slit drum rests and an assemblage of 16 highly decorated flute stoppers from the Sepik region. A final index, listing the collections by category and catalogue number, complements the presentation. The overall appearance is clear and space-efficient. The liberal inclusion of photographs, many in colour, of individual instruments is admirable, adding to the clarity and value of the book.

By contrast, the purpose of including three pages of vernacular terms (pp. 37-39) is unclear. Not only is the list incomplete (three instrument types listed carry no indigenous names), but diacritics are also applied inconsistently (and often inaccurately), and some terms are simply wrong (e.g., the Samoan fala rolled mat is listed as “stamped tubes”, the New Zealand Māori pūtorino bugle flute is listed as a conch trumpet). Mervyn McLean’s recent publication on Oceanic instruments (2010 in *Occasional Papers in Pacific Ethnomusicology*) provides a very comprehensive list of indigenous names for musical instruments; unfortunately, it appears that his publication may not have been available to Atherton in time for consultation.

The Māori kōauau illustrated on p. 141 as m1190 is almost certainly not the described instrument having that number (a bamboo instrument 288mm long accessioned in 1895), but may perhaps be m1192. And the eight-holed 750mm long Niuean noseflute, m1172, is an instrument of extraordinary size and construction, quite unlike those in other museums from that location (Moyle 1990 in *The World of Music*, p. 32) and deserving of an illustration. The Cook Islands ka‘ara slit drum is an example of an obsolete instrument revived some 40 years ago as part of a drive to relocate artefacts of distinctive national ethnicity. The Australian Museum’s ka‘ara (m1177) exemplifies the additionally symbolic value of such an instrument: it is a 1990 presentation from the Cook Islands Government.

The critical comments in this review should be taken as cautionary rather than reproving. I am well aware of the unseen effort required to produce each individual catalogue entry, and Michael Atherton deserves congratulation for his labours over several years. His book is a welcome addition to the small number of museum catalogues of Pacific instruments, and will be a useful reference tool for organologists and ethnomusicologists.

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Anthropologists have brought their particular insights to social theories of modernity, challenging assumptions about its unidirectional flow and homogenous influence by acknowledging multiple and local forms of modernity. In his book on the Pacific nation of Tonga, Niko Besnier takes this critique further, showing not only how modernity is locally configured and how Tongans engage with it in diverse ways, but also “how different modernities operate and articulate with one another” (p. 231). Beginning and
ending the book with discussion of the unprecedented riots that occurred in Tonga on 16 November 2006, Besnier captures the complex production of both tradition and modernity occurring even in contexts he describes as banal and mundane and he skilfully leads the reader to an understanding of those riots that is far more nuanced and complicated than simply a clash between the old and the new or a populist demand for democratic reform.

The book is a convincing demonstration of the ongoing value of ethnographic research and long-term engagement with societies that enables anthropologists like Besnier to bring a depth of knowledge and insight to their analysis. Although he eschews the typical ethnographic format of peppering the text with quotes from research participants, each of the ethnographic chapters provides an impressive wealth of detailed information about the minutia of contemporary daily life in Tonga, in contexts as diverse as pawn shops, flea markets, beauty salons and beauty pageants, gyms and non-mainstream churches. These are not the typical contexts of village life in Tonga but they are all places in which even ordinary villagers are increasingly engaging with modernity and in the process reconfiguring tradition. Importantly, Besnier consistently links the Tongan diaspora into his analysis, acknowledging that “Tonga” now spreads far beyond the borders of this tiny nation and that what he calls the multi-directional entanglements of tradition and modernity (p. 232) include ongoing relationships between Tongans in the islands and overseas.

Within the local contexts he describes Besnier has chosen to focus on objects—such as textile wealth and symbols of modernity such as four-wheel drive cars—and on bodies—their size and shape, the clothes and hairstyles that mark them in many ways, particularly as gendered bodies. He also applies his linguistic skills and methods to the analysis, showing the ongoing negotiations taking place in relation to central Tongan values and emotions.

Following a long-established pattern in Pacific Studies of combining history and anthropology, Besnier is careful to bring historical depth to his account. In Chapter 2 he provides an overview of Tonga’s history including the waves of migration and the long history of relationships with foreigners both within Tonga and overseas. Here, he captures the contemptuous view of pālangi (Westerners) held by many Tongans, although the high rate of intermarriage with Westerners among diasporic Tongans suggests they are not as “irrelevant” as he suggests (p. 50). The ethnographic chapters also establish the particular historical backdrop of each case, sometimes including fascinating digressions such as the history of hair in Tonga (Chapter 6).

Marginality is a theme threaded throughout the book, from Tonga’s position on the margins of globalisation to the marginal Tongans who inhabit the spaces in which the most intense negotiations between forms of modernity and tradition are taking place. These include the traders at the fea ‘second-hand markets’ featured in Chapter 3, the leiti ‘transgendered men’ who parade in the annual Miss Galaxy beauty pageant (Chapter 5) and run the beauty salons (Chapter 6), and the Mormons (Chapter 8) who despite their marginality have the relative economic advantage that enables them to negotiate a place within the mainstream and even to actively marginalise others, such as the leiti. Given that all of these groups are marginalised, as are others Besnier discusses such as deportees and Chinese immigrants, this highlights the tendency of
Tongans to be exclusive rather than inclusive, as I have shown in my own work on overseas-born youth. This seems such a counter-intuitive attitude for such a small population and shows, as Besnier does so well, that generalising about Tongans is increasingly problematic.

This is the first detailed discussion of contemporary Tonga to focus so explicitly on the concept of modernity, and reading the book one wonders why it has taken so long. As Besnier points out, in Tongan social life “tradition and modernity do not simply coexist, and one is certainly not being obliterated by the other, but they are deeply entangled with one another” (p. 177). This is a masterful exposition of those entanglements, and will by no means appeal only to scholars of Tonga as it has much to say that will be of interest to all academics interested in modernity, especially as it shapes and is shaped by other societies “on the edge of the global”.


PHILLIPA PEHI
*Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiārangi*

Upon reflection, I think I have been captured by the “essence” of this book as much as the content. The idea for this book was developed from two international colloquia aimed at investigating what the still evolving discipline of Transcultural Indigenous Studies is currently, and perhaps what it might still aspire to become. The editors have done a very good job in drawing together such diverse topics and academic areas to identify two coherent themes of identity and resistance that weave these chapters together. Many of the authors, although not all, agreeing in principle with these joining threads manage to incorporate the themes in their chapters and write in ways that are strikingly academic, but are also sometimes poignantly personal (for example, Alice Te Punga Somerville’s comments on “identification” versus “identity” [pp. 40-41]).

Every chapter within these covers is a mine of information, thought-provoking and thoughtful, and in some cases just simply brilliant. Most of the authors locate themselves somewhere within the context of their topic and this ability therefore lends an authenticity and gives a special truthfulness to what is being said. In covering a number of indigenous peoples, this book is a useful reference text for any scholar interested in the indigenous “reality” as it is situated locally, but also as a global phenomenon. These chapters tell stories that are unique to certain cultures (for example, the Native American Cree or Arapaha in Chapter 4 on understanding the Cree language), and therefore relate specifics that are unique to these people. Some direct comparisons are made between cultures (e.g., Janine Hayward compares the different political representations for Māori and Canadian First Nations in their respective countries). When read together, these chapters *together* tell a universal indigenous story, highlighting many of the struggles, triumphs and commonalities that all indigenous peoples share.