

influence the conflict? At times, the explanation seems structural, where the conflict naturally remains non-religious: “a logic of identity construction and differentiation...drove [the Acehnese] to deemphasize Islam” (195). This structural argument seems apolitical, at odds with a book about elite constructions of nationalism, and also with Aspinall’s evidence that early GAM members were Darul Islam veterans and that some ground GAM forces saw the conflict as Islamic. At other points, the explanation seems instrumental, with GAM leaders steering the conflict away from Islam. But did they steer it this way because it would not work, or because it was against their interests? If it was against their interests, the same religion point becomes largely irrelevant. GAM leaders lack religious credentials and world views and worked hard to do what the MNLF could not do, that is to maintain control of a nationalist rebellion.

Finally, I feel the nationalism at the core of this book is centred on elites, providing the reader with little guidance on micro-level dynamics. Aspinall mentions that village chiefs “were particularly likely to defect” to the GAM (159), while most Ulama were co-opted by the state (205). He does not explain why these community leaders behaved differently; his claims are supported by scant evidence, and he also states that chiefs “served two masters” (159) and that many rural Ulama supported the rebels (98). Related to this is why people follow the nationalism constructed for them by leaders. Aspinall seems to downplay the importance of human rights abuses in providing a reason to follow. The author hopes to “move beyond” (51) human rights grievances; without the frames provided by leaders, Acehnese may have viewed “military high-handedness” as “unfair and irritating but also as banal and unavoidable” (82). But abuses echo throughout his interviews and, in concluding, Aspinall is more generous, calling human rights abuses “the most important” factor in sustaining the conflict (250).

Quibbles such as this cannot dampen my enthusiasm for this book. It should be read by anyone interested in Southeast Asian politics, Indonesia, nationalism, civil wars and Islamic politics. *Islam and Nation* will be the account of record for what was Acehnese separatism.

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MICHAEL ROCKEFELLER: New Guinea Photographs, 1961. By *Kevin Bubriski*; foreword by *Robert Gardner*; photographs by *Michael Rockefeller*. Cambridge (MA): Peabody Museum Press, Harvard University, 2006. vii, 87 pp. (B&W photos.) US\$29.95, paper. ISBN 978-0-873-65806-5.

Michael Rockefeller is perhaps best known for the wing of New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art that bears his name and the Asmat art inside that he collected on his ill-fated journey to that region of New Guinea in the

fall of 1961 (see Adrian A. Gerbrands, *The Asmat of New Guinea: The Journal of Michael Clark Rockefeller*, New York: Museum of Primitive Art, 1967). What he is perhaps less well known for is his tragically short-lived career as a photographer, something that this exhibition catalogue seeks to rectify.

The photographs in the catalogue, *Michael Rockefeller: New Guinea Photographs, 1961*, were taken in 1961 during the Harvard–Peabody New Guinea Expedition to the Dani region of the Baliem Valley and were featured in an exhibition that opened in 2006 at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Rockefeller joined the expedition during his senior year at Harvard and worked with the film crew as the sound recorder. With the recent advent of the 35-mm camera, all of the members of the expedition—Jan Broekhuijse, Eliot Elisofon, Robert Gardner, Karl Heider, Peter Matthiessen and Samuel Putnam—took photographs, and that included Michael Rockefeller, despite his inexperience and age. Many of those photographs were published in *Gardens of War: Life and Death in the New Guinea Stone Age*, by Robert Gardner and Karl Heider (New York: Random House, 1968). Other results of the expedition included Robert Gardner’s film, *Dead Birds*, and Peter Matthiessen’s book, *Under the Mountain Wall* (New York: Penguin, 1967).

The exhibition’s curator, documentary photographer Kevin Bubriski, began by sorting through Rockefeller’s contact sheets that are housed in the archives of the Peabody Museum. Of the 116 rolls of 35 mm black-and-white film and 83 rolls of 35 mm colour film Rockefeller had shot, Bubriski dealt only with the black-and-white photographs and selected those he felt, “appear as fresh today as they did when the moments they document unfolded” (4). Most of the photographs had never been processed or seen before; they were enlarged and developed using a duotone photographic process for the exhibition. The book’s foreword is written by Robert Gardner and the main essay by Bubriski is titled, “Curator’s Reflections.” The photographs reflect the lives of the Dani people, mostly men, many children and a few of the Dani women. Interspersed among the photographs are quotations by Robert Gardner taken from *Gardens of War* as well some taken from Michael Rockefeller’s sound log.

The exhibition catalogue demonstrates that Rockefeller was able, either through his naiveté or more likely, a natural aptitude for photography, to capture moments ranging from levity to mourning with equal gravity. Some of the lighter moments include images of Dani children playing games and sharing secrets or of Dani men playing with Rockefeller’s camera equipment—photographs that are indicative of Rockefeller’s rapport with his subjects. The Dani men are the focus of most of the photographs and many capture them during battle, images that Bubriski compares to photographs taken by documentary photographers during the Vietnam War. For example, the photograph titled “Wounded Warrior” captures men carrying on their shoulders a warrior wounded in battle or “Removing an embedded arrow”

depicts a Dani man delicately extricating an arrow from a Dani boy, whose head rests on another warrior. In his essay, Burbriski writes about the advantages of documenting a culture within the context of conflict, referring to what fellow documentary filmmaker Peter Getzels describes as the ideal conditions for “a culture to express itself unselfconsciously.”

Perhaps the most powerful images are those that Rockefeller took of the Dani in mourning, particularly those of the Dani women with their arms outstretched, presumably towards the recently departed. Then there is the photograph of two Dani girls, each with one of their arms bound in banana leaves and held in the air. After reading Gardner’s accompanying text you realize that the girls’ fingers had just been sacrificed as part of the mourning process and the seemingly innocuous image becomes much more startling.

It is clear from the foreword by Gardner and Burbriski’s essay, that both men had a strong affection for Rockefeller, recalling fondly his response to almost anything on the expedition as “It’s unbelievable!” While the catalogue reproduces what must have been an intimate and beautiful exhibition, it certainly does make one wonder what Rockefeller’s life might have been, had it not been cut short.

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THE MANAMBU LANGUAGE OF EAST SEPIK, PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

By Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald, with the assistance of Jacklyn Yuamali Ala and Pauline Agnes Yuaneng Luma Laki. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. xxv, 702 pp. (Tables, figures, maps, B&W photos.) US\$180.00, cloth. ISBN 978-0-19-953981-9.

Of the 800 or so Papuan languages in the world, most of them remain undocumented or inadequately documented and many are rapidly disappearing under the shadow of trade languages like Tok Pisin and Papuan Malay. Aikhenvald’s grammar of the Manambu language is a momentous (and timely) addition to Papuan linguistics; the grammar is crafted to the highest quality and the range of topics covered in the grammar is substantially wider than in most other grammars of Papuan languages.

Manambu is spoken along the Sepik River and belongs to the relatively well-known Ndu language family. Chapter 1 provides a linguistic summary of the language and discusses a wide array of fascinating ethnographic topics, such as the structure of houses and the ownership of names in Manambu society. Chapter 2 deals with phonology: there are 9 vowels, 21 consonants and stress is contrastive, for example, *ákas*, “habitual negation,” while *aká’s*, “catch!” (47). The section on intonation is lengthy for grammars of Papuan languages, but more could be said on the intonational patterns before the