

Dietmar Rothermund (2006) *The Routledge Companion to Decolonization* (Routledge Companions to History) Abingdon, Routledge, xii + 365 pp, £60.00 stg, hbk., £17.99 pbk., ISBN-13: 978-0-415-35632-9.

Decolonization is crystallizing as a distinct period of world history, though as this guide suggests, there are still many loose ends and unresolved consequences. The book focuses on the rapid collapse of European empires between 1945 and the mid-1960s, but extends the deadline to include the protracted negotiations in the Pacific Islands, the negotiations with China over Hong Kong and Macao, and Timor's liberation from Indonesian rule. It is broad enough, but nevertheless excludes British settler societies like Australia, Canada, New Zealand, as well as South Africa. The earlier decolonization of Latin America gets a look-in through the discussion of dependency theory in post-colonial economic policy (pp. 270-271). The book does not try to fit the breakup of the Soviet Union, and its casting loose of dependents such as Vietnam and Cuba, into its framework.

The series editors' target is the student or general reader, and format here includes a Chronology (1914-2002) and two background essays on the phases of imperialism and the historiography of decolonization. The latter distinguishes between studies that focus on the motives of the colonizing powers; those that take a more 'excentric' view, emphasizing agency of local elites; and a third more postcolonial tradition, distrustful of both of these grand narratives, and more interested in the experiences of ordinary men and women. There are then 4 maps. The one on the South Pacific is not very reliable. It misleadingly shows Solomon Islands ruled by UK and Australia – though there may be a deeper truth there, as hundreds of Australian soldiers, police and civil servants are currently serving in Solomon Islands as part of a post-colonial 'regional assistance mission'. The map also shows Tonga becoming autonomous in 1970, contradicting the text's date of 1976 (p. 242).

The most substantial section of the book is 11 thematic chapters which are mainly organized by region: Asia, the Arab world, Black Africa, settler colonies in Africa, the sugar colonies (Mauritius, Guyana and Fiji), the Commonwealth Caribbean and the Pacific Islands. The scattered and late-decolonizing Portuguese empire gets a chapter on its own. The last three chapters in this section deal with the legacy of colonial rule and economic debates about colonial development and free trade that have carried forward in arguments about aid and structural adjustment.

The final part of the Companion provides a guide to archival sources and secondary reading, mainly national histories. There are brief biographies of African, Asia and Caribbean leaders in the period of decolonization, notes and an index.

Overall it is a very impressive and even handed synthesis by Dieter Rothermund whose own work has been mainly on India and the economic depression between the two world wars. Readers of *Island Studies Journal* will probably be most interested in the island-rich sections on the Caribbean and the South Pacific. The former was particularly interesting in its discussion of federalism as a solution to problems of smallness and isolation. In the Caribbean, federation was initially embraced by nationalist leaders, whereas Rothermund shows how elsewhere – Malaysia, Central Africa – it was suspected as a late-colonial ploy.

The Federated States of Micronesia are mentioned in the Pacific Islands chapter, but other (and continuing) external attempts to encourage federation and regionalism are not discussed. Indeed, the Pacific Islands chapter is the shortest (4 pages) and most cursory.

There are several distinctively Pacific Island themes in decolonization that might have had broader resonance, if the region had been treated in more depth. The first is the history of environmentalism as part of colonial policy (such as national parks), and during decolonization (the timber industry and mining, which Rothermund touches on in relation to Bougainville, p. 241). For example the 2001 book by Michael Ross on *Timber Booms and Institutional Breakdown in Southeast Asia* shows a pattern of late and post-colonial politics that led to the liquidation of state-owned and protected forests from Philippines through Malaysia, Borneo and Indonesia. The same ‘rent-seizing’ by politicians, with support from traditional landowners, carried through into Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands as they decolonized. It has had catastrophic environmental consequences.

The second theme, obscured through the book’s exclusion of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa, is the parallel between colonial policy overseas and policy towards indigenous minorities in settler societies. Various kinds of ‘decolonization’ are being proposed and resisted by indigenous and native peoples within settler societies, such as in New Zealand’s revival of the Treaty of Waitangi and official bi-culturalism. The parallels and connections between these and international decolonization are particularly striking between the Pacific Islands, New Zealand and Australia. And there are also parallel tendencies to recolonization. For example, Australia’s 2003 military-led intervention in Solomon Islands, mentioned above, targeting corruption, looks a lot like its 2007 military led-intervention in the Northern Territory of Australia, targeting child abuse in remote Aboriginal communities.

The third is the role played by the colonized and their descendants as immigrants, students, or guest workers, particularly the growing role of *diaspora* populations of Pacific Islanders – including Indo-Fijians – in New Zealand and Australia.

In spite of these shortcomings, many of the more general themes that Rothermund identifies are sharply relevant to the Pacific Islands cases, demonstrating the usefulness of this kind of broad gauge comparative history. Rothermund’s chapter on the legacies of colonial rule could well serve as a checklist for current issues in Pacific Islands studies such as the relevance of the template of the ‘nation state’, the preoccupation with formal constitutions (more recently, electoral systems) and worries about mental colonization and sports (rugby rather than cricket). Rothermund’s chapter on the history of development planning, and the impact of free trade on colonial and post-colonial economies, should also go on a Pacific reading list – even if the Pacific islands are not actually referred to.

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Godfrey Baldacchino (ed.) *A World of Islands: An Island Studies Reader*. Charlottetown, Canada and Luqa, Malta, Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, and Agenda, 2007; pbk., pp. xviii + 617; Can\$39.95, ISBN-13: 978-99932-86-10-3.

In compiling this encyclopaedic volume on everything you want to know about islands, Godfrey Baldacchino has set himself a daunting task – and an equally difficult job for a reviewer, given the book’s length, scope and variety of approach. That the book largely succeeds in its stated aim of providing a ‘global, research-based, comprehensive and pluridisciplinary overview of the study of islands’ is in no small measure due to the energy, commitment and broad academic expertise of the editor. Of course there are some critical remarks that I feel compelled to make; I will come to these later.

Truly, this is a *tour de force* – a solid sign that island studies has come of age as an interdisciplinary academic field. I am not sure that it is strictly correct to call this book a ‘reader’ (*vide* the subtitle) since my understanding of that term is a collection of already-published texts, usually articles or extracts from books. Rather, it is somewhere between a conventional edited book and a compendium; perhaps it is best described as an island studies state-of-the-art. It is fact-packed and occasionally (for me, at least) too whimsical and nerdish; but its better chapters (and there are many) are often stunningly original and impressive.

Baldacchino sets the pace in his excellent 30-page introduction. Here he makes the case for island studies as a critical, interdisciplinary field of research and scholarship, as well as reviewing a variety of approaches taken in the book – which range from the hard science of geology and botany through the social science of human geography, economics, sociology and politics to the literary and the fictional. At the same time Baldacchino deftly weaves in some essential facts (e.g. 600 million people, 10 per cent of the world population, live on islands) as well as a useful historiography of references, journals and institutes.

The rest of the book – 16 chapters – is divided into four sections, respectively entitled ‘Island Spaces and Identities’ (Chapters 1-3), ‘Island Life’ (4-8), ‘Island Development’ (9-15) and ‘Resources for Island Studies’ (Chapter 16).

The first part on spaces and identities consists of a trilogy of chapters – ‘Definitions and Typologies’ (Stephen Royle), ‘Locations and Classifications’ (Christian Depraetere and Arthur Dahl) and ‘Origins and Environments’ (Patrick Nunn) – which, taken together, provide an exhaustive overview of the phenomenology of islands; although, to be critical for a moment, there is much more on ‘island spaces’ than there is on ‘island identities’. Indeed the failure to get to grips with the latter concept, anywhere in the volume, is a key shortcoming. Royle comes closest, although he does little more than broach the topic of insular identity. Otherwise his chapter is a very useful account of definitions and typologies, albeit overly reliant on the English-speaking realm of ‘these islands’ of Britain and Ireland and their minor islands. He also takes us through what are, for some of us, familiar issues of size, fixed links, islands as metaphors and as laboratories, as prisons and dreamlands, and islands in literature.

Questions of definition and scale are further developed in Chapter 2 which is packed with astonishingly rich data. Fractal analysis is used to compute the frequency-size distribution of islands, according to which there are 5,675 islands with an area between 10 and 1 million km²; 8.8 million islets of between 100 m² and 10km² (some of which, like Rockall, are ‘nano-islets’); and 672 million rocks of an area of between one square foot (‘large enough for a bird or a child to rest’) and 100m². And this is just the start! Dozens of tables, maps and graphs enrich this chapter’s multidimensional classification of the world’s islands. Chapter 3 complements the other two by taking a more historical, geomorphological and environmental approach to ‘islandscapes’; this also lays the foundations for Part 2 of the book, ‘Island Life’.

The second section of the book contains a sequence of chapters, three on non-human life (although, of course, the impact of humans on island ecosystems is never irrelevant) – ‘Evolution’ (Andrew Berry), ‘Flora’ (Diana Percy, Stephen Blackmore & Quentin Cronk) and ‘Fauna’ (Sam Berry) – and two on ‘Archaeology’ (Atholl Anderson) and ‘Epidemiology’ (Andrew Cliff, Peter Haggett & Matthew Smallman-Raynor). Most of these chapters pay homage to Darwin’s observations in the Galápagos as well as to other island natural history classics such as Carlquist’s *Island Life* (1965) and *Island Biology* (1974) and MacArthur & Wilson’s *Theory of Island Biogeography* (1967). As Berry points out in his ‘evolution’ chapter, islands are natural laboratories for ecological study: they are ‘small and simple’, closed systems; but also sites of disharmony; and it is this latter characteristic that is particularly illustrated in this chapter, with reference to ‘absent’ species, ‘relict’ species, dwarfism and gigantism, flightless birds and insects, niche expansion and invasion (the last of which often results in multiple species extinction). Many of these themes are then taken up in the ‘flora’ chapter, based on a case-study of the Indian Ocean island of Aldabra, and in the subsequent chapter on fauna. I am less persuaded by the relevance of the specific island dimension in the chapter on archaeology – as is, I suspect, the author, who retreats into a summary of his own extensive research on South Polynesia which probably has less appeal to a general readership than other chapters in the book. The contribution on epidemiology raises issues of more direct concern to human well-being. Here the authors draw on their own pioneering research on island epidemics, focusing on four selected case-studies of increasing size: Tristan da Cunha, Guam, The Faroes and Australia. The last-named is not normally considered an island but can be so for epidemiological purposes because of its history of settlement and the encounter with the long-resident aboriginal population.

For the social scientist, Section 3 contains the richest material: three chapters on international relations (Barry Bartmann), political economy (Geoff Bertram & Bernard Poirine) and governance (Edward Warrington and David Milne); and three on mobilities – tourism (Stefan Gössling & Geoffrey Wall), migration (John Connell) and gentrification (Eric Clark, Karin Johnson, Emma Lundholm & Gunnar Malmberg).

Bartmann starts with the revealing phrase ‘small is dangerous’, reminds us of the Falklands and Grenada, and continues with a listing of security threats posed to small island states – vulnerable to foreign aggression, organized crime and illegal immigration. The notion of

‘failed states’ is illustrated by case-studies of the Solomon Islands and Nauru. Bertram and Poirine explore further some of the issues raised by Bartmann, but from an economic perspective and with a more positive spin. As well as vulnerability, key words in their analysis are specialization, flexibility, resilience and sustainability. The smaller and more isolated the island economy, the greater the need to be open to the world market, and to specialize in a narrow set of income-generating activities. And yet the ‘vulnerability index’ is positively, not negatively, correlated to per capita income, indicating advantages (as well as disadvantages) to economic smallness and isolation. According to the authors, the magic recipes for small-island economic success are hyper-specialization and flexibility – the ability to make rapid shifts to new specialized niches according to the local resource base and the opportunities offered by changing global markets for goods and services. A classic example is the shift of the Cayman Islands from a MIRAB economy (migrant remittances, aid and bureaucracy) to offshore financial powerhouse. Given that ‘flexible specialization’ is key to post-Fordist economic success, it is no surprise that small island states do so well in the global development listings. This is another chapter with rich tabulations of small island data.

The high standard of originality, insight and fluency achieved by the previous two chapters is continued, even exceeded, by the chapter on island governance, whose breadth of analysis defies any attempt at brief summary. Alongside Royle’s remarks in Chapter 1, this is the only contribution to try to distil the nature of islandness in terms of identity, which appears as a flickering narrative throughout this chapter. Combining the situatedness and facticity of geography with the temporality and external contacts stressed by history, the authors favour an ecological approach to island governance. Warrington and Milne identify seven patterns of island governance: *civilization* (Britain, Japan; islands which have global impact); *fief* (Sicily, Haiti; the polar opposite of civilization, where peripherality and vulnerability are compounded by exploitation by a rapacious colonial power); *fortress* (Malta, Hong Kong; a bulwark for protecting and projecting power); *refuge* (Cuba, Taiwan; where a contested emancipation results from a confrontation with a dominant regional power – in these cases the US and China respectively); *settlement* (Australia, New Zealand; settled predominantly by voluntary migration of colonial overspill population); *plantation* (several Caribbean islands; narrow range of commodities developed under imperial control with the aid of slaves or slave-like labour); and *entrepôt* (Singapore, Mauritius; based on location, centrality and market transactions).

After these three chapters we come down a gear for the next two on tourism and migration, which are solid, competent contributions by well-known authors who certainly know their stuff, but do not pull out all the stops. The tourism chapter covers standard ground on the attractions, limitations and problematic sustainability of tourism for islands, followed by case-studies of Bali and the Seychelles: all very descriptive. Connell’s chapter on migration reviews the key debates – demographic and economic causes and effects, remittances, selectivity and brain drain, return and retirement migration – but limits its geographic scope to the tropical island realm of the South Pacific.

With Chapter 14, on ‘island gentrification’, the spark of originality returns. The market for island space is, apparently, ‘hysterical’, at least in Sweden where the empirical research for

this chapter was carried out. Conventionally applied to inner-city contexts, gentrification is also a relevant process for islands where the buying power of wealthy outsiders snaps up properties for second homes and permanent residence. Although gentrification is subject to a range of theoretical interpretations from Marxist to neoliberal, it is essentially about power and displacement, and the movement of capital as much as people. This micro-research on Swedish islands could easily be applied elsewhere.

I am less convinced by the value of Chapter 15. Entitled 'Island Futures and Sustainability', it is a collection of 18, one-page statements from various commentators, experts, and others on the key challenges facing island development. Some of these voices produce interesting soundbites, but few are able within the space allowed to say anything very meaningful or scientific.

The final section of the book – one chapter – is on resources and lists a host of useful addresses of organizations, data sources, journals etc., as well as giving details of two MA programs on Island Studies at the Universities of Malta and Prince Edward Island, Canada.

To sum up, this is undoubtedly a landmark volume on islands – probably the most important *general text* on the theme ever published. Its great appeal is its breadth of coverage. It has its quirks and weaknesses, but its strengths certainly prevail.

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Bernice Morgan (2007) *Cloud of Bone*, Canada, Alfred A. Knopf, hbk., 447 pp, Can\$34.95, ISBN-13: 978-0-67-6979-38-1.

I have always read Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* as an eloquent testimony of loss and until recently, I had not thought to encounter its kind again. That is, until acclaimed Newfoundland writer Bernice Morgan's *Cloud of Bone* brought back to me the grief I imagine Woolf to have carried to her premature grave in 1941, including human struggles she fathomed without ever actually witnessing: wounding and reparation in the aftermath of modern colonization, eugenics, and warfare. In *Cloud of Bone*, the fruits of atrocity come home to roost and it is not a pretty picture. Bernice Morgan is not a writer to turn to if it is the easy airing of serious feelings for which the reader yearns. The book is a difficult mistress with elements of myth, history and mystery fiction, yet ever drawing us on to feel for its author as someone we know must have grieved deeply in order to tell this story in the first place, and only barely withholding throughout 447 pages the secret we are brought to want to share. It would be misleading to say that the novel is without lightness and humour (which the Italian writer Italo Calvino marked as primary among the literary virtues). But more about Morgan's gorgeous literary sociability later.

The story is artfully told, but not simply. Like a thick underground stem whose roots and shoots develop a cantankerous life of their own, *Cloud of Bone* entangles three seemingly disparate narratives – of a sailor, a savage and a scavenger – each of whom needs the other in order to speak with the embodied textures of layered address that give art meaning. The plot develops tightly through overlapping spaces and time that conjoin spatially, temporally and metaphorically in dynamic counterpoint. These chronologies are – in Book Two of the novel, *The Savage* – the early 1800s in and around the River Exploits in the interior of Newfoundland, where Shanawdithit and the last of her starving Beothuk kin flee inland to escape white contact, unsuccessfully; in Book One, *The Sailor*, 1941 in St. John's, where charismatic 16-year old Kyle Holloway actively enlists and then temporarily deserts a convoy of British merchantmen (Newfoundlanders) ordered by His Majesty's Royal Navy to escort Allied vessels through the harrowing minefields and wolf packs of German U-boats in the Battle of the North Atlantic, fought just beyond the Narrows; and in Book Three, *The Scavenger*, mid-1990's, back in St. John's, where English archeologist Dr. Judith Muir finds a moment of unlikely, almost unbearable grace in the dazed aftermath of her husband's murder amidst the slaughter of the Rwandan genocide. And just as Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* coheres around its second, longest, and most difficult section of three parts – *Time Passing*, in which the death of a mother strikes such emptiness and longing that one feels the heart must break – so it is Shanawdithit's long and attenuated recounting of her sad and premature death in Book Two of *Cloud of Bone* that demands that we slow down and listen up, that we engage right now with the eerie, inconsolable hours of memory and time passing.

But here some readers may object. Shanawdithit's story – “The last of the Beothuk people” – is well known to Newfoundlanders, compellingly related by Michael Crummey, Annamarie Beckel and Kevin Major, among others, and surely celebrated in popular art, public education, theatre, and opera. A monument to her life stands recently unveiled in Bannerman Park, St. John's. Her bones lie interred in the Southside Hills (or what remains of them) overlooking the majesty of sea, sky and earth (or so the Canadian Encyclopedia would have us believe). So, what is Bernice Morgan doing by resurrecting her ghost, and what possible literary justification can ease the unrelenting presence of her low hum in a book otherwise so concretely focused on the uncommon hours of two common people (a sailor and a scavenger) whose lives come radically undone one day in May 1941?

I am all memory. Nothing else. But even memory can dissolve, leech into earth.
...Without memory everything I was will vanish – become nothing (p. 72).

For Morgan, Shanawdithit is a historically real human being whose unrequited life demands a difficult hearing in the after-hours of post-colonialism and genocide. She is Kyle Holloway's and Judith Muir's *Other* in the sense evoked by philosopher Martin Buber, who believed that only through being in a relationship of openness and mutuality with others can we commune with the “eternal thou” of another, and hope to create elemental relations that rise to the unique obligations of Being. In the journey we all make to find a place for ourselves in a post-Darwinian world, surely this is not an easy task. And in the heartbeat of time that encompasses Morgan's story time, the time of European colonization of the island of Newfoundland – an imperial, English time that sucks up brash

young Newfoundland pups like Kyle Holloway and deposits them like raw meat on a barbecue, all the while disciplining with Foucauldian fervour the likes of archaeologist Dr. Judith Muir in the arts of academic career building and relic collection as science – here time stops and bids us to listen. Until the act of contrition performed by both Kyle and Judith near the end of the novel, Shanawdithit remains a number, R29-H624, a skull severed in the name of phrenology from a body and, worryingly for “science”, gone missing from the Royal College of Surgeons in the London Blitz of May 1941. Her polished cranium – “the forward-projecting cheek-bones, the suture line where the cheek and upper jaw meet and the absence of a ridge above the eye sockets all indicate it is the skull of a woman” (p. 377) – has been the unlikely trophy of a little working class girl’s ardent game of seek-and-find, just a stone’s throw away from the killing fields that eradicated – in real life, Virginia Woolf’s Hogarth’s Press in 1941. In *Cloud of Bone*, the girl child is Judith Muir whose mommy and daddy get consumed by war. Years later, having returned Shanawdithit’s skull to its rightful burial place deep within a moss covered valley near Freshwater Bay where good memories and spirits linger:

Judith knows the certainties that supported her career have dissolved. Never again will she look at such things without doubt, without sadness (p. 422).

In a sentence that finally makes you draw up sharp, Bernice Morgan writes: “Grief is not a house but a country” (p. 354). It is but one example of her even-handed taste for a good sentence, her authority over history, language and meaning, and her fresh feminine sensibility. Morgan possesses a deep, wide humanity that ably restores to us whole and unruined things that we had given up as lost. Islanders, specifically Newfoundlanders and London Englanders, will adore the sharp internal cartography that not only lends animate presence to familiar capes and headlands, streets, pubs, and vernacular, but that raises these felicitous, liminal spaces to a mythical consequence that manages to fuel on a basic generative level both resistance and hope.

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Patti M. Marxsen (2008) *Island Journeys: Exploring the Legacy of France*, Houston TX, Alondra Press, 122 pp, pbk., US\$12.95, ISBN-13: 978-0-981452-30-2.

This short book of just 122 pages is enchanting. It deals with six islands; I was going to write that there are six island case studies, but that would not be quite accurate, rather there are six islands used as hooks on which Patti Marxsen sometimes hangs broader themes. Thus, to the hook of the Île de la Cité in central Paris is attached a discourse on the nature of French civilization, concluding with strong thoughts on the *Crise de Banlieues*, the crisis of the suburbs of 2005 when young people, many of North African descent, rioted. The chapter on Haiti concludes with a critique of America’s foreign policy: ‘We (Marxsen is American) like to focus on technical and monetary solutions; we like to make things work; we like to make deals. As we confront the unknown, we keep the arm’s length

composure people from powerful nations can afford. We think of ourselves as insiders, not Others; nor are we very good at listening to Others' (p. 79). Powerful and well-expressed: there is good writing here.

The weakest aspect of the book is the packaging: the title and the blurb. '*Exploring the Legacy of France*' is the sub-title, a theme reinforced by the back cover blurb, which offers the reader a 'fascinating journey through the history of France and its empire'. This seems to promise a formal history, but that is not what is delivered, nor has there been any attempt to do so. This is not an academic treatise, it has no references, no footnotes; there was no need to trumpet it as a history of anything. And, it is certainly not a history of the French Empire. Of the six islands one is at the heart of Paris and could not be more metropolitan and less colonial. Another, Gross Île, whilst in a French speaking part of the world, i.e. Québec, becomes a story of Britain and Ireland, given that this was the location of so many deaths in quarantine of Irish famine migrants in the 1840s; if any empire is being illustrated here, it is British, not French. Then Marxsen writes about Île Saint Pierre, which, given the book's title, might have led one to assume this was to be about part of the French territory of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon off Newfoundland, but no. Île Saint Pierre turns out to be a *presqu'île*, a peninsular, in a Swiss lake, Lake Biel. There is a French connection insofar as this was the location where the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau lived, but the inclusion of this study stretches beyond breaking point both parts of the title, this Île Saint Pierre being neither an island, nor French, to say nothing of its relationship to the French Empire.

This criticism should not deter people from seeking out this short book and enjoying it for what it really is: a charming, evocative, thought-provoking and occasionally witty piece of travel writing in the best traditions of that genre. Marxsen sometimes even takes us with her on her *Island Journeys*: thus inspecting images in Notre Dame on Île de la Cité: 'I pause and stare at the grimacing Devil and the condemned stone figures scuttling away in chains. Suspicious of the neat dichotomy of good and evil, I turn away, clutching my collar' (p. 9).

The six studies – 'islands that are far more than geography, having achieved the status of *place*' (p. 4) – are of Île de la Cité, Tahiti, Grosse Île, Haiti, Île Saint Pierre, and Lambaréné. There might be a story to be told: that of France itself from Île de la Cité; in what I think to be the best chapter, the unhappy journey of Haiti from being the richest colony in the Atlantic world, through one of the first places to escape the colonial yoke to its present parlous state. Or there might be a person who has impacted the island or has been affected by it: Gauguin on Tahiti; Rousseau on Île Saint Pierre; Schweitzer on Lambaréné. Then Marxsen discourses on history, medicine, arts, books: Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*; *Noa Noa* by Gauguin; *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker* by Rousseau; *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest* by Schweitzer.

There is also material here of wider interest within island studies. In her Foreword, Marxsen touches on themes of the discipline: 'islands are self contained worlds, but sometimes they encompass larger worlds' (p. 3); 'the experience of knowing an island well allows us to escape to it' (p. 4); and 'after studying a few islands, it becomes harder to

think of islands as small and uncomplicated' (p. 4). In the chapters she discourses upon islands as defensible sites; as constricted places; the elusiveness of an island journey as pilgrimage – thus in seeking Gauguin on Tahiti, 'I realize that I have come here in search of something that simply does not exist' (p. 43). There is material on the commodification of island cultures for tourist purposes: the Polynesian dance show was 'not the Tahiti I came to see; it is not Tahiti at all' (p. 44); islands as refuges – Rousseau on Ile Saint Pierre wanted to be left alone, 'to exist without obligation' (p. 88) is the telling phrase here. Finally, Marxsen ponders on the existence of 'that nebulous thing called an "island mentality"' (p. 119), this in her concluding chapter on St Helena and its French connection with Napoleon (although it would seem that, unlike with her six deeper studies, she has not visited this island). 'On Napoleon's mental map islands fulfilled many functions: they were safe havens for exile and refuge; they were strategic points of departure for his next adventure; they were turning points too' (p. 120). This concise description of the multi-faceted role of islands seems an appropriate point to conclude this review of a book I greatly enjoyed reading.

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Christy Constantakopoulou (2007) *The Dance of the Islands: Insularity, Networks, The Athenian Empire, and the Aegean World*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, hbk., xiii + 330 pp, US\$120.00, ISBN-13: 978-0-19-921595-9.

Constantakopoulou's *The Dance of the Islands* is an engaging examination, based on her 2002 Oxford PhD thesis, of the various roles and perceptions of the islands of the Aegean in classical antiquity, focusing on the 5th century BCE. The roles of the islands were multifarious and perceptions sometimes contradictory: the islands were isolated and often poor (pp. 99-110), typically had little political power, and were used as places of exile (pp. 129-134); but at the same time, the islands were involved in important religious and political networks, could be of great military importance (pp. 87, 115-119), sometimes controlled territory on the mainland (pp. 231-245), and on occasion were wealthy (pp. 110-112).

Following an interesting discussion of the Greek definition of "island" in terms of an island / mainland opposition, the author discusses two island-centred amphictionies, or associations originally formed to defend a common religious centre, but which also entailed broader cooperation between the member city-states or regions. She lays out the literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence for the existence of the amphictionies centered on Calauria (modern Poros) and Delos. The Calaurian network, which centered around the sanctuary of Poseidon in the centre of the island, was established in the 8th century BCE. The Delian amphictiony centered on the sanctuary of Apollo is more famous, of course, and also of greater interest here for two reasons. First, not only was the association centered on an island, but also many of its members were island communities

(pp. 49-58). Thus the Delian amphictiony offers more evidence of the networking of island communities. Second, Athens used the Delian amphictiony as a springboard to establishing imperial control over the Aegean islands.

In the 6th century BCE, Athens began to exercise its influence on Delos, first by erecting a monumental building in the sanctuary, and later by suggesting that the political and military alliance that would be known as the Delian League be headquartered on Delos. The Delian amphictiony served as the basis for the establishment of this network, but Athens asserted itself more and more, transferring the treasure of Delos to Athens, taking a greater role in administering the sanctuary, and eventually subjugating the island members of the group. This led to a change in the perception of the Aegean islands: in Athens islanders were perceived as subject-allies, and islands were regarded as weak and poor.

Constantakopoulou's analysis to this point is well-executed and interesting, but it leads to what for me is the least successful chapter of the book, that on "The Island of Athens" (pp. 137-175). Earlier, she had suggested that the transfer of the Delian treasury to Athens made Athens "the new central 'island' of the Aegean" (p. 70, *also* p. 163). In this chapter, the author claims that the construction of the Long Wall in the mid 5th century, and of the Middle Wall in the late 5th century, led to an insulation of Athens, and over-interprets passages in Thucydides (1.143.5) and the Old Oligarch (2.14-16) in which the authors suggest that the defensive position of Athens would be stronger if the city were on an island. She talks of their "conspicuous use of the 'island' metaphor (p. 147) and speaks of their "rhetoric of insularity" (p. 153), building the whole chapter on this basis. But really, it is just two brief passages in which Thucydides and the Old Oligarch suggest that Athens *would* be better defended if it *were* on an island; moreover, as Constantakopoulou herself notes (p. 102), the Old Oligarch elsewhere speaks of the weakness of islands.

Towards the end of the chapter Constantakopoulou invokes Plato's myth of Atlantis, first citing several authors who point out (correctly) that Plato structures the story on a contrast between ancient Athens and the mythical island kingdom – but then (pp. 170-171) she tries in vain to argue that Atlantis can be seen as a mythic parallel of Athens in the 5th century BCE, in an effort to bolster her argument that Athens was thought of as an island.

The final two chapters are much more successful. The first of these is on "mini island networks" (pp. 176-227), and addresses how large islands often controlled smaller adjacent islands, including "goat islands" (pp. 200-214), small islands used for grazing goats. The brief discussion of ancient references to ferrying (pp. 222-226) is particularly interesting, and is an essential and little-studied aspect of ancient Greek island connectivity. The last chapter is on "islands and their *peraiiai*," a term that refers to mainland territories controlled by islands. Naturally the islands that had *peraiiai* were located close to the mainland; the *peraiiai* were sometimes sought as regions of exile by those who were fleeing political difficulties on their home islands. Thus *peraiiai* demonstrate that islands, which were often subject to mainland powers, could sometimes reverse that relationship, and instead of receiving exiles from the mainland, could sometimes send them to the mainland.

Constantakopoulou's title, *The Dance of the Islands*, refers to a passage in Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* in which the Cyclades are said to dance around Delos. A closely related image was illustrated on a 5th century BCE Greek cup, where the Titan Tethys is shown dancing, and two of the maenads dancing with her are labeled Delos and Euboea. This is a wonderful metaphor for Greek island connectivity, and it is unfortunate that this cup is not illustrated somewhere in the book, or indeed on its cover.

The book's high price limits its attainability by individuals; but *The Dance of the Islands* should be in any serious research library.

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Irené Novaczek, Jean Mitchell & Joeili Veitayaki (eds.) (2005) *Pacific Voices: Equity and Sustainability in Pacific Islands Fisheries*, Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of South Pacific, Oceania Printers Ltd., pbk., 246 pp, ISBN-10: 98-20203-72-4.

They say that you cannot judge a book by its cover. But *Pacific Voices* is one book whose cover captures the essence of what lies beneath: a female Pacific Islander with a fishnet for a scarf, proudly holding up her catch over a mass of sea vegetation. Behind, and somewhat faded, is another woman selling her marine produce in an open air market under a hand-held parasol. No market stall: only a cloth laid neatly on the ground to display her wares, a bucket at her foot, and a stool to sit on. Here are two local women, actively involved as harvesters in their own rights as well as vendors of fisheries products. The book cover is a visual metaphor for the very real, but often hidden, participation of Pacific Islander women in the community-based fisheries.

It was intended that the book would be a one-of-a-kind compilation of case studies from a number of Pacific Islands dealing with social equity considerations around the sustainable use of aquatic biodiversity, as the title suggests. The nexus between subsistence fisheries and commercial fisheries was to be investigated by the team of researchers through a gendered lens, yet paying special attention to cultural and inter-generational issues as well.

The book is arranged into fifteen chapters dealing with different aspects of aquatic biodiversity use that can be found within several Pacific Island communities. These included Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The range of topics encompasses pre-harvest activities (community fisheries management and local resource management), harvesting of marine flora and fauna (customary fishing practices, introduced fisheries, subsistence fishing and food security), and post-harvest activities (shell money, fish cannery workers, and the shell trade, to name but a few).

The authors include thirteen females and seven males, with sixteen of the contributors hailing from the Pacific Islands and four from Northern countries. So it is clear from the

start that the female voice is to be heard, as well as the Islands voice. Furthermore, the fact that the book was published by the Institute of Pacific Studies at the University of the South Pacific, and subsequently printed in Fiji, is evidence of the ownership of the book's contents by the research community within these Southern countries.

The book's collaborators accomplished what they set out to do, namely, make transparent the roles, insights and stories of people involved in the Pacific Island fisheries, with a view to valuing the contributions of both males and females of different age groups to the local knowledge base and labour pool. Their ultimate objective is to become a catalyst for positive change leading to more sustainable fisheries management and utilization of marine resources. In the introductory chapter, Veitayaki & Novaczek set the stage for ensuing attempts to address some of the perceived gaps in global knowledge with respect to small-scale fisheries and the use of traditional technologies.

Each contributor to the book maintains the importance of listening to women's voices in particular, and looking at fisheries management through a gendered lens to ensure harvests of aquatic plants and animals are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Collectively, the authors role model a gender-sensitive approach, stressing the importance of both women and men participating equitably in fisheries management and applying methodologies that investigate the confluence of gender, age and cultural diversity in modern-day fisheries. The investigators highlight the blatant and subtle divisions of labour between sexes and age-sets in the Pacific Islands, thereby exploring the cultural tugs between traditional and contemporary models of fisheries conservation and use. The bottom-line is that household food security is threatened when social equity considerations are ignored. Therefore, the contributors call for documentation of emerging fisheries resource management data with a view to enhanced information-sharing and understanding.

Sauni & Fay-Sauni's article examined the Tuvaluan inshore fisheries in the Nukufetau and Funafuti Atolls. They determined that the Tuvaluan Islanders are highly dependent on aquatic biodiversity for household consumption and income from fresh fish and handicrafts made with shells harvested in the nearby lagoons and reefs. The case study acknowledged the existence of a substantial subsistence fishery that goes unreported. The authors argue that the cash economy has led to depletion of the more valued species and the subsequent degradation of marine habitats. This is but one example of many within the book where social scientists shed much light on the management, harvesting, processing, marketing and distribution of Pacific Island fisheries resources.

Ram-Bidesi & Mitchell argue for the critical importance of conducting gender analyses as a tool to make transparent the ever-changing relationships within different Pacific Island families and community-based fisheries. Some of these changes are the result of movements of people from rural to urban centres, or the growing number of women and youth seeking new fisheries-related livelihoods such as ornamental fish and aquaculture. Ram-Bidesi & Mitchell reiterate the need for the data disaggregated by gender to permit future investigators to accurately measure the full costs of fisheries-related activities, not simply from an economic perspective, but also from social and cultural perspectives. They

also make a strong case for including women as decision-makers with respect to fisheries utilization and management, alongside local men, to ensure that over-harvesting and aquatic habitat degradation are practices of the past.

If there are any shortcomings to be found within the pages of this book, one might be that more data disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity could have been included. Only two of the articles included data actually broken down by sex (Chapters 10 and 12). It is only when hard numbers are rolled up that further conclusions can be drawn from the data and subsequently included in national reports on fisheries and labour. Therefore, future baseline studies of socio-economic information, including catch and consumption surveys, would be more meaningful for fisheries managers and policy-makers if all data were to be disaggregated by gender and other diversity considerations.

Every once in a while, a book comes along that speaks to an issue that resonates with the reader. *Pacific Voices* was such a book for a researcher on gender and aquatic biodiversity. The collection of papers focusing on the Pacific inshore fisheries and gender proved to be a treasure trove of case studies. The various authors were culturally-sensitive in their approach and practical in their application of traditional knowledge to the research question at hand. Finally, many articles concluded by inviting the reader to consider issues that require further investigation which exemplifies the necessity of a collaborative approach to achieving both social equity and the sustainable management and use of aquatic biodiversity at local, regional and global levels.

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Godfrey Baldacchino (ed.) (2007) *Bridging Islands: The Impact of Fixed Links*, Charlottetown, Canada, Acorn Press, 2007, pbk., 284 pp, Can\$29.95. ISBN-13: 978-1-894838-24-5.

Is there a bridge effect? Do fixed links such as causeways, tunnels, and bridges have immediate and direct socio-cultural, economic, geo-political, and cultural consequences on the island and mainland communities they connect and separate? Does the building of a fixed link effectively end the islandness of an island? Are fixed links icons of engineering distinction and economic progress or perhaps menaces to traditional insular lifestyles and polity? These are the questions investigated, discussed, and carefully answered in Godfrey Baldacchino's timely edited volume *Bridging Islands: The Impact of Fixed Links*. At a time when all over the globe fixed links are rapidly turning ferry boats into a technology of the past, Baldacchino collects fifteen original chapters penned by an interdisciplinary team of geographers, sociologists, anthropologists, economists, and cultural historians focused on such areas as Canada's Atlantic region, Quebec, Florida, Singapore, north-western France, Ireland, Scotland, the Netherlands, and Sweden. Wrapped around by beautiful cover art and drawing from a diverse corpus of original and secondary data, both

quantitative and qualitative, both archival and original, *Bridging Islands* offers nissologists, policy-makers, environmental and community activists, islanders, and social science students and scholars a fascinating anthology on a much underexplored and highly interesting topic.

So, is there a so-called bridge effect? Do islanders need to fight for their lives against the threat of a bridge, or should they instead lobby their regional and national government to be saved from the debilitating realities of isolation? According to Baldacchino and colleagues, a bridge effect is not clearly evident in the majority of circumstances studied, and any facile conclusion over direct causal effects should be promptly dismissed. Wisely eschewing technological and material determinism, the essays in *Bridging Islands* show that a fixed link is merely one player amongst many in a complex social ecology of movement and growth. As Baldacchino points out in his useful introduction, “it is not so much fixed links that should be the topic of study but *people*, since it is they, with their actions or non-actions, who effectively limit, separate, and border” (p. 5). Fixed link technologies’ effects are therefore to be understood as nuanced, negotiated, and meaningful only insofar as their separating and connecting potential is enacted through the day-to-day acts of island and coastal community residents.

Despite the absence of a facile one-way relationship, social, economic, cultural, and political life does experience change after a fixed link is put in place. This is evident in several of the essays in *Bridging Islands*. Barter, for example, finds that the economic impact on Singapore of a second fixed link to the southern tip of the Malaysian peninsula has not been irrelevant. As Barter points out, this is a unique finding in that changes were more dramatic for Johor than the island of Singapore. Significant changes have also been noticeable in the cases of Urk and Noord-Beveland, two low-lying Dutch communities whose island status was literally extinguished by the raising of nearby dams. The consequences of easier access are far from uniform, however, as Urk has seemingly retained its fishing economy and lifestyle whereas Noord-Beveland has experienced a turn to a service economy. Extreme diversity in terms of both the effects of a fixed link and antecedent conditions is also present within the north-western French island communities surveyed by Barthon. As she demonstrates in her well-balanced analysis of development trends on the linked islands of Oléron, Noirmoutier and Ré, a fixed link may have undeniably ended the island status of the three communities, but it has merely contributed to, or at times exacerbated, developmental trends already in progress.

A bridge effect has taken somewhat of a different shape on islands off the Irish coast, as Royle argues. Many Irish islands are uninhabited or very sparsely populated, and therefore linking them to the Irish “mainland” has had positive (in terms of avoiding abandonment and depopulation) outcomes, but certainly little in terms of a drastic impact (given the very small populations it has affected). A similar positive effect has been noticed by McQuaid and Greig on the Isle of Skye, though the high bridge tolls initially imposed on drivers there almost cancelled out any fixed link effect. Despite the mildly positive consequences observed in many of the chapters in *Bridging Islands*, this islander cannot help but sympathize profoundly with the fears of assimilation so perspicaciously captured by one of the smartest comic strips to be ever featured in an academic book. The strip- contained in

Anders Källgård's chapter on Swedish islands – tells the story of a lone islander, Viktor, and his pet seagull. “It would be nice to meet some people” – one day Viktor thought – “if I build a bridge people can visit.” And so he did. Soon an industrious man arrived, promptly followed by his employees, a harbour and its port workers, land developers, and more residents. Annoyed by the chaos, noise, urban-style traffic and overcrowding there was only one choice for Viktor and his seagull: to move off his old island and onto a newer, smaller one where he at last found peace again. How can any islander not relate to this, especially in light of the fact that – as Hache points out in his chapter on the European Union's government's attitude toward islands – as soon as a fixed link is put in place an island is no longer to be considered as such?

As a Canadian, it is then the less optimistic chapters written on Canadian islands that resonate the most with this reviewer. But beside my own national partisanship and insular mentality, it is the chapters on Prince Edward Island (MacDonald, Baldacchino & Spears), Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Island (Hunter and Corbin), Newfoundland's Twillingate and Fogo (Walsh & Jones), and Quebec's Orléans Island and Hazel Island (Guay) that deserve to be singled out as being rich in quality and quantity of data analyzed, historical insightfulness, analytic precision, and clarity of writing. These chapters beautifully capture the struggles underlying the process of linking to a mainland, the complexity of the outcomes, and the political arm-wrestling surrounding the negotiations over who can, should, and does benefit from a bridge or causeway. As a scholar interested in issues of communication, culture and mobility, I cannot help but come away from these chapters – but also all the other essays of the book, including Steinberg's informative overview of the uniqueness of life in the Florida Keys, Cosgrove's rhetorically powerful reflection on the significance of the English Channel Tunnel, and Fielding's analysis of tourism and tourist preferences along the Florida Gulf – with the feeling that the consequences of creating a fixed link are most clearly found in the intangible changes in the sense of island identity, insular culture and lifestyle, and cultural and social (not to mention environmental) sustainability. Islands are both insulated and isolated entities – or as Baldacchino remarks following Simmel, marked by connectedness and apartness – and any attempt to absorb them into the culture of automobility typical of mainlands cannot be meaningless or inconsequential in terms of the things that matter most to many islanders: a distinct sense of time, space, and community. The essays in *Bridging Islands* show while islands and islanders adapt to, and interact with fixed links – rather than merely subjugate to their power – bridges, tunnels and causeways inevitably have the potential of de-isolating and de-insulating islands, and thus annexing them into the ever-expanding logic of gentrification, suburbanization, and globalization typical of landlubber communities found almost everywhere.

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Eliawony J. Kisanga & Sarah Jane Danchie (eds.) *Commonwealth Small States: Issues and Prospects*, London, Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2007, pbk., 328 pp, £20 stg., ISBN-13: 978-0-85092-849-5.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has long been a strong advocate of “special and differentiated treatment” for the small developing states that make up a numerical majority of its members. This book, flowing from a 2003 conference, is a good example of the way the case has been made for giving preferential treatment to small island states in the allocation of aid and trade opportunities. There is a relentless momentum to recitals of the now-familiar litany of alleged vulnerability and disadvantage, matched by a reluctance to pause to reflect on possible areas of intellectual vulnerability in the case itself.

The book benefits from having recruited as authors a number of recognized players in the great game of playing international agencies and donor government for ongoing resource transfers. Roman Grynberg is here to plead the case that trade liberalization unfairly undermines the export sectors of “small vulnerable economies” and that they should therefore be allowed to form a sub-category of states in the WTO negotiating framework. Lino Briguglio promotes his vulnerability/resilience paradigm, and Andrew Downes struggles (with inadequate data) to construct a ranking of small economies relative to the Millennium Development Goals. Kisanga includes his own 2003 submission, co-authored while at the Secretariat, to the UN Committee for Development Policy, arguing for deferral and slowing-down of the process of “graduation” from least-developed-country status, on the bases that such graduation “could lead to deterioration in the economic fundamentals and place a damper on long-term growth” (p. 287), and that the UN’s main quantitative indicator of “vulnerability” (the EVI) fails to take account of information specific to small vulnerable states that would justify their non-graduation.

So there is no lack of authoritative-sounding pronouncements, nor of “factual” ammunition to give additional apparent weight. But this book is not for the reader who wants answers to critical questions. In chapter after chapter the potential question “how do you know?” is pre-empted by the response “because international agency X has passed a resolution saying so” or by the even less satisfying “because it is so”. The mere existence of the Barbados Program of Action and the Mauritius Declaration seems to have freed many of the authors from any sense of responsibility to offer a reasoned case, of the sort that might persuade skeptics. Thus rescued from a potential scholarly deadlock, they can move directly with the comfortable authority of political correctness (attested by the said declarations, action plans, *et al.*) to their work of pleading the cause.

In this endeavour, the list of supposed wrongs and ills suffered by SIDs is sufficiently lengthy to render it impossible to offer a full list, let alone a commentary, in the space of this review. Two representative quotations will convey the flavour:

[C]haracteristics of small economies, centering around their size, vulnerability and governance capacity, combine to yield significant cost disadvantages large enough to

undermine substantially these states' capacities to participate in trade on a remunerative basis, even in areas of comparative advantage. Where small economies cannot obtain premium prices for their products abroad, their exports will struggle to be feasible. Any diminished trading success will only compound the deleterious effects of small size on their economic welfare, with increasing marginalization in world trade being the last thing that small economies can afford (Horscroft: 87).

Small undiversified countries pay higher costs after an external shock than large diversified countries. Several factors contribute to the economic vulnerability of small states: a high degree of openness to trade and financial flows; export concentration and reliance on foreign development and technical assistance, along with underdeveloped financial markets and undiversified production structures... The high volatility and instability in export prices, external markets and capital flows have adversely affected the performance of small economies.... The need to eke out a living in a small physical environment also puts pressure on the ecological environment of small countries... (Downes: 303).

The problem I encountered as I trudged through the book's 300-odd pages of immaculately-laid-out and beautifully-printed small type was that virtually every fact or alleged fact about small states, whether asserted from common experience or measured by some statistical indicator, was framed in a negative light. It is bad to be an open economy, bad to have a trade deficit, bad to have exports earning only a small fraction of your foreign exchange revenues, bad to have a lot of migrants overseas, bad to have remittances and aid coming in (these are repeatedly framed as "remittance dependence" and "aid dependence", in contrast to exports which are "earnings"), bad to be located remote from other countries, bad to be small (because you then presumptively lack "bargaining power" and cannot achieve economies of scale in governance), bad to have a high share of agricultural products in your export mix, bad to be have enjoyed historically-determined preferences and privileges and become accustomed to them when the world is globalizing and privileges are eroding (you are then "preference-dependent"! – p. 81).

Possible objections to this remorseless tsunami of negatives are generally ignored. When occasionally acknowledged, they are quickly brushed aside without any real scholarly engagement. Horscroft, for example, in her detailed and breathlessly-paced manifesto in favour of special and differential treatment, pauses for barely a couple of pages (pp. 73-75) to cite, then toss overboard, the Easterlies and Kraays, Armstrongs and Reads, Pages and Kleens, Srinivasans and Streetens, who have noted the relatively good economic performance of small countries and have suggested that there might even be advantages in small size that could be capitalized upon. Briguglio relegates to a dismissive footnote ECOSOC's objection to his vulnerability index, that "high dependence on foreign trade is not a disadvantage, but a strength of SIDs" (p. 108).

Those two chapters at least do provide the interested reader with a few citations to the case for the dissent. Others simply rely on pure rhetorical momentum. Kisanga & Mitchell, for example, see no need to spend time carefully establishing their claim that "the economic performance of small states has worsened with globalization, trade liberalization, and the

pursuit of sustainable development [sic]" (p. 286). They are content simply to assert that data on growth and trade balances for 1995-2001 look worse than those for the preceding period, and that this proves the general case.

All the above is not to say that the book is without merit. Not only will it provide a truckload of ammunition for already-converted campaigners in the vulnerability cause, but it also includes a couple of quality chapters that repay a closer look as useful pieces of new research on key issues. The two are an impressive short chapter by Redding & Venables, summarizing their empirical research on transport costs and the transport intensity of traded goods, and a useful exercise in ranking manufactured export success, by Wignaraja & Joiner.

The results presented by Redding & Venables go to the heart of some of the claims advanced uncritically elsewhere in the book. First, in their cross-country analysis, they find that being open (in the sense of having a lot of foreign-market access) is unequivocally positive for income per capita (p. 115, Figure 5.1). As the authors remark, "good foreign market access provides a safety net against very low incomes".

Second, being landlocked (the opposite of an island) is bad for transport costs and trade volumes (p. 114). Islands and coastal states have an advantage, not a disadvantage, on this dimension, other things equal.

Third, distance matters a lot, and negatively, for trade, capital flows, and technology transfer (p. 112, Table 5.1). Two implications would seem to follow from this: that genuinely remote locations such as Kiribati may have a better claim to vulnerability than do the clustered islands of the Caribbean, close as they are to the American continent; and that small islands in very remote locations are the least likely to reap major benefits from improved trade and capital market access, and should look strategically elsewhere (which, in turn, implies that they will be apt to exhibit commodity trade deficits, are likely to get more value out of aid and remittance flows than less remote states, and should possibly be encouraged to focus upon trade in services rather than commodities, as noted on p.119).

As Redding & Venables conclude: "development strategies need to look carefully at what the comparative advantages of small, distant and isolated economies really are" (p. 123). Their chapter points the way to the sort of analysis that would have been welcome elsewhere in the volume, both in case studies such as Kisanga and Mitchell's appendix on the Maldives' graduation, and in general economic overviews such as Horscroft's chapter.

Alas, one major reason the Redding & Venables chapter stands out is that it is based upon a dataset of good enough quality to support statistical analysis. A glance at the 101 countries in their sample (p. 126) reveals not more than half-a-dozen small island developing states, and only a minority of Commonwealth countries in general. Their study is simply not about "Commonwealth small states". Getting the data to extend it to more SIDS would surely be a worthwhile exercise.

In contrast, the following chapter by Wignaraja & Joiner, on the measurement of “industrial competitiveness”, deliberately focuses on 40 small states, and derives results of more direct relevance to the book’s title. They immediately find themselves “hampered by the lack of data on key variables” (p. 146) and so restrict their statistical analysis to some simple tests. The outstanding results from this exercise are that population size has a positive effect on “competitiveness” if the sample is truncated to exclude large-population, uncompetitive “outliers” (in this case, Papua New Guinea), and that the Commonwealth Secretariat’s vulnerability index has no significant effect. The first of these draws attention to the risks of sample-selection bias in work of this sort. The second chalks up yet another statistical refutation of the vulnerability-index paradigm in small state analysis.

It is important, in considering the Wignaraja & Joiner results, to bear in mind that what their “competitiveness” index measures is not the usual *ex ante* notion of being able to undercut competitors, but a set of *ex post* indicators – manufactured exports per capita, average growth in such exports, and the share of “technology-intensive” exports in the total (p. 131). The index would thus be better described as an index of manufactured export success, relative to other possible development paths, with that success itself then interpreted as evidence of “competitiveness”, with no definite indication of exactly what this means. To find Malta at the top, Fiji in the middle, and Kiribati at the bottom of the forty-country ranking should raise no eyebrows!

There are a number of chapters which function more as ballast for the book than as novel contributions in their own right; two reviews of regionalism (in the Caribbean and Pacific); one report on a sample survey of school teachers addressing issues of recruitment and retention; a consultants’ review of regional fisheries issues in the Pacific; and a pair of chapters by Paul Sutton on governance and public-sector restructuring which contain no surprises (except possibly for the unqualified assertion that “there is no evidence that small states are any more corrupt than larger ones” [p. 213]).

Coming on the heels of the Secretariat’s sponsorship and publication of the distinguished 2004 work of Winters & Martin – *When Comparative Advantage Doesn’t Matter: Business Costs in Small Economies* – analyzing the effect of small size on trading performance, this Kisanga & Danchie collection is an anticlimax. A return, perhaps, to business as usual, after an exciting flirtation with real cutting-edge research?

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Kevin J. Edwards (guest editor) (2005) *Human Ecology: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, special issue on The Faroe Islands, Vol. 33, No. 5, pp. 585-762, ISSN: 0300-7839.

This special issue of *Human Ecology* contains seven articles that focus exclusively on the Faroe Islands, a sub-arctic, semi-autonomous, North Atlantic archipelago within the Kingdom of Denmark. The contributors include geographers, archaeologists,

conservationists, anthropologists, historians, and environmental scientists. Its major theme is that humans have affected the natural environment in the Faroe Islands and have created thriving communities since their initial arrival there. Evidence for this is presented through a multitude of channels and with a broad range of data.

First, Kevin Edwards (pp. 585-596) presents the history of human settlement in the Faroes and provides an overview of the type of agriculture that was practised there through palynological, archaeological and historical data. This paper does provide some introductory text but could have spoken more specifically of the works that follow.

Símun Arge *et al.* (pp. 597-620) sought to map the settlement patterns of the Norse as they established themselves in the Faroes from the 9th century onward using archaeological and historical evidence. In this pursuit they did a remarkable and ground-breaking job. This ambitious project shows how human settlement decisions were influenced by the natural environment and topography of the Faroes just as the Faroese environment and topography were affected by human settlement. The work of Arge and his colleagues deserves better visual representation than it was given in this issue and perhaps a full-colour and large-format version of their maps can be made available in a subsequent publication.

Edwards *et al.* (pp. 621-650) set out to test the validity of four hypotheses regarding anthropogenic ecological change in the Faroes during the early Norse period. Their decision to limit their study to one area of the Faroes (Hovsdalur, on the southernmost island of Suðuroy) is well defended based on the area's use as a microcosm of the entire archipelago, but may have limited the potential of their research. Nevertheless, the four addressed hypotheses – namely, that human settlement affected geomorphology, woodlands, flora diversity, and soils in the Faroes – were all tested in Hovsdalur. Of special interest is the mention of the human ecology of pre-Norse settlement in the Faroes. Edwards *et al.* determine that humans have been using the land since before the accepted dates of Norse settlement. More research into this area of history is called for.

Ian Lawson *et al.* (pp. 651-684) focus their studies upon the island of Sandoy and show “how people and their activities fit into the processes and patterns of landscape evolution.” The authors call for a diversification of methodological techniques in the study of Faroese landscape change. Practising what they preach, Lawson and his colleagues employ palynological, paleological, paleolimnological and archaeological methods, among others. They conclude that the Sandoy landscape was affected in only a limited way by settlers and today resembles the pre-settlement landscape closely.

Kim Vickers *et al.* (pp. 685-710) examine Faroese human ecology at the scale of the farm. The farm they chose dates from the *Landnám*, or the time of first Norse settlement. The results of this study place this farm in line with other Norse settlement sites and add to the scholarship that describes early Norse farming practices and their impacts upon the natural environment.

Paul Adderly and Ian Simpson (pp. 711-736) expand the scope slightly from the Vickers *et al.* article to the home-field. This is the land used by a settlement for growing fodder or

cereal crops. With the use of an agroecosystem model, and a comparison of this model's results to data gathered on the ground, Adderly and Simpson show a strong connection between home-field yields and soil management, even through historical climate fluctuations.

Amanda Thomson *et al.* (pp. 737-761) travel beyond the farm and the home-field and examine the Faroese rangeland where sheep were traditionally grazed. While grazing (especially by sheep) is typically seen as a major contributor to land degradation, Thomson and her colleagues argue that the Norse practised a type of grazing management that minimized negative environmental impacts and actually enhanced both livestock productivity and natural vegetation. By comparing pre- *Landnám* vegetation cover with historical and recreated covers, their model shows the possibility of sustainable grazing practices in use soon after Norse settlement in the Faroes.

Throughout the issue, it is pointed out that there exists a lack of current knowledge about any possible pre-Norse settlement (most likely by Irish monks) in the Faroe Islands. Various contributions suggest a pre-Norse Irish presence, and some offer evidence from archaeology or place-name analysis. However, only Edwards *et al.* delves more deeply into the possible ecological effects that this presence may have had, if it existed. This type of scholarship is of special interest to those of us in the field of island studies because it reflects the model of "waves of immigration" with which islands and those who study them are all too familiar. The possibility of pre-Norse human habitation on the Faroes is a subject worthy of future investigation by human ecologists and researchers.

Other valuable themes in the human ecology of the Faroe Islands are fishing and whaling activities, both historical and modern. Fishing is the Faroes' primary industry, and has been for quite some time. Given the worldwide decline in commercial fish stocks, the human ecology of fishing is a salient topic in any geographical location, and all the more so in a remote place such as the Faroes which relies so heavily upon the sea for its subsistence and economy. Whaling – specifically the *grindadráp*, or pilot whale drive – has become a uniquely Faroese phenomenon but was once practised in many areas of the North Atlantic. Considering the discourse and controversy that surrounds whaling, there is certainly benefit to be derived from a human ecologist's trained perspective on this topic.

This special issue of *Human Ecology* may have also benefitted from crisper, easier-to-read maps and graphics. However, all in all, the final product remains most cohesive and informative. It is encouraging to see the editors of this journal turn their attention upon a little-known place, a remote archipelago that many of us in the field of island studies have come to know and love for its expressions of islandness.

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