

technological innovation. Such a monopoly undermined the power of opponents to counter the increasing influence of the ethical dentists and closed off any other avenues of development for New Zealand dentistry. In spite of this, Brooking has produced an extremely worthwhile contribution to the country's social history, and one that will lead to further valuable research.

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Brown or White? a history of the Fiji Sugar Industry, 1873-1973. By Michael Moynagh. Pacific Research Monograph number 5. Australian National University, Canberra, 1981. xiii, 306pp., map. Aust. price: \$9.00 soft cover.

THE HISTORY of post-European contact Oceania is, first and foremost, an era of foreign domination. In the tiny states of the Pacific the essence of imperial rivalry, economic exploitation and colonial rule have been played out in all their complexity, manifestations and contradictions. Yet while the unfolding repercussions of colonialism can be seen with great clarity in the South Pacific, there is a paucity of detailed scholarly research on most island states on the relationship between their colonial past, current political-economy and how these have largely predetermined post-independence development strategies. To adequately investigate such issues for any one country is a substantial undertaking. Nonetheless, important insights can be achieved, perhaps more easily than anywhere else in the world, from studies of key actors or economic activities. Most Pacific islands are so small, their economic and political structures relatively uncomplicated and easily discernible, that the study of a strategic sector, or even of one company becomes, in effect, an examination of a country's productive and social foundations. And so it is with Michael Moynagh's *Brown or White?*

Since the end of the nineteenth century, sugar cultivation has indisputably been the most important economic activity in Fiji. It has also had the single most profound impact in shaping the post contact social and political organization of the country. The country's employment, trade, production, infrastructure and urban characteristics are largely legacies of the colonial sugar economy. Similarly the nation's ethnic composition, social tensions, electoral system and cultural mosaic are direct outcomes of the industry. It has been Moynagh's task to trace the evolution of Fiji's sugar industry from its beginnings in the 1870s. What is pivotal to this account is the fact that the industry was, for over ninety years, under the domination of one Australian company, the Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Ltd. That nearly eight chapters of *Brown or White?* are devoted to CSR's operations is an indication that CSR has been synonymous with Fiji sugar. CSR was the Fiji sugar industry. By implication, it was also the backbone of the Fiji economy and highly influential within the colony's political institutions.

Brown or White?, however, is far more than an empirical history, though it meets the requirements of excellence of such an endeavour. The book is exhaustive in its compilation of documentary and other data sources. In fact, Moynagh

provides the first real coverage of the Fiji sugar industry in part because he obtained access to CSR company records not previously available to researchers. With this wealth of revealing (though incomplete) evidence, Moynagh does a commendable job balancing facts and statistics alongside quotations from central personalities. This enables him to present both an informative and absorbing account. But the value of *Brown or White?* lies as much in its wider relevance to development studies. It has been said before that there are 'no logical or even methodological distinctions between the social sciences and history—appropriately conceived'.¹ Moynagh has made a major contribution towards understanding the political-economy of development in Fiji and the wider South Pacific. *Brown or White?* is a case study of Australian imperialism and of an early Pacific multi-national company. Although it is an historical study of Fiji's economic development, it is also illustrative of the processes that have shaped colonial economies throughout the Third World. At a deeper theoretical level, the book is another demonstration of the subordination of non-capitalist and simple commodity modes of production to industrial capitalism and, in this case, British political imperatives. The Third World is characterized, some would say defined, by this type of articulation which leads typically, in multifarious, unexpected and contradictory ways, to the creation of long-lasting structural inequalities and social volatility within underdeveloped countries. By covering such issues, Moynagh's book is one of the few works on the South Pacific which offers a genuinely historical analysis of the process of underdevelopment.

Unfortunately Moynagh is an historian by training and so is not particularly familiar with the literature on underdevelopment. One consequence of this is the author's over-reliance on the theoretical perspectives offered in Beckford's *Persistent Poverty* for a conceptual framework (which could also have been more vigorously applied). This weakens Moynagh's ability to generalize and theorize on the Fiji development experience. Beckford's work is clearly appropriate to the Fiji case, but it needs to be supplemented. Even with inadequate conceptual tools, Moynagh nevertheless offers a penetrating analysis of what is in effect the formation of Fiji's capitalist economy. Especially interesting are the insights into the inherently conflict-ridden and contradictory nature of colonial economies. Throughout the book evidence is presented of the simultaneously antagonistic yet collusive relations between and within CSR, the government, and factions of Fijian, Indian and European society. The history of the sugar industry is dominated by the classic colonial confrontation between capital, labour and a 'neutral' administration overlain by shifting alliances of mutual distrust and dependence between the numerous components of Fiji's economy and society.

This book is not without a few minor faults. Several statistics on Fiji's current economic performance could have been updated. There are some lapses in sentence structure and proof-reading. The discussion on occasions becomes empirically dense and would have benefitted from being more clearly related back to central issues. Perhaps more could have been said on the Fijian chiefs' perception of the sugar industry (in other than land tenure terms) and the European merchants' relationship with CSR (outside of conflicts over the supply and costs of imports). Finally, the analysis might have benefitted from a few comments on CSR's corporate diversification within Australasia in the last two decades and how this, if at all, influenced the company's commitment to Fiji. These points aside, however, this is an important publication. Similar investigations are long overdue on such South Pacific colonial commercial institutions as Burns Philp

(South Seas) Ltd, W.R. Carpenters Ltd, the Union Steamship Co. Ltd, Lever Bros Ltd or the nickel, phosphate and copra industries. Such studies would go a long way towards providing an understanding of the development experience of this part of the world. Michael Moynagh is to be congratulated on his contribution.

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1 A. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*. London, 1979, p.230.

The Collector: A Biography of Andreas Reischek. By Michael King. Hodder and Stoughton, Auckland, 1981. 196pp. N.Z. price: \$13.95.

THIS BOOK fills one more gap in the developing historiography of New Zealand science, itself, as King rightly points out, until recent years a much-neglected field. Reischek has long been ripe for balanced biographical study, not so much for his attractiveness as a person—he is here portrayed convincingly as charlatan, fraud, plunderer, looter and showman with ‘a strong streak of masochism’, ‘a self-proclaimed ethnographer . . . not a reliable witness of Maori customs, values and ritual’ (p.62)—but rather more to allow scholars a more adequate assessment of his important, if mostly secondary role, in the developing network of home-based museum and field science in post-settlement New Zealand. For as a field ornithologist—he published eighteen papers on natural history in the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* between 1881 and 1888—taxidermist—where he excelled—and minor explorer (there is a most useful summary of the expeditions at Appendix I) he accomplished a good deal. His main preoccupation, however, was to *collect*, and not primarily for the museums which employed him in Auckland, Canterbury and Wanganui, but for the institutions of his native Austria where, lacking the prerequisite academic or scholarly kudos and training so necessary in the German-speaking world, he never really rose beyond the status of competent but neglected ‘technician’ after his return, following twelve crowded years in New Zealand between 1877 and 1889.

He had, it is true, influential and sympathetic patrons and passports in Ferdinand von Hochstetter, long remembered affectionately by his erstwhile Maori hosts for his courtesy and discernment (but where is the mention of Charles Fleming’s excellent Hochstetter translation of 1959?) and Julius von Haast, who became his local adviser on matters scientific, domestic and matrimonial, and he was well promoted by other contemporary leaders in New Zealand science such as Buller, Hector, Cheeseman, Kirk and Thomas but, all that and his ornithological abilities notwithstanding, he has left no happy legacy of praise among conservation-minded New Zealand naturalists. He is recalled by many rather as the virtual exterminator in some localities of a number of rare New Zealand species, although conversely W.R.B. Oliver refers to him as ‘the best ornithologist New Zealand ever saw’. Among anthropologists and Kingite Maoris, as