourers for Queensland and Fiji and Asians for Hawaii, a lack of a comparative dimension, a concentration on the nineteenth century, a lack of gender concerns, and the absence of any general overview of either labourers' experiences or the capitalist/colonial labour 'systems'. This book is a most ambitious attempt to begin to address such issues for the Pacific islands as a whole (and not just the South Pacific as the title misleadingly claims) and from pre-European to post-colonial times. Labour is defined widely, including domestic, slave, convict, waged, free and indentured.

The scene is nicely set by Jacqueline Leckie, who briefly examines pre-capitalist labour in the Pacific and overviews the Pacific labour reserve, and Doug Munro, who presents a succinct though extremely valuable commentary and statistics on the labourers' origins. This may be the most useful chapter of the book. At once the complexity of 'labour' is apparent since labourers might be 'internal', from other Pacific islands, from 'Asia' (countries such as India, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam), as well as from such unlikely places as Norway, Poland, Spain, Portugal and Italy.

The book then divides into three sections — ‘colonial workers and the condition of labour’ (six chapters), ‘case studies on Pacific workers’ (13 chapters), and ‘labour, politics and class’ (seven chapters). Each chapter has ‘notes’, which generally consist of very useful commentaries on the main sources. There is a very extensive bibliography and a well-compiled index. It is well beyond the scope of this review to list, let alone to try to examine so much material, particularly since it is so diverse. But collectively these 26 chapters are for the most part informative and they do extend our horizons of ‘labour’ in the Pacific islands well beyond many of its former confines. Inevitably the quality of some of the chapters is uneven. A few are only three or four pages long. While they are collectively extensive in their coverage, they are still far from comprehensive, which is scarcely surprising given the vastness of the topic. What is a little disappointing is that no attempt is made to give a comparative summation of the topics/case studies, except for a final chapter that examines the rather narrow issue of the development of class analysis for the Pacific. Thus the book as a whole provides a great deal of raw material for the synthetic overview, but that overview is still elusive. Perhaps that is an inherent and inevitable weakness of such ‘collections’?

This book is a worthy pioneering effort in Pacific historiography, and perhaps it might inspire similar treatment for a good many other deserving topics. But it is not an easy read, and it is certainly not a primer for newcomers to Pacific islands or labour scholarship. But those who already have a knowledge of either or both will find its material ripe for plunder for sources, reference and advanced teaching purposes.

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*The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 26, no. 2, 1991. Special issue on ‘France in the Pacific: past, present and future’. Edited by Deryck Scarr. Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU, Canberra. 248 pp. Price: \$A30.00/\$US35.00.

THE 15 PAPERS in this volume make up a diverse, and apparently randomly-ordered, collection of subjects, methods, and styles. Six articles concern French mentality and attitudes. Colin Forster gives a broad-brush overview of the evolution of French penal policy, showing how it eventually led to penal settlement in New Caledonia. Michel Panoff, in a somewhat superficial paper more like anti-French pamphleteering than a serious attempt to uncover root causes, contrasts British, German, and French approaches to the plantation business (1880-1900), showing how a specifically French ‘style’ obtained. He clearly implies a defect in the French national character on a state and a personal level: a lack of enlightened self-interest. If this is so, it would be interesting to be told why Panoff thinks this might be the case. In a jump to the present, Jean Chesneaux discusses the place of the Pacific in the French state’s ‘Grand Design’. He ranges far beyond the Pacific, which is but one of many elements in the ‘Grand Design’ of a *puisseance mondiale moyenne* and provides an analysis (hardly new to readers of, say, *Le Monde*) of attitudes and their consequences too often misunderstood by the rest of the world. Karis Muller looks at French conceptual obstacles to considering independence as an option for New Caledonia. Bronwen Douglas’s substantial paper on the 1878-79 war in New Caledonia is well-researched, even-handed, and insightful, putting this crucial event of New Caledonia’s history — an event whose effects on the psyche of both