

Michael Haas, *The Pacific Way: Regional Cooperation in the South Pacific*. New York: Praeger, 1989. Pp. 183, maps, tables, bibliography, index. US\$42.95.

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Several decades have lapsed since Fiji's Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara first popularized the term "the Pacific Way." The need for the small and isolated island states of the South Pacific to speak with one voice on matters of regional concern and the fact that the nations of the region share many common characteristics have both necessitated and enabled the development of several forms of regional cooperation. It is the various institutional forms that this cooperation has taken since World War II that interest Michael Haas in his latest book. The author has four main aims (p. xxii): to define the Pacific Way, to sketch some important details of regional cooperation, to discuss the future potential for the development of a single coherent regional structure, and to demonstrate that the Pacific Way represents a new form of international interaction that can contribute to broader theories of regional integration. These are important themes that have received relatively limited attention in the South Pacific context. The author's previous work has dealt with the development of intergovernmental links in the Asian region and this background provides him with considerable knowledge of the problems and prospects of regional cooperation (Haas 1989).

The book is simple in its structure. A brief overview of Pacific history provides the foundation for a discussion of the concept of the Pacific Way and how it has developed over time (chap. 1). The text then con-

centrates on a blow-by-blow description of the growth, and in some cases demise, of a variety of intergovernmental organizations. The South Pacific Commission, ANZUS, the South Pacific Forum, and a range of judicial, educational, tourism, and trade organizations are all covered in varying detail. The book then concludes with a rather cursory overview of the future of South Pacific regional cooperation in which the author attempts to introduce some broader theoretical issues.

The book will serve two major groups of readers. First are those who know little about regional cooperation in the South Pacific and require basic reference-type information on the budgets and membership of local intergovernmental organizations. Second are those with a deeper interest in the issues embodied in the Pacific Way--readers focusing on the Pacific (from a variety of disciplines) and researchers interested in other areas of the world who wish to learn from the lessons provided by the Pacific. It is fair to say that the book caters rather better to the needs of the former grouping than to those of the latter. As a reference book it performs its task relatively well. The coverage of organizations is exhaustive and clearly presented and, aside from the occasional typographical error, the text is accurate and concise. However, if the reader is looking for a more searching analysis of the Pacific Way or the influence it can have on the generation of theories of intergovernmental cooperation, he or she is likely to be disappointed.

The central problem of the book is that it strings together a series of detailed outlines of regional organizations without providing a satisfying contextual background. The initial history of the Pacific region is painted in brush strokes so broad it serves little real purpose. The main weakness here is that the reader is not given any real feel for the diversity of the region. The reader is then presented with a cursory four-page explanation of the inception, development, and growth of the Pacific Way. Unfortunately, the author's statement in the concluding paragraph of the first chapter that the "theory of the Pacific Way has been presented" is simply not accurate.

The text also has its problems. While undoubtedly factual and comprehensive it is also rather repetitive. For example, between pages 8 and 20 we learn four times that the South Pacific Health Service was established in 1946. Tighter editing could have removed much of the duplication. Similarly the structure used to describe each regional organization is basically identical. Each is described in terms of its historical growth, organizational structure (flow charts are used), membership, and budgetary characteristics. Such an approach detracts from the

readability of the book. The text also suffers from occasional typographical errors; for example, on pages 6 and 104 missing words or letters make two sentences particularly difficult to comprehend.

But perhaps the most disappointing section of the book is the concluding chapter on the future of South Pacific regional cooperation. Earlier in the text the reader is told, "The Pacific Way will remain as a *modus operandi* no matter what happens in the coming years because the region has learned throughout the years how to avoid being divided and conquered by outside powers" (p. 127). While this may be true little attention is paid to the various conflicts that have caused the Pacific Way to splinter at various times during the past decade. In particular the 1987 Fiji coup is not really mentioned until page 167 and then only within the context of its impact on the funding and staffing of regional organizations. What of the fact that Australian warships loomed off the Fijian shore during the crisis? What are the factors that have led Australia to resume economic aid to the nation? While the spirit of the Pacific Way undoubtedly helped some form of reconciliation to be reached, one might also argue that the major factor influencing these changes was the fear that Fiji would turn to France as a source of economic aid. There is a lack of detailed analysis of these types of problems and as a result the reader again feels that she or he is reading a reference book written in a contextual vacuum.

In the foreword we are told that "the book demonstrates that the Pacific Way is a new form of international interaction--a refreshing contribution to theories of regional integration" (p. xxii). Unfortunately we are not introduced to these theories until the final three pages. Thus only an extremely brief outline of the way that the Pacific Way may influence broader theoretical constructs is provided--an overview too sketchy to be of any real use to the informed reader.

In summary, then, this book provides detailed coverage of the structure and history of a series of South Pacific regional organizations but does not succeed in grounding the discussion in a broader contextual and theoretical framework. Therefore, while I can certainly recommend the book as a useful addition to the reference section of any university library, it does not represent a major contribution to our understanding of the Pacific Way.

REFERENCE

Haas, M.

1989 *The Asian Way to Peace: A Story of Regional Cooperation*. New York: Praeger.