

in that the cultural practices labeled polyrhetoric work to interrogate monorhetorical (mis)understandings. In the final chapter, Wood documents many forms of Hawaiian nationalist sovereignty assertions proliferating through the world of cyberspace to indicate the possibilities that may be created through new forms of technology and media.

One troubling aspect of the book is that “Hawaiian voices” are too often reduced to merely “alternative rhetoric” rather than recognized for what they may promise in the way of epistemological resources and their corresponding implications. Looking to the fundamental Hawaiian cultural principle found in the saying, *‘ōlelo i ke ola, ‘ōlelo i ka make* (in the word, life, in the word, death) enunciations themselves are alive and capable of producing multiple effects, including creating reality.

I came to this text from a broad interdisciplinary perspective and found that overall, Wood’s book offers very strong critical analyses of dominant cultural productions and discursive struggles, with a central focus on the contested terrain of representation. *Displacing Natives* is an excellent choice for courses that focus on US colonialism, Hawaiian Studies, literary and visual representations of indigenous peoples, and ethnic studies. In this time of *‘ena makani* (stormy winds) it is important to see a scholarly work that explains the enduring process by which Hawaiian indigeneity is continuously effaced in and through the dominant popular culture.

J KĒHAULANI KAUANUI
Wesleyan University

* * *

Ethnologie et Architecture: Le Centre Culturel Tjibaou, une réalisation de Renzo Piano, by Alban Bensa.

Paris: Adam Biro, 2000. ISBN 2-87660-240-7; 202 pages, photos, sketches, notes, bibliography, index. 290 French francs; us\$40.

This is a very fine work by Alban Bensa, an anthropologist at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, who has specialized in New Caledonia over the past thirty years. While the book might easily adorn a coffee table, being full of glossy photographs (150 in 200 pages) on high-quality paper, its contents reveal that it is also worthy of a rather different destination.

In 1990, Bensa’s book *La Nouvelle-Calédonie: Un paradis dans la tourmente* appeared in a popular series by the French publisher Gallimard. The work came to the attention of the Italian architect Renzo Piano just as he was about to tender for the construction of a cultural center in Noumea. This project had first been evoked in the Matignon Accords in 1988 and given further impetus following the assassination, a year later, of one of the signatories of those accords, the independence leader, Jean-Marie Tjibaou. Unfamiliar with the Pacific, Piano invited Bensa to be part of his team, which successfully bid for the project, and for the next seven years the author played a leading role as consultant.

This association with Piano represented for Alban Bensa “a new opportunity to carry forward the political struggle on the cultural and symbolical front where Jean-Marie Tjibaou had so wished it could also develop” (175). The author here situates himself

firmly in the tradition of Tjibaou's Union Calédonienne, promoting the primacy of cultural over political "action" (against, for instance, the more politically radical line of PALIKA, another of the groups making up the FLNKS), that is, that culture is the art of politics by another name. Indeed, one of the features of *Ethnologie et Architecture* is the constant cross-referencing of the traditional-modern dichotomy with political considerations, which is also a way of deconstructing such a dichotomy.

Architecture here requires anthropology to confront history. Bensa mistrusts the past as such, as being a place to which "prehistoric" Kanaks are relegated in the long tradition of banishing them from the present. The project had to avoid the twin traps of reconstituting a traditional Kanak village, which would have been necessarily picturesque and kitsch—the "regionalist replica"—and the construction of a purely European building—the "functionalist credo" (162).

This "Promethean challenge" in Piano's words (200), is solidly and largely successfully taken on by Bensa in this book. For him, anthropology is engaged dynamically, with no essentialist view of culture. The ethnographer and the architect are in his eyes both translators, with all translation involving interpretation, that is "symbolisation" (181) and reformulation. In this perspective, social formations project into the future, meaning that their relation to time, that is, history, is constitutive of their identity—or as Jean-Marie Tjibaou put it, "our identity lies ahead of us."

The book is divided into ten chapters beginning with a potted historical and ethnographical description of New

Caledonia's Melanesians, from their migration from southeast Asia some three thousand years ago through to the 1990s via the devastating effects of European colonization. There are also an introduction and a conclusion followed by a transcribed French radio interview with Bensa and Piano.

The backbone of the work, however, is a presentation of and reflection on the buildings, the site, and the garden of the Tjibaou Cultural Centre and their place in the Kanak world, as well as in New Caledonian society generally. This produces some very sensitive and detailed analyses and much inspired and beautiful writing, in a "manifest desire to exalt the Kanak universe" (156), reminiscent (despite Bensa himself, no doubt) of pages from Claude Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques*. Some of the enlightening comments on the *case* (traditional hut) showing its place in Kanak topography and social organization; the garden's relation to nature and cosmogony; the center's vocation to "represent the whole of the Kanak world" (117), to the point that, were Kanak culture other than purely oral in tradition, the Tjibaou Cultural Centre would be its "hieroglyph" (123).

However, Bensa also shows how, restructured by Piano, the *case*, "the most difficult part of the work" (68), given the fact that it is not only the centerpiece of traditional Kanak social life, but also a kind of symbol of the reconquest by today's Kanaks of their cultural identity, is reflected and deflected in the architect's project.

Renzo Piano has never been hidebound by tradition, having shocked many a Parisian as far back as the mid-seventies with his construction of the Pompidou Centre. In Noumea,

as elsewhere, he wanted to leave his imprint of modernity, and not just for aesthetic reasons. His work is also a political gesture. Traditionally, Kanak space is organized hierarchically around the *grande case* of the chief, with taboos lining the central pathway leading to it. This hut itself, “a private residence” (77), is a very closed space, excluding women and those deemed to be of inferior status. Into this closure, Piano introduces a nondiscriminatory and “democratic” openness (79), in this building commissioned and underwritten by a modern western European state.

As Bensa takes us around the external garden path of the Tjibaou Cultural Centre, he interweaves anthropological information about Kanak kinship relations, sexual symbolism, the position of the chief, and the role of the ancestors in Kanak spirituality, in a narrative of Kanak history. But the path also has a twin political function: a metaphor of Kanak rootedness (enracinement) and ancientness, from mythical origins to renaissance via death, and being at one with the cultural politics of the Noumea Accord. In a kind of vegetal teleology (native-exotic species), there is a harmony, indeed homology, posited between Kanak identity projected into the future as part of a multicultural society, and the (re)naissance of the territory in a “common destiny,” as the Noumea Accord would have it: “the whole effect was to give a positive image to the contemporary Kanak presence, that is integrated into the whole of the Caledonian territory” (118).

The layout and typography of the book are near faultless. Curiously, however, Bensa several times (15, 121,

191, but not 195) mistakes the center’s inauguration date of 4 May 1998 with that of the signing of the Noumea Accord the following day, despite the coherence of the real timetable with his (and Tjibaou’s) cultural politics, whereby politics is seen to *follow* culture.

Given the richness of the discussion of a postmodern European encounter with a Pacific Island culture, one where Piano has brought out “the specific in its profound universality” (155), one would have welcomed some consideration of the significance of the achievement relative to others in the region (eg, Wellington’s Te Papa or the cultural center in neighboring Vila, with its very different sociological emphasis). Instead, Bensa seems content to maintain a largely French perspective, the Tjibaou Cultural Centre having “no equivalent either in metropolitan France or in the French Overseas Territories” (15). References to only three nonfrancophone writers on the Pacific, James Clifford (in French translation), R A Rappaport, and Nicholas Thomas, may in part account for such absence of regional comparative perspective, which also limits the analysis of the impact of the Tjibaou Cultural Centre–Noumea Accord for French presence or reception thereof in the Pacific. The author would no doubt be able to extend this focus if there were an English-language edition.

Similarly, some assessment of the actual functioning of the center in the years since its opening would have been worthwhile, particularly to test Alban Bensa’s own assertion that the space is “experienced by the initiated as the living spectacle of their culture. Kanaks have very easily appropriated this space in which they see each

other, show themselves, and find their place" (103). One may wonder about this, in the light, for example, of the local elections that took place in New Caledonia in March 2001, which saw a further decline in support for the Union Calédonienne.

Such reservations notwithstanding, this is a beautiful book whose finesse in detail and richness of speculation, bringing anthropology and architecture to an encounter with philosophy, regarding what Bensa rightly calls "one of the most astonishing buildings of the late twentieth century" (10) bears witness to both his and Renzo Piano's great essay in European humanism. In this context, one feels inclined to echo the words of Marie-Claude Tjibaou in her speech at the inauguration of the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in 1998, when she said simply and elegantly, "Merci, Alban."

All English translations are my own.

PETER BROWN
Australian National University

* * *

Papers from Ivilikou: Papua New Guinea Music Conference and Festival (1997), edited by Don Niles and Denis Crowdy. Port Moresby: Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies and University of Papua New Guinea, 2000. ISBN 9980-68-041-5, 182 pages plus accompanying audiotape (UPNGS 014), figures, maps, photographs. K30 plus postage.

Like the many diverse cultures that Papua New Guinea comprises, this book documents the diverse musical genres, practices, and expressions found there. The book brings together

papers from the music conference held in Port Moresby in 1997. These papers are written not only by ethnomusicologists but also by musicians, linguists, anthropologists, lawyers, and music journalists, among others. The papers focus on different musical genres, different aspects of music, and copyright laws, and circumscribe a cornucopia of topics, ranging from traditional to popular and church music to issues of ownership and copyright laws. At the same time these papers focus on music from a variety of perspectives.

In the section on "Traditional Music and Changing Contexts," Julie Toliman-Turalir's first article examines the different traditional classification of Tolai music and dance such as high status dances, middle status dances, and general music and dance. She argues that in Tolai society, "music and dance are classified in order of a man's status, which is determined by spiritual power, sacredness and wealth" (50). She explains that in Tolai society the definition of music is expanded to include sound, dance, song, story, musical instruments, costume, design, and language. Indeed, this stretches the western definition of music.

An interesting paper is one by Otto Nekitel. Although his paper is not strictly on music but on whistled speech, the fact of the matter is that in many indigenous societies language lies within the parameters of the definition of music. Nekitel's paper therefore cuts across linguistic and musical boundaries. Whistled speech was developed among the Abu?-Wam speech community of Papua New Guinea. This form of communication, developed essentially to "meet natural socio-topographic conditions" (73), is

2004 : Renzo Piano & The Building Workshop , Porta Siberia, Area Porto Antico, Gena, Italy 2005 : On tour with Renzo Piano and Building Workshop: selected projects , Los Angeles County Museum of Arts, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A. (March October); Celebrate Architecture! Renzo Piano & Building Workshop , High Museum of Arts, Anne Cox Chambers Wing, Atlanta, GA, U.S.A. (November 2005 March 2006) 2006 : On tour with Renzo Piano and Building Workshop: selected projects , The Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX, U.S.A. (May August) ; Zentrum Paul Klee , La Galerie d'Architecture, Paris, France 20... Spirit of Nature Wood Architecture Award, Helsinki, 2000 A. Bensa , Ethnologie & Architecture-Le centre culturel Tjibaou. Bensa, Alban. 2000. Ethnologie et architecture. Le Centre culturel Tjibaou, une réactualisation de Renzo Piano. Paris: Adam Biro. Biennale d'art contemporain de Nouméa. 1996. Le Centre culturel Jean-Marie Tjibaou et la construction de l'identité kanak: contribution à une réflexion sur la notion de patrimoine. DEA thesis. Paris: EHESS. Réunion des Musées nationaux. 1990. De jade et de nacre: patrimoine artistique kanak. Paris: Réunion des Musées nationaux. Roper, Robyn Christine. Ethnologie & architecture : Nouméa, Nouvelle-Calédonie, le Centre culturel Tjibaou : une réalisation de Renzo Piano. Author: Alban Bensa. Publisher: Paris : Adam Biro, ©2000. Additional Physical Format: Online version: Bensa, Alban. Ethnologie & architecture. Paris : Adam Biro, ©2000 (OCoLC)647209002. Named Person: Renzo Piano; Renzo Piano; Renzo Piano; Renzo Piano. Document Type: Book. All Authors / Contributors: Alban Bensa. Find more information about: Alban Bensa.