

Introduction

Antony Hooper

Throughout the South Pacific, as in many other places, notions of ‘culture’ and ‘development’ are very much alive, surfacing again and again in a wide variety of contexts—political debate, the news media, sermons and policy reports, as well as in the endless discourses of ‘ordinary life’, everywhere from outlying villages to gatherings of urban élites. Not infrequently the terms are counterposed, and development, along with ‘economic rationality’, ‘good governance’ and ‘progress’ is set against culture or ‘custom’, ‘tradition’ and ‘identity’. The decay of custom and impoverishment of culture are often seen as wrought by development, while failures of development are haunted by the notion that they are due, somehow, to the darker, irrational influences of culture. Nevertheless, as Ron Crocombe has commented (1994:38), both are ‘good’ words throughout the Pacific, needing, and receiving, constant attention. The problem, as in other places, has been to resolve the contradictions between them so as to achieve the even greater good—access to material goods, welfare and the amenities of ‘modern life’ without the sacrifice of ‘traditional’ values and institutions that provide material security and sustain diverse social identities.

Many development economists are aware of these contradictions. The World Bank (1991:1–3) for example, acknowledges that ‘[p]rospects

for economic development [in the Pacific] are conditioned to a large extent by the islands' social patterns', and that 'cultural endowments' exert a 'profound influence over the pattern...of development.' Wolfgang Kaspar (1991:49) makes the point that 'anthropological [by which he means cultural] facts matter in the South Pacific.' He gives a good account of them, but then, like the writers of the *World Bank Report*, he has not really sought to work out exactly how they matter, or what their implications may be for economic development. Nevertheless, he confidently reaches the general conclusion that South Pacific island countries could, if they really tried, emulate the growth of certain Asian economies, 'absorbing Western technology, management and economic modes of behaviour without giving up their Chinese, Malay, Korean, Japanese or Indian identities' (1991:790).

Development economists frequently draw comparisons between Asian and Pacific countries in much the same terms that Kaspar does (for example Cole and Tambunlertchai 1993), perhaps on the assumption that since they all belong in one Asia Pacific region, what goes for culture in the larger Asian part of it, goes for the remainder. This, I believe, is a false assumption, and one that I sought to question directly in my own contribution at the Suva meeting, by pointing out some of the less obvious ways that Pacific island countries are different, apart from scale and resources.

In general, what is construed as culture in the Pacific region is constructed in ways that are quite distinct from the kinds of construction prevalent in the larger Asian countries. Culture impinges on the 'harder' structures of political and economic organisation much more directly and effectively. There is, in every Pacific country, a large and vigorous traditional sector. It does not consist, as is the case in many other regions, of minorities or a few remnant groups in the hills with little influence on national economic and political affairs. In most cases, around 80 to 90 per cent of land resources are under customary tenure, and the traditional sector accounts for around 50 per cent of national GDP. Furthermore, the systems of customary tenure are commonly entrenched in constitutional or other legal structures which insulate them, either absolutely or in large degree, from the operation of market forces and state coercion. Custom thus controls a very large proportion of the economic resources that are basic for development in any of its conventional senses. In these circumstances development is not, as some would have it, simply a matter of engineering a transition from subsistence to dynamic monetary economies. The economic

mode of Pacific traditional sectors is not 'subsistence' if by that is meant 'mere subsistence'—nor has it ever been. There is instead a wide variety of reciprocal exchanges and redistributions that integrate whole districts in networks of mutual obligation and concern going far beyond 'mere subsistence'. Such transactions are more than 'mere economics'. They are, in the well-worn phrase, 'embedded in the society', carrying within them a large moral and ideological force.

Culture also impinges on national politics. Pacific countries are democratic; most are wholly so, and the remainder at least to some degree. Politicians have to be elected, and where the electors derive a great proportion of their livelihoods from the traditional sectors, matters of custom and tradition carry considerable political clout. Again, most Pacific countries have constitutions which assert national legitimacy in terms of their distinctive culture and traditions, and these are given at least as much attention as universal notions of democracy and individual rights. In these ways, culture in one form or another is right at the heart of national economic and political life.

These basic facts clearly distinguish the region from the larger Asia Pacific conglomerate in which it is so often submerged. Culture plays a much more significant role in national economies and national life of Pacific countries than it does in most other regions of the world. One of the implications is that the national economies of the Pacific cannot be adequately encompassed by standard macroeconomic analyses. Economists do what they usefully can in charting the trends and fortunes of the private and public sectors, but they generally have little or nothing to say about what they call the traditional sector. This is understandable, given the nature of traditional economic transactions and their absence from national accounting systems. But where the traditional sector accounts for 50 per cent or more of GDP (according to what can only be gross estimates), such analyses can hardly be adequate as descriptions of what motivates people or what they are actually doing with their lives. In addition, since macroeconomic analyses commonly take little or no account of the constraints that the ideology of tradition places on the private and public sectors, recommendations for development take on an air of prescriptive unreality. Politicians and policymakers in Pacific countries do what they can to adapt the development recommendations to social and political realities (or, as some would insist, to their own ends), but it is often an inexact and disruptive process, beset by many unintended consequences.

There is, it seems, no widely agreed-upon way out of this situation—no general paradigm for economic development that does not, in the final analysis, involve getting people out of what is consistently called the subsistence economy and into a dynamic monetary economy. That, so they say, is an economic imperative. Be that as it may, it hardly contributes to an understanding of the contemporary economic, social and cultural reality in Pacific island countries. For that, the need is for a broader and more complex conceptualisation, made in socioeconomic rather than straightforward economic categories. A scheme that I have proposed involves three broad domains: a traditional domain, a private sector domain and a public sector domain. These are not simply sectors of economic activity but socioeconomic units, each with its own economic base, its own set of institutional structures and basic grounding ideas. They are present in every Pacific country, though differently constituted in each, according to the contingent historical and cultural structures which brought them into being. They have been there for generations, having been laid one over the other in the form of a palimpsest, each influencing what was there before and, in turn, acquiring a particular coloration of its own from what preceded it. Individuals may participate in several domains, as when a business person contributes profits to a traditional undertaking, or when traditional status is converted to political ends. Institutions, motivations and expectations may differ between separate domains. People know this, and can either keep them apart, or deliberately confuse them. The structure of domains may change, adapting to connections which are made with the outside world (as, for example, through emigration) and in this way influence the structure of other domains.

These chapters, in their diverse ways, pick up and elaborate on this general characterisation. They also cohere remarkably with one another in the following four ways. First, none of the contributors is at any pains to define either culture or development. They are instead concerned with the ways in which the terms are employed in common usage, with ‘what is being accomplished socially, politically, discursively when the [concepts...are] used to describe, analyse, argue, justify and theorise’ (Dominguez 1992:21). They are also very closely focused particularities, drawing on a variety of concrete examples and images: a two-storey house, Solbrew, centre and edge, a village band and so forth. Change is expected. Consistency is not an

issue. What is characterised as culture appears sometimes as a weapon of the weak, sometimes as oppression by the strong. This produced no confusion, no dislocating sense of a ragbag of unrelated topics. Everyone present knew precisely what was at issue, drawing on a common fund of experience or what Dominguez has characterised as 'sameness and shared understanding'. This, I believe, is an important point which has clear implications for any plans for future action on behalf of culture in the Pacific.

Second, although the chapters show a common concern with what is understood as culture, there is no idealisation of it. That in itself is an accomplishment, since in the general Pacific discourse of 'culture and development' idealisation is pervasive—its nature neatly captured by Colin Filer's description of 'the village which is everywhere and nowhere',

...a community whose members lived in complete harmony with each other and with their natural environment, who jointly owned the land to which they had a mystical attachment, who chose their leaders by consensus, settled arguments by compromise, and redistributed the products of their labour to ensure that everyone enjoyed the same condition of subsistence affluence (1990:9).

Contributors to the conference were in general experienced enough to know that no traditional community exists entirely free from greed, self-seeking, treachery and disloyalty. The common regret that all the chapters express is simply the erosion of the traditional institutional forces that hold these forces in check, by the ideologies of development which are built on notions of cost accounting and bourgeois individualism. Pacific countries are all relatively small; social disruptions are not easily contained and can have very widespread and corrosive effects.

Third, it is obvious that traditional values and forms of social organisation have been remarkably resilient and persistent throughout the Pacific. Marshall Sahlins' chapter is the most powerful and eloquent statement of this point, drawing attention to the capacity of peoples to indigenise the forces of global modernity and turn them to their own ends. In the Pacific, this capacity depends not only on force of will, loyalty to kin, religion or respect for chiefs (though all these are important) but also upon a solid, and legally entrenched, economic infrastructure.

Culture and development in Pacific discourse

Culture

As a region of striking human diversity, the Pacific has attracted anthropologists ever since the halting beginnings of the subject as a separate field of social inquiry. Over the years, the anthropologists have produced a huge descriptive record of the region, couched in a wide variety of theoretical frameworks and including some of the classics of the discipline. 'Oceania' was thus built into a famous site of culture, with the descriptive record contributing significantly to the acceptance of culture in the anthropological sense, as an attribute of all peoples. This was in opposition to the restrictive German and French *kultur/culture*, 'high culture', or the possession of a privileged few, and also to the related notion of the equal worth of all cultural traditions which has passed into popular usage as vulgar cultural relativity.

Anthropologists established and retained what Linnekin (1992:255) has called 'narrative authority', if only because they were, for much of the time, the only ones to pay attention to 'culture' as such. The reaction of Pacific peoples themselves to these largely objectivist, positivist (Linnekin 1992:249) representations was highly varied—though, for complex and particular historical reasons, often muted. The situation was to change, however, as indigenous scholars and political leaders sought to construct their own versions of culture and tradition, as *kastom*, *pasim tumbuna*, *Maoritanga*, *fa'a Samoa*, *vaka vanua* and so forth, asserting their own narrative authority and defining for themselves the essential qualities by which they wished to be known to the outside world. None of these changes, of course, were peculiar to the Pacific. They were worldwide. The meaning of culture went through another historical transformation, becoming a self-conscious, objectified reality, a universally valorised marker of difference which could be used to good effect in struggles against colonial and other political oppressions and which directly reflected the ways in which multiculturalism in the industrial world used culture to refer to diverse collective social identities engaged in struggles for social equality. The background to this historical transformation of the meaning of culture is complex. Jocelyn Linnekin (1992:254) refers its intellectual genealogy to various postmodernists, while Terence Turner (1993:424) points to a great 'contemporary conjuncture' of the global organisation of capitalism, the suppression of the nation state and other changes such as consumerism and information technology.

Not unexpectedly, these moves led to a general excitation of the academic discourse on the region, with the result that there was a proliferation of the scholarly attention given to the general themes of tradition, nationalism and identity, often summarised under the label of the politics of tradition. This has provided fertile ground for continuing debates—impossible to summarise here, but whose leading ideas are well represented in a number of volumes of collected essays (Keesing and Tonkinson 1982; Linnekin and Poyer 1990; Jolly and Thomas 1992; Lindstrom and White 1993). Jolly and Thomas give a good summary of the issues that this literature addresses, several of which are relevant to an informed reading of this volume. The historically particular influences of colonialism, for example, have channelled broadly similar indigenous institutions in different ways. Thus there is a world of difference between what happened to ‘chieftainship’ in the Cook Islands under the New Zealand regime, and the way in which the British administration coopted chiefs into the mechanism of indirect rule in Fiji, as well as broad similarities in the fate of indigenous people in the white settler colonies of New Zealand, Hawaii and Australia. The nature of the indigenous societies was also relevant. There is an obvious difference in the way that culture has come to be constructed in more linguistically and politically unitary places like Fiji, Samoa and Tonga compared to the more diverse territories of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. What has come to be objectified and counted as culture (as distinct from ‘church’, ‘business’ or ‘government’) is thus extremely diverse.

Then there is the issue of authenticity, centred on the question of the extent to which representations of the past in indigenous constructions of tradition square, with ‘historical facts’—the occasion of some notable disputes between Pacific peoples and academics. These have probably attracted much more attention in academic circles than among indigenous intellectuals and activists, most of whom have been preoccupied with more urgent, practical, political and legal concerns. A related issue here has been the extent to which all traditions, including the great European ones, have been ideologically constructed—a point neatly raised by Sahlins in his characterisation of the European Renaissance (1993:7–8).

Both of these issues are related to a third: the extent to which ideas of ‘national culture’ can be manipulated to serve the interests of westernised élites in control of the apparatus of government. This can give rise to accusations, justified or not, about ‘politicians raised in

urban settings and educated overseas [who] proclaim the virtues of a *kastom* they have never known' (Keesing 1982:299). In some places it can also give rise to the deeper, more complex and subtle ambiguities which appear when the culture that is extolled is no more than an analogue of 'high culture' in the Western sense, the attribute and possession of a privileged few. The well-known debate over 'The Pacific Way' illustrates aspects of this.

Development

A hundred and fifty or so years ago, when people of the Tokelau atolls began to have access to iron, European cordage and nautical goods, they set about acquiring it by whatever means available. They discarded their shell fishhooks and made their own out of iron, replaced their sennit lines with manufactured ones and their matting sails with canvas. They learned of *pulaka* (*Cytosperma chamissonis*) from what was then the Ellice Islands, labouriously dug up acres of their rough coral ground two metres down to the fresh-water lens and planted flourishing crops. When manufactured hooks and monofilament lines appeared they set upon those as well, and, much later, enthusiastically set about acquiring aluminium dinghies and Japanese outboard engines. Nobody in the atolls now refers to all this as 'development', however. It is regarded simply as common sense, what the people themselves did, for themselves, to make their production more efficient and to secure their food supply.

'Development' in the Pacific is commonly understood in a different sense, one whose hegemony effectively began with Harry Truman's acceptance speech on 20 January, 1949.

We must embark [President Truman said] on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. The old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing (quoted in Esteva 1992:6).

As Esteva puts it, '[u]nderdevelopment began, then, on January 20, 1949. On that day, two billion people became underdeveloped. In a very real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were...' (1992:7). The old meanings of development, based on both religious and biological metaphors, faded in the popular mind. Development became a global project, directed from on high. It became even further impoverished through being taken over by

economists who reduced it to economic growth, measured by indicators such as gross national product, launched by various international agencies in the 1950s. The failures were notable, with many projects having tragic consequences for the very people they were designed to assist.

Since then a variety of planning adjustments have been proposed and put into operation, all of them emphasising in one way or another the importance of integrating what was called the 'social and cultural' with the 'economic'. The list of the well-meaning initiatives is a long one: the 'unified approach', 'integrated development', 'another development', 'human-centred development', the 'basic needs approach', 'endogenous development', 'human development'—and so forth, down to the diverse current enthusiasms for 'sustainable development'—as the various international agencies have competed for attention and funding. There is no doubt about the sincerity of the efforts, yet the central contradictions remain.

Meanwhile in some parts of the Pacific at least, economic goals have been effectively integrated with local society by using the kinship and family loyalties which had long been a central feature of 'traditional culture.' Emigration from Tonga, Samoa and other 'MIRAB' (Bertram and Watters 1985) countries grew rapidly in importance, and, as it did so, not only did the volume of remittances sent back to sustain and improve the material situation of the home societies increase, but they also allowed the elaboration of 'culture,' feeding into the complex displays and ceremonial exchanges at the heart of traditional economics and status. This has involved a double irony. First, although the whole process has relied on essentially 'cultural' linkages, it has also been an exercise in pure textbook economic rationality, as people have simply deployed their labour resources to places where they can get the best return. Second, overseas remittances have come to be of great importance in the macroeconomic sense, greatly exceeding in some states the earnings from visible exports, and providing about half GDP.

Yet in spite of both the economic rationality of the process and the significant amounts of overseas exchange involved, remittances are nevertheless looked on as a suspect mechanism of development. The reason for this is not purely economic. As a 'global project' (usually, but not necessarily, involving aid, soft loans or foreign commercial investment) development operates within the context of nation states. It is thus inescapably a 'top down' process, driven and evaluated by

macroeconomic principles—in whose light remittances are seen as entailing both high reservation wages (the wages at which people are willing to take up employment) and reductions in agricultural exports.

Development has also been affected by changing economic orthodoxies. From after the Second World War through to the end of the 1970s, development was essentially dependent on state planning. Programs were conceived and directed by economists of basically Keynesian outlook who placed heavy emphasis on infrastructure, capital formation and the expansion of public sectors. It was not until the early 1980s that the doctrines of free market and monetarism gained ascendance, with a profound effect on the reigning development paradigm. Since the mid 1980s the World Bank's advice and aid to Pacific countries has turned away from support for public enterprise and physical investment, towards human development (education and health), the dismantling of government economic controls, and support for the private sector.

The development programs before 1980 or so, brought about a number of significant changes throughout the Pacific. Although the general effect was to increase social welfare and induce some economic growth, the changes involved new social and regional inequalities and the results were not uniformly benign (Overton 1988:10). They also fuelled the emergence of a category, variously called 'middle class' or 'bureaucratic élite,' made up of people separated to some extent by education and economic interests from those in the 'traditional' rural sectors.

The new free-market, monetarist orthodoxy has prompted widespread anxieties and criticism. As Claire Slatter (1994) has pointed out, much of the World Bank's recent analyses of Pacific island economies (1991;1993) is confused and contradictory. While drawing attention to relatively high living standards and favourable social indicators that have been achieved in spite of constraints, the World Bank fails to attribute these facts to the overall success of the older development model. The developers' enthusiasm for private sector development and the opening of opportunities for foreign investment is also suspect, not only because of the likelihood that most of the profits will be repatriated overseas but also because, it is felt, social and economic inequalities will become more acute.

The papers

These chapters highlight various aspects of the broad contrast outlined above, but are so densely inter-related that they are difficult to sort into discrete thematic groups. They do, however, differ in what may be termed their 'range', some deal with either basic conceptual issues or with the region as a whole, and others with specific examples and particular countries. On this basis I have made two groupings, the first 'general' and the second 'specific'. The third grouping, 'tourism', suggests itself not only because of the subject matter, but also because of the distinctive conceptualisation of culture which the subject involves.

General

Langi Kavaliku's chapter sets out the basic theme and offers a clear, principled stand on a number of issues. The perspective he brings is that of a political leader with long experience at the critical intersection of international development discourse and national policymaking. His address makes three significant points. First, that the majority of global conferences on development as well as the policies of major development agencies are overwhelmingly focused on economic issues. Culture generally appears as an afterthought, mentioned, if at all, 'only in dispatches.' While this was hardly news to his audience, his second point effectively stands the first on its head, drawing attention to the fact that,

in spite of a seeming lack of concern with culture, their plans of action take matters of culture into account in any case. At the end of the day, I do not believe that any individual or group can act in a vacuum. They can only act as who they are, what they are, and what they want to be.

What this implies is that culture is not merely an afterthought, an impediment to development, and a contradiction of the basic premise of the universal rationality of economics. Economics cannot claim universal rationality. It was not created in a vacuum, but by a group acting from within the culture of capitalism. Thus Kavaliku's third point casts aside the conceptually flawed contrast between culture and development and replaces it with the much more potent rhetoric of modernisation and westernisation.

Given his identification with the powerful élite of a country with a notably stable and enduring national culture, it is understandable that Kavaliku does not dwell on the tensions, ambiguities and conflicts inherent in that culture. Many of the chapters in the following 'specific' group, however, address these issues directly in the context of other countries, using contrasts variously phrased as 'government and culture', 'centre and edge', 'rational/legal authority and traditional authority' as well as 'development and culture'.

The two following chapters have the same expansive theoretical sweep. Kavaliku used an image of Pacific countries as *lokua*, small fish living in reef ponds cut off from the sea at tidal lows, but periodically replenished by ocean waters. Epeli Hau'ofa's central concern is with the ocean ('our most wonderful metaphor for just about anything we can think of'), but his fish are hardly *lokua*; instead they are a much bigger, more confident species, ranging over the whole Pacific and its surrounding shores. Pacific emigrants have sustained their homelands independently of the world of official diplomacy and neocolonial dependency. The sea has been a pathway into the whole region, a common inheritance and a potent symbol of a common Oceanic identity—which, he points out, has the capacity to be the foundation on which to build a humane vision of the future free from the market economy and the 'homogenising force of the global juggernaut'.

Marshall Sahlins has little to say about the possibilities of regional unity, but much about the capacity of local cultures everywhere to seize the opportunities and the wealth provided by the global system for whatever good things make up the local conception of human existence. Culture is not disappearing, as predicted by the old 'Despondancy Theory'. Instead, 'global homogeneity and local differentiation have developed together'. The process, the 'indigenisation of modernity' echoes closely the distinction made by Kavaliku in his call for modernisation (of the local scheme of things) as against homogeneity and a disabling westernisation.

According to Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, although Pacific women generally argue that they have not been disadvantaged by the development process because they have been shielded by customary ways, the question remains as to whether those customary ways have in fact done enough to protect women's overall well-being. There is considerable evidence to show that this is not always the case: for example, despite generally having the same educational attainments as men, women participate much less in national decision-making;

family systems are weakening, marriages breaking down and households headed by women are increasing. Malama Meleisea, Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka and John Burton all lend weight to these general statements with their observations on how some women have been treated in development situations in Samoa, Solomon Islands and some Papua New Guinea societies.

Specific

Meleisea's chapter concerns governance in Samoa. It begins with the observation that 'values about governance are rooted in culture, and that not all cultures value the kind of openness and acceptance of individual rights that Western thinkers have argued to be the basis of human development'. His point is based on the well-known contrast between rational/legal authority underlying the constitution and government, and the traditional chiefly authority that is the basis of Samoan culture. This, he points out, 'gives us two system of legitimacy to draw upon', with the gloomy result that both systems are compromised and the sense of citizenship eroded. Meleisea's chapter resonates strongly with Kabutaulaka's account of the same sort of corrupting compromises in Solomon Islands, hinging on the interaction between the customary land tenure system and the logging industry. This, he points out, produces a hybrid culture—dynamic to be sure, and heavily influenced by the traditional patron-client political relationships, but in a situation which encourages and facilitates individual accumulation at the expense of traditional wealth redistribution. The resulting situation is one which has deleterious effects on social stratification, the position of women and the sustainability of resources.

Burton stresses the fundamentally political nature of the relationship between 'remote peoples', the central government of Papua New Guinea and the large foreign corporations involved in mining enterprises. His plea for sociocultural research is couched in terms which are disingenuously neutral and modest—namely 'the avoidance of risk for both investors and local communities'—but the wider implications, political catastrophes like Bougainville, are obvious. He lays some stress on the particularities of different situations: the nature of the traditional political organisation, the impact of mining, the corporate culture and the monitoring capacity of government. As his examples clearly show it is wrong to assume that 'remote peoples' have no power. They can, in certain situations, easily

match the power of both central government and large corporations; but it is an enervating, and, in many cases, extremely combative process, which might be avoided to some extent if as much were spent on social and cultural monitoring as is spent on environmental impact studies.

Philipp Muller, like Kavaliku, writes from the perspective of a Pacific Islander with long experience of the management of development projects. Like Kavaliku, he has a clear idea of the contradictions involved when the 'educated privileged' (as he puts it, 'almost systematically desensitised to the needs of our own people') promote noble general goals such as job creation, foreign exchange earnings and improved balance of payments, in almost complete ignorance of what people on the ground consider to be important. Projects are directed by a faceless government, carried out by officials who are hard pressed and under-resourced—an unfortunate situation leading straight to what he calls two universal lies: 'that you can get useful information from a government department, and that a government official is there to help you'. Joeli Veitayaki has a keen awareness of the same contradictions. His experience, however, is shorter than Muller's, and, because his chapter on fisheries management deals with a situation in which cultural principles are taken into account, his perspective is a somewhat sunnier one. There are obviously good lessons to be learned from the way in which Fiji has endeavoured to take culture into account in its fisheries management, marrying it with research and grass-roots participation. Kerry James' chapter echoes many of the points about culture and participatory development made by Muller and Veitayaki. However, like Burton, she also stresses the particularities of local social organisations and authority structures and the dangers inherent in assuming that the 'educated privileged' have any greater understanding of them than the average foreign development project consultant.

Fiji can also apparently provide good lessons in the importance of 'taking cultural principles into account' in fields other than fisheries management. Robert Norton's chapter shows how the deep ethnic differences between Fijians and Indians have been successfully managed and negotiated in a way that, for the present at least, accommodates both groups. Again, it has depended on historical particularities rather than recourse to universalistic principles. Chiefs have retained their position as icons of traditional life, as against money-based lifestyles, and from this position of political and cultural

strength they have been able to encourage acceptance among non-chiefly Fijians of the political and economic accommodations they have reached with Indian interests.

While virtually all the other chapters are concerned with relatively organised, relatively stable and ongoing 'traditional' cultures and their relationships to the forces of development, Shane Jones' chapter on the New Zealand Maori describes a situation where both 'culture' and 'development' are in the process of active construction. The question here is whether the natural resources transferred to Maori by the state are better developed from the centre (by building large commercial enterprises with growing capital bases, maintaining technical advances with profits dedicated to further Maori education and training) or from the edge, by having the resources developed by tribal bodies, the inheritors of the rights and resources denied to their ancestors. The New Zealand situation, as Jones describes it, is obviously a limiting case for any discussion of the relationships between culture and development, with conceptual, political and moral implications going far beyond the scope of this brief introduction.

Cultural tourism

Richard Englehardt, Levani Tuinabua and Hana Ayala deal with cultural tourism. All stress the spectacular, worldwide growth of the industry and its potential contribution to the economic development of countries like those of the South Pacific.

Englehardt reviews the hard questions that are commonly asked about the industry. Who actually benefits from the money that tourism generates? What are the effects of industry on the environment and the local cultures? Are children and women exploited on the fringes of affluent resorts? He stresses that there are no general answers since the necessary studies have not been done. He focuses on the lessons provided by two case studies, from Vietnam and Laos, stressing the importance of planning and exhaustive consultation with all the 'stakeholders' involved in tourism and heritage developments. He also makes the valuable and timely recommendation that properly prepared cultural impact assessments 'should be required by law prior to the approval of every (tourism) development activity.'

Tuinabua adds the valuable observation that tourism should not be held wholly responsible for drugs, immodesty and the trivialisation of sacred traditions, drugs and immodesty, which may be also be the

result of other influences. He also draws attention to local cases in which tourism development has worked smoothly with traditional communities, to the obvious satisfaction of both sides.

Ayala writes from a planning, management perspective, but on a more ambitious and regional scale, stressing the possibilities open to Pacific countries through careful evaluation of their heritage resources, in particular for tourism, conservation and research. She points to the ways in which these activities might be mutually beneficial and the part that *Vaka Moana* might play in achieving their complementarity.

Together, these three papers all argue for a cautious approach to what is undoubtedly a contentious field of development. All are concerned that the process of development should not result in traditional cultures being destroyed. Their conception of culture is, however, less comprehensive than that embraced by any of the other conference chapters. What they stress is mainly the observable artefacts of culture, what Burton refers to as the 'feathers and paint', without exploring what is involved in translating these artefacts into commercial settings. This observation is not meant as a criticism. England, for example, has considerable industry in 'heritage tourism', but nobody would suggest that this does much to preserve the values, way of life and culture of Elizabethan times. Again, there are numerous Pacific examples of satisfactory accommodation between culture and commercialism of the kind referred to by Tuinabua.

'Further action'

Russell Marshall draws attention to the 'largely unrelated and *ad hoc* activities' of the *Vaka Moana* thus far, and expressed his hope that this project might lead to a more coherent strategy for UNESCO's cultural activities in the Pacific. His views on *ad hoc*-ery have been widely shared, not least by Mali Voi, who, as coordinator of *Vaka Moana* since 1992, has been caught between UNESCO's uncertainties about what culture is and what might be done about it, its bureaucratically-driven definitions and procedures, and the understandings of both political leaders and public servants in twelve very diverse small Pacific countries spread over a third of the earth. The management of *Vaka Moana* has been fraught with difficulties, and Voi's chapter is a detailed testimony as to how *ad hoc*ery has been the only coherent philosophical basis on which it has been possible to operate. The fact is that in spite of its broad ideological proclamations, preambles and volumes such as *Our Creative Diversity*, UNESCO's international

cultural program has in fact remained fairly firmly tied to specific activities such as museums, archives, folk art, crafts, festivals, traditional knowledge and so forth. These are all worthy and important, and within the funding limits, *Vaka Moana* has made notable contributions.

Proposals

The conference had no mandate to come up with resolutions for UNESCO as to what, if anything, might be done about the relationship between culture and development in the region. Freed from this requirement, the speakers and other participants were able to spend a couple of hours each day discussing exactly this point.

The discussions were lively and wide-ranging. From my own notes, there were three topics that provoked the most concern. First, how to bring about changes in the prevailing orthodoxies of development and so prevent, or at least mitigate, the kinds of injustice, victimisation and official indifference that were described in many of the chapters. Mention was made of the difficulties of persuading governments to articulate ‘national visions’, and all agreed that it was necessary to somehow gain access to those who actually make the decisions. Second, there was general agreement that the most industrial and influential nations of the world had no good grounds for urging smaller nations to follow the course that they had taken—given the evidence of crime, social injustice and general anomie in these countries. Third, corruption was the most delicate topic of all, and the one that perhaps provoked the most comments. The devolution of authority to small, localised social units was proposed as one remedy—and then dropped when it was pointed out that corruption was by no means confined to members of national power élites. There was also discussion of the difference between legal corruption, for which there was redress through the courts, and extra-legal or moral corruption, generally centred on money and its accumulation for individualistic ends, in contrast to the basic Pacific redistributive ethic.

The focus of these discussions was a series of ‘agreed-upon suggestions’. None were formally set down in writing and voted on at the time, but there was a general consensus. The first was for a ‘Bill of Cultural Rights’, similar to ‘Action 7’ of the International Program of the World Commission on Cultural Development: ‘Protecting Cultural Rights as Human Rights’ (UNESCO 1995:281–84). The proposed bill involved an independent standing committee, perhaps with an

ombudsperson empowered to set the parameters of cultural impact statements and hear complaints. The standing committee could assign particular projects to qualified people who would attempt to mediate cases of grievance.

The second proposal was for a '*Fono* of Wontok Peoples'. Like Action 9—'A People-Centred UN'—of the International Agenda (UNESCO 1995:285–87), this was based on the idea of gatherings, or a permanent forum, of elements of civil society, rather than government representatives. Such *fono* or assemblies would fit in with the well-established Pacific practice of touring parties from villages, islands or churches which raise funds for local projects and re-establish links with emigrants. An alternative scenario was to have the *fono* idea associated with the South Pacific Festival of Arts, providing a venue where traditional leaders rather than government representatives could meet.

The third proposal generally agreed was support for mandatory cultural impact assessments of development projects—which might be associated in some way with the standing committee envisaged by the first proposal. The idea had in fact already been put forward by Englehardt, though he carefully limited it to tourism projects. Burton's account also supports this idea in its discussion of the *realpolitik* of social impact studies of mining ventures in Papua New Guinea, and his statement that, in his experience, environmental impact assessments attracted approximately 100 times the financial support given to social impact assessments.

None of the participants would wish the agreed-upon suggestions to cut across any of the *Vaka Moana* projects already in train, or indeed any of those proposed by Voi. There was general agreement that these projects fit well with the way that culture has been institutionalised within UNESCO, and that they are of intrinsic value. The agreed-upon suggestions are based on a more holistic concept of culture, and more directly political in nature. The problem remains, however, as to how the three practical suggestions which arose might be translated into effective political action. One answer to this, I suggest, lies with the main regional development agencies. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have enormous influence in the region—not only in the aid-receiving countries, but also on the policies of the major bilateral donors. Both have attracted criticism for their economic mind sets, and over the past few years, perhaps in response to this,

they have begun to pay serious attention to social and cultural issues. The Asian Development Bank has published a commissioned volume on the topic (Schoeffel 1996) and the World Bank has published a series of 'Pacific Islands Discussion Chapters' devoted to the same issues (Hooper 1998; James 1998; Kabutaulaka 1998; Macdonald 1998; Sutherland 1998).

These initiatives might be usefully endorsed by UNESCO's Pacific agencies, with the aim of encouraging the banks to incorporate mandatory sociocultural impact reports into their own policy advice. In this manner, cultural issues could be brought to the attention of political leaders in Pacific countries, from where it is only a short step to bilateral donors and to the Pacific Forum, which might then be prepared to consider mandatory cultural impact studies for all development projects. Culture is not in any sense 'dying out' in the Pacific. It is adaptable, and is firmly entrenched in the structures of national life throughout the region. What is needed is a mechanism by which the principles on which it is based can be brought forward in the causes of equity and peace.

Notes

- 1 This scheme is based on a set of ideas which I first used in 1992 in a paper written for an audience of development economists (Hooper 1993) and later applied to an analysis of the course of development in Samoa (1998). Although conceived independently and for a different purpose, my notion of 'spheres' and 'domains' is strikingly similar to Ton Otto's use of the same terms to delineate the manner in which Balauans (and other Pacific islanders) make a division between separate 'ways' in their own societies (Otto 1992).
- 2 There are many records of Pacific peoples objecting to the ways in which they were represented by anthropologists. But this was not the universal reaction. The story goes that, in the early 1970s, when Albert Henry, as Premier of the Cook Islands, called a meeting of traditional authorities from all the separate islands of the country with the object of compiling a kind of 'national compendium' of tradition, the representatives of Pukapuka proudly laid a copy of Ernest Beaglehole's *Ethnology of Pukapuka* on the table, announcing that their record was already complete.
- 3 Turner employs the useful distinction between 'critical multiculturalism' and the intellectually weaker 'difference multiculturalism' which simply fetishises difference without reference to economic and political contexts. Dominguez (1993) also draws attention to the ways in which multiculturalism as a

political policy can be used to justify the social, economic and political disadvantage of ethnic groups, making it appear as all the fault of 'their culture'. This situation is not unknown in the Pacific, particularly in the metropolitan white settler states.

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