In addition, the activities of the British East India Company, the Dutch Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie and other similar organisations are summarised attesting to the wider European interests in the region and how they influenced activities throughout the southern Pacific. Each entry is concise and reasonably well informed with many including bibliographic information for further reading. The presentation is somewhat quirky, in an academic sense, but the wealth of factual detail as well as the presentation in bold of key names, places, and terms makes it a quick and handy reference for voyages to the region.

Bennett returns to the theme of the possibility of other visitors to New Zealand before Tasman in a series of appendices which consider the likelihood of Arab and Chinese explorations in the region by cataloguing the surviving wisps of Portuguese and French cartographic and documentary evidence for the improbable discoveries. It is somewhat surprising that this material is presented separately from the essay in the introductory section as both cover similar themes. All this material would be better placed in an appendix. A brief, but useful index completes the volume.

*Treaty to Treaty, Volume 2* is not your usual academic history book. At times the material presented suffers from the apparent passions of the author. A more careful and considered analysis of the voyages and events presented would have enhanced the volume, as would a more judicious organisation of much of the data. However, the book does inform the reader about which Europeans were in the region, where they went, and when. It also includes some discussion of the contextual issues in Europe, which influenced how the Pacific was perceived, and its exploration deemed desirable. Overall, *Treaty to Treaty, Volume 2* is a credible calendar of voyages and events which influenced the European exploration of New Zealand and the wider southern Pacific region.


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Ilana Gershon’s ethnographic exploration of Samoan migrant experiences contrasts their situation in two countries, New Zealand and the United States, and in two contexts, in their churches and ceremonial exchanges (*faʻalavelave*), and in their interactions with the state. Her analysis of how Samoans represent themselves to the state in the US and New Zealand—and the complexities of that interface—involves the concept of “reflexivity” to pin down analytically different constructions of “culture” by government officials and community workers, and Samoan migrants themselves. In my opinion, the concept does not add much to an otherwise richly and insightfully considered ethnography.

The book is in two parts roughly corresponding to these contexts. In the migrant imagination “Samoa emerges as a nostalgic utopic space… the site of authentic
and properly enacted cultural knowledge”. From this perceived reality, Samoan migrants select, classify and construct the “cultural”, the sentiments, obligations and performances they perceive as integral to their identity as Samoans, and define what Gershon terms “the a-cultural” in their encounters with state welfare offices and community organisations.

Part One examines the most salient markers of Samoan identity, kinship and church membership, and the performance and affirmation of that identity through contributions of money for family *faʻalavelave* and church donations.

In my experience, first generation migrants are expected to send money to close kin in Samoa for practical needs, such as house building, small businesses and school fees, as well as medical and financial emergencies. Those adults who wish to affirm kinship ties to Samoa, whether migrants or the children and grandchildren of migrants, are expected to contribute, both in their new homeland and in Samoa, to expensive *faʻalavelave*—funerals, weddings and chiefly installations—and to help fund the big 1st, 21st and 50th birthday parties that have become commonplace among Samoan migrants.

Further, monetary solicitations are made of migrant communities by visiting parties from Samoa raising money for building churches and other village development projects. On top of all these are further financial obligations to churches. Members of the majority and definitively Samoan Congregational Church are obliged to provide weekly financial contributions. These are publicly announced, encouraging families to demonstrate their pride and win prestige by exceeding one other in their giving. The Congregational Church also obliges church members to collectively pay their pastors’ salary or stipend, house payments, and other sundries, such as electricity bills, car payments and personal holidays.

Gershon discusses how those requesting funds do not appear to base the size of the expected gifts upon the actual financial resources of the giver because people usually do not disclose their incomes in efforts to retain some control of them. In the context of these heavy and ambivalently borne financial burdens, she explores the spoken and unspoken motives underlying conversion from Samoan mainstream churches (Congregational, Methodist and Catholic) to newer churches (such as the Assemblies of God, Latter Day Saints, Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah’s Witnesses). These non-mainstream churches not only provide more individual and often more expressive religious experiences, but apparently are also less financially demanding. Some of these churches even frown on and discourage *faʻalavelave* and most prescribe tithes, or treat donations as matters of private conscience, thus removing them from the arena of interfamily competition.

In Part Two Gershon explores the different approaches towards the funding of minority needs and recognition of “culture” by social services bureaucracies, in New Zealand and the United States, and Samoan migrant responses in representing their culture and communities. In both countries neo-liberal agendas have recognised that there are potential efficiencies to be gained by shifting responsibility for dealing with social problems from state agencies to civil society. The New Zealand approach has been shaped by the formal, and in some instances legal, recognition of the right to cultural difference and cultural rights among indigenous Maori, which has influenced
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state approaches to the needs of Samoans and other Polynesian migrant minorities. Migrant groups soon recognised the opportunities provided by such policies for funding projects and getting jobs. However, there have been many problems of “cultural fit”, for example, the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act of 1989 that enshrines policy-makers’ assumptions about “cultural” solutions to social problems. Their expectation that Samoan and other Pacific Islander migrant families would be comfortable with frank, open discussions of family problems proved to be fraught with misunderstandings of how culturally conditioned modes of communication actually operate.

Samoan migrants in the US are a relatively insignificant minority, in contrast to their status in New Zealand. Social service provisions in California acknowledge the possibility of *ethnic* minority disadvantage, but not of *cultural* disadvantage. In New Zealand ten years ago (the time of which Gershon writes), the state accepted an obligation to help Samoans preserve their culture, an obligation that was not recognised in the more assimilationist US. There, modest funding for social services is available for secular community organisations that represent ethnic communities, but this system does not work well for Samoan communities, which are largely church-based. Gershon describes the hopes cherished by Samoan migrants in both lands that there would be specifically Samoan solutions to intergenerational social problems, if only the younger generation would properly “learn their culture”. Unlike New Zealand’s welfare bureaucracy, which is more open to such notions, US social workers promote doctrines of assimilation that specifically encourage families to become “American”. In the US system “learning to be American” is a fundable objective, although it is unlikely that American Samoans (who have lived under an American administration for the past century) need to learn this. In the American context Gershon found that is was difficult for Samoans to be accepted by their own communities as “translators” mediating between two kinds of worldview. The problem is that social service providers assume that modern psychological approaches to family welfare and associated modes of communication have cross-cultural relevance and applicability, and in one of Gershon’s many revealing examples, a government social worker attempts to explain to an uncomprehending Samoan family how children should be encouraged to “express their emotional needs”.

The book provides substantial anthropological insights for migrant studies, and would be a useful text for American and New Zealand social workers, even if the academic mode of expression may affect readability for this important audience.