



- 89

REVIEWS

BECKET, Jan and Joseph Singer (eds): *Pana O'ahu: Sacred Stones, Sacred Land*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999. xxx + 186 pp. bib., glossary, ind., notes, photos, n.p. (cloth).

MICHAEL J. KOLB Northern Illinois University

At first glance, *Pana O'ahu: Sacred Stones, Sacred Land* might appear to be a showy catalogue of photos better suited for a coffee table than for academic study. But on closer examination the book holds some scholarly merit in regard to Polynesian sacred sites and religious architecture. As the cover jacket specifically notes, the purpose of this book is to document the remains of the ancient sacred sites of O'ahu for future generations. These sites, called *heiau*, were the scenes of religious and political ceremonies that served to integrate ancient Hawaiian life.

Monumental landscapes of Polynesia share a common ancestry, but the *heiau* of Hawai'i followed a unique trajectory of development. Hundreds of *heiau* existed on each island, ranging in size from single stone uprights and small stone altars, to moderately-sized enclosures, to large temple platforms. A myriad of functional types existed, including family ancestral shrines, temples for assuring the productivity of nature, and war temples reserved for exclusive use by the paramount chief.

Becket and Singer have compiled a portfolio of photographs for over 125 sacred sites (organised into six chapters). These photos are prefaced with an abridged compilation of the writings of Kēhaunana Cachola-Abad, J. Mikilani Ho, and Kāwika Makanani. Particular relevance is placed on the modern cultural and political value of the remaining *heiau*, and Polynesianists interested in the native Hawaiian view will find this introduction thought-provoking. Cachola-Abad discusses the high degree of variability in *heiau* form, and argues that such variability creates stereotypes of interpretation by archaeologists. Makanani relates to us how these *heiau* became abandoned and destroyed despite the fact that Hawaiian spirituality survives. Ho discusses current preservation issues, desecration, and how we might further halt the desecration and destruction of these sites.

The subsequent volume of photographs is grouped into chapters according to the six traditional political districts of the island. Each chapter is prefaced with a set of archival photos of the native Hawaiian informants who helped document the current list of sacred sites. Gilbert McAllister, one of the early Bishop Museum archaeologists who surveyed O'ahu between 1930 and 1933, took the photos. It is to these informants that much must be credited for what we know now. These photos are nicely framed, so as to not confuse them with the authors' portfolio. Each chapter also contains an introductory section on the ancient and modern political history of the district, as well as affiliated legends and folklore. This section makes mention

- 90

of geography and landscape, ancient chiefly rulers, noted events such as battles, points of interest, the history of names, and modern archaeological research.

The site photographs themselves are stunning full-page black-and-white prints. Each site is represented by a single photo and accompanying text, although some of the more visually impressive sites are depicted with two separate photos. The black-and-white format conveys the timelessness and antiquity of these stones extremely well, and creates continuity with the included archival photos. The black and white format also helps capture the contrasting

intensity of the volcanic basalts of Hawai'i, which can vary from light grey to jet black as they are exposed to the elements. Care is taken to include the surrounding environmental context of each site, such as nearby vegetation or topographic vantage. Although recent clearing of some of the sites (presumably for photography) seems to have resulted in an artificial contrasting of weathered and unweathered stones.

Each photograph also is accompanied by documentary information for the site. This includes the Hawaiian name of each sacred site and its English translation, the functional type, and archaeological site number as assigned by McAllister. There is also a brief paragraph discussing the history of each structure.

The scholarly quality of this book is adequate, although the more serious researcher may wish to consult the original historical documents to obtain more detailed information such as a site map. The text is well written and all site and introductory notes are adequately footnoted for those who are interested in going to the primary historical or archaeological sources. A nice full-page map is also included which reconstructs the major land divisions in ancient times, although the specific locations of each site are intentionally left out.

This book is both graceful and eloquent. The potency and beauty of stacked dry-laid rocks or outcrops are difficult to capture on film, yet the authors have done a marvellous job at visually conveying the power and impact of each of these *heiau* by embracing the entire landscape of earth and sky in their photos. And it is exactly these aspects of earth and sky that give these places their sacred quality. However, the reader should be aware that this book targets a more general audience interested in Hawaiiana, and not necessarily the serious scholar.

DALY, Martin: *Tonga*. World Bibliographical Series Volume 217. Oxford: Clio Press, 1999. xxxvi + 185 pp. bib. inds, map. n.p. (cloth).

ELIZABETH WOOD-ELLEM *University of Melbourne*

Since *Tonga*, by Martin Daly, is number 217 in a series, the style and layout were no doubt determined by earlier bibliographers or the publisher, and I have no quarrel with either. The book is so arranged that it is easy to locate any of the items listed.

There are several things that immediately struck me about this annotated bibliography. First is the excellent introduction by Daly, who has long had

- 91 

connections by marriage with Tonga, who owns an extensive private library of books about Tonga, and who was until recently the Research and Publications Manager at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Although I believe that the radio station and the *Chronicle* were founded in 1961 and 1964 respectively, not (p.xviii) during the reign of the present King (who was Premier in those two years), Daly's introduction not only gives us a brief history but informs us about contemporary Tonga. The second useful feature is the three indexes: (1) Authors, (2) Titles, and (3) Subjects. Ph.D. theses (M.A. theses are not listed) precede the main part of the bibliography: i.e., are not numbered or annotated. Third, the 452 items that follow the theses are divided into 29 categories, and within the categories the items are listed alphabetically by title. These features make it easy to locate the books/articles/journals/reports the reader seeks on any subject, while assessing the length of the article/book/report/journal. Fourth, there are many cross-references within the annotations to similar publications listed in the book.

The annotations are a summary of the contents of each item, with a very gentle assessment of each. I found myself spending pleasant hours perusing Daly's comments on the different publications, some already known to me, and some by researchers of whom I have never heard but hope to meet some time.

I also noted, as Daly does in his introduction (p.xxvii), "the sad fact that, that so little about Tonga is written by Tongans themselves". For example, of the 54 Ph.D. theses listed, only eight are by Tongans. I also did a count of the 452 items, and found that only 52 are written by Tongans (some of whom no longer live in Tonga), 15 are Government publications, 10 are collaborations between Tongans and non-Tongans, and 375 by people who are not Tongans, including not only people of English-speaking background, but more than a few contributions from Europeans and Asians. (My calculations do not agree with those in the Author Index, in which, for example, the three editors of *Tongan Culture and History* are listed every time an article published in that book is cited.) Among the Tongans, the late Rev. Sione Latukefu has eight publications in the Author Index, Epeli Hau'ofa has seven listings, and Futa Helu has six entries, although 35 of Helu's papers have been collected—many read at conferences but previously unpublished—in his recent book *Critical Essays* (1999).

Since it is common knowledge that Tongans have written theses and published books and articles, one must assume