

1990s used Liberation Day parades to decry US “colonial” policies, igniting objections along generational and political lines—the most public example of frictions *within* Guam’s Chamorro community that Camacho describes. When Japanese (and Okinawan and Korean) tourists and commemorative groups arrived in the northern islands in the 1970s, their hosts adjusted more easily to the return of their former colonial master than Guam had; their loyalty to Japan had never been fully repressed. Asian memorials proliferated on Saipan, far outnumbering those from the US. Yet the high emotion of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the 1944 invasion seems to have refashioned local memories to accept a version of the American triumph that lies very close to the dominant attitude on Guam. (It is relevant that the northern islands had by this time become a commonwealth of the US.)

Camacho’s discussion of painful memories that have remained suppressed is dramatic and revelatory. Guamanians still resent Japan for using them as slave labour and for multiple murders of innocents in 1944. The charge that the northerners who came as police or interpreters collaborated with the enemy still haunts islander relations. Most deeply buried are the memories of Chamorro women forced to become sex slaves of the Japanese military, atrocities so scarring that no woman or family has yet publicly demanded restitution.

This significant book is thoroughly researched, well organized and tightly argued. It treats extremely sensitive topics with fairness and understanding. Camacho holds two seldom-examined colonialisms up to the light, and demonstrates both the reach and the limits of their powers to shape the lives and memories of the people of the Marianas. With great powers afoot and afloat again in the Western Pacific, the Chamorros’ story looks set to add fresh chapters of negotiation, resistance and adaptation.

Independent scholar, Goleta, USA

STEPHEN C. MURRAY

INTIMATE STRANGERS: Friendship, Exchange and Pacific Encounters.
Critical Perspectives on Empire. By *Vanessa Smith*. Cambridge and New York:
Cambridge University Press, 2010. xii, 323 pp. (B&W photos.) US\$99.00, cloth.
ISBN 978-0-521-43751-6.

This is an interdisciplinary study of friendship as it was manifest in encounters between Pacific Islanders and Europeans. Written primarily within the discipline of literary studies, it scrutinizes eighteenth-century European texts and analyzes the ways that their authors represent friendship between people during the period of imperial expansion. It is exploratory, speculative and interpretive of the emotions and motivations of both parties in contacts characterized by cultural difference and, usually, good intentions.

The central problematic is supplied by the Tahitian concept of *taio*, a formal bond of friendship or alliance between two specific people that is

ceremonially enacted and entails reciprocal rights and obligations. The custom of establishing cross-cultural *taio* relationships was attested to by numerous Europeans during the period and has been examined by the anthropologists Douglas Oliver and Ben Finney as an extension of traditions that previously cemented alliances between people of unrelated groups. Although the term is now archaic, it appears to be very similar to customs of friendship pertaining in many cultures across the Pacific. People who were *taio* exchanged names, gained status from each other, gave gifts and treated each other with amity and generosity. It appears to have been an entirely masculine institution.

Smith explores the meanings and implications of such ritualized friendship, raising questions about the emotional content, moral assumptions and calculation of benefit that Europeans and Pacific Islanders invested in it. As she draws on the descriptions contained in the texts written by European maritime explorers, travelers and observers, these investigations concentrate much more on their experiences of friendship than on those of their Pacific friends. Her interrogation of the prevailing European understandings of friendship and its implications is both literary and philosophical, often leading her far away from the Pacific. The chapter that probes issues of authenticity of emotional expression and sincerity in the display of grief, for example, presents these with reference to prevailing theories of the universality of sentiment, empathy, emotive performance and the distinction between inherent or natural behaviour and social or cultural elaboration of emotional states. Here, as elsewhere, the question of commensurability and cross-cultural intelligibility is crucial.

Smith analyzes ambiguity of friendship within European social and cultural traditions from the Greek customs of *xenia*, friendship with strangers, to the forms of camaraderie associated with sailors, where issues of rank and hierarchy obtain. Given that *taio* entailed the offer/gift of the Tahitian partner's wife as a temporary sexual companion as well as the exchange of hospitality and items desired by one's friend, the various notions of indebtedness and obligation to receive required that both parties compromise in the interest of maintaining the relationship. The vexing question of mutual comprehension permeates the book. Both friends appear to be wary of ulterior motives, yet each is also capable of cynical instrumentalism. Clearly some of the doubts were communicable, as a European can discern his friend's discomfort when he refuses sex with the Tahitian's wife. Equally, islanders can opportunistically claim items in spite of their comprehension of European displeasure.

The book contributes to a now vast literature on the meaning of gifts in the formation and maintenance of social relations within societies and between people from disparate cultures. It raises questions about language and the communication of emotional states that have particular pertinence

in anthropological debates. But it is also a historical study of the range and variations in cross-cultural contacts that can be attributed to individual characters, dispositions and personalities. In her chapters on the ‘ruinous friendships’ that emerged in the Bounty mutiny and the friendly relationships that the sailor Robarts was able to establish with Marquesans, Smith makes a strong case for the role of individual personality in the development of mutuality and friendship.

Her own literary sensibility leads her into forms of textual scrutiny which at times seemed to me to be anachronistic and even fanciful, but are nonetheless interesting to reflect upon. Cynicism, fear, preconceptions about cultural difference and the desires for material gain were demonstrably present in some friendships, but often these can only be speculated upon. Smith’s attention to nuances in language and text, the mark of a literary scholar, sometimes seems contrived, as if striving to find calculation or misunderstanding. The spontaneity and curiosity that characterized many encounters is sometimes dissipated in elaborate attribution of motive and interpretation.

That said, the book is stimulating and readable. It engages with the existing ethnographic and historical arguments about colonial encounters in ways that are original and challenging. It offers new insights into the ways that friendships were both formed and shattered in cross-cultural contacts. The claims of friendship that appear so regularly in the writings of Europeans raise questions about the imperial political relationships that developed subsequently. Smith’s study is a significant contribution to postcolonial studies of the Pacific region and an invaluable reflection on the meanings of friendship.

The University of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia

MARTHA MACINTYRE

PACIFIC ISLAND ARTISTS: Navigating the Global Art World. *Edited by Karen Stevenson.* Oakland, CA: Masalai Press, 2011. x, 203 pp. (Colored illus.) US\$69.95, paper. ISBN 0-9714127-7-4.

In 2006, artist Jewel Castro and anthropologist Pamela Rosi curated an exhibition of contemporary Pacific art: *Turning Tides, Gender in Oceania*. In an effort to bring this exhibition to the Midwest, I emailed a colleague who was gallery director at an Indiana University campus. The response was to the effect that they didn’t want “that stuff you study, but something edgy.” This encounter exemplifies the difficulties surrounding Pacific artists trying to find their way in the post-modern art world. Questions of perceived identity, authenticity, meaning and politics in contemporary Oceanic art are thus at the heart of *Pacific Island Artists: Navigating the Global Art World*, edited by Karen Stevenson.