LABOUR IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

edited by

Clive Moore
Jacqueline Leckie
Doug Munro

Townsville
James Cook University of Northern Queensland
1990
Chapter Twenty-Six

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLASS ANALYSIS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Vijay Naidu and Jacqueline Leckie

1.

Vijay Naidu

This volume with its collection of essays dealing with labour history and conditions pertaining to labour in the South Pacific is an extension of existing class analysis in the region. It has covered the creation of the labouring and working class in South Pacific societies, the treatment of migrant workers, the organisation of workers in trade unions, the role of the colonial states in promoting and impeding the formation of a class of workers in island societies, the regulatory measures adopted by the state in relation to various categories of workers, industrial actions by workers and the formation of political parties based on workers' movements. This collection has built upon the foundation of scholarship directed to the study of the evolution and the contemporary situation of the working class in the South Pacific region.

It is argued here that the notion of class analysis in the context of a concluding chapter for a book entitled Labour in the South Pacific, must be taken at its most coherent and theoretically comprehensive form. Such a variant is to be found in Marxist discourse. The chapter begins with a definition of class analysis and of social classes. This raises the problem of how the model can be applied to the material contained in this volume and if the question of context mediates our understanding of class analysis. A major gap here has been the absence of class analysis in the study of Pacific societies. To help explain this the chapter will follow with a brief discussion of the literature on Pacific societies and signpost some important contributions to the development of class analysis. In the second section of the chapter, Jacqueline Leckie will raise some new questions in relation to class analysis, cultural change and the development of class consciousness within Pacific societies.

The concept of class or social class may be defined from the perspective of at least three different schools of thought within sociology. Weberian scholars would insist that the labour market is crucial in allocating class positions to individuals and groups depending on what skills, qualifications and experience they have. The life styles of these individuals and groups which are dependent on the workers' income determines their class position. Studies in this volume, such as that by Ron Adams in Chapter Ten, have illustrated the inappropriateness of simplistically applying class models based on lifestyles to societies with radically different cultures to those in the industrialised West. Followers of Emile Durkheim would pick on the centrality of the division of labour in society where specialisation ensures that the complex demands of an industrial society are fulfilled. Again this does not adequately account for the division of labour in much of the Pacific's labour history where the co-existence of pre-capitalist and capitalist forms of labour may be integral to capitalist development under colonial rule. The fact that this division of labour is exploitative is not the primary factor for consideration; more important is how wider societal solidarity can be established to bring together the specialised components. In contrast to these two approaches to class analysis, Marxists focus on production relations which engender exploitation by those who own and/or control the means of production of those who through their labour produce wealth in society. The idea of appropriating the fruits of labour of a productive category of people by a non-productive group defines a class society.

For Marxists, inherent in capitalism is the division of society into social classes, particularly a class of workers who have their labour power to sell having lost their direct access to land and other means of production and a class of capitalists who own the means of production -- land, machinery, raw materials and money (capital). The former class, the proletariat, are deprived of their surplus labour by the appropriation of surplus value by the latter class of the bourgeoisie. This in essence defines the exploitative nature of capitalism which is central to the notion of class contradictions and class struggles. Although both Marx and Engels were especially concerned with analysing the transformation of Europe from agrarian feudalism to capitalist industrialisation, their notion of class has had wider appeal. According to Marx, "It is always the direct relation between the owners of the conditions of production and the direct producers which reveals the innermost secret, the hidden foundation of the entire social edifice". In this sense, Marx expected that social classes were to be found in societies other than those permeated by the capitalist mode of production.

The systematic analysis of the structure of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial societies using Marxist analysis has been a very recent phenomena. Indeed, the proliferation of Marxist and Neo-Marxist writings in general has occurred over the last two decades. It is hardly surprising therefore that in the South Pacific, class analysis is of very recent origins. However, the terminology associated with an examination of social classes within the context of a non-European history has not been without controversy. Non-Marxist scholars from an early period, rejected what appeared to them the notion of 'primitive communism' advocated by Marxists. Thus Bronislaw Malinowski declared:

The opinion that primitive humanity and savages have no individual property is an old prejudice shared by modern writers, and especially in support of communist theories and so-called materialistic history.

In a similar vein Raymond Firth maintained that:

we find here no trace of the artificial concepts by which the economic behaviour of primitive man has been sometimes interpreted: the opposed figments of 'primitive communism' and the individual search for food now appear equally barren principles of interpretation.

Following these early functionalist anthropologists, two generations of scholars eschewed class analysis of the South Pacific island societies that were experiencing capitalist penetration, disarticulation of spatially limited economies and their incorporation into the global capitalist system, emergence of completely novel forms of ownership of property and labour relations, imposed bureaucratic organisation and class formation. Instead of examining the structural transformation of Pacific societies, much effort was devoted by non-Marxist scholars to describing pre-European cultural organisations, kinship systems, trade networks, the achievements or failures of discrete groups such as explorers,
traders, missionaries, beachcombers and colonial administrators. Pacific history and
the study of Pacific societies were largely within the tradition of imperial
scholarship. Island-centred studies emerged at the time of decolonisation
but were hijacked by Pacific Way scholars who substituted Islander nationalism
for critical examination of the restructuring of island societies.

The lack of theoretical rigour has been a marked feature of studies of
Pacific societies. Many studies do not indicate what their basic premises are.
Prejudices and psychological reductionism take the place of systematic analysis
and explanation.

Sometimes retired colonial officials turned academics, or academics
turned colonial administration experts, wrote about their exploits. Their
publications are informative about discrete events but their "balanced accounts"
are permeated with apologia for colonial rule. While general histories have been
written and do play a useful role in bringing together a variety of experiences,
allowing for comparison, they tend to be moulded into pseudo-scientific notions
such as cultural adaptation, continuity in change, and neo-tradition, which do not
delve in any systematic way into the structural re-orientation of these societies.
Some of these studies justified colonialism. In their surveys of Pacific societies
Douglas Oliver in 1951 and Ron Crecombe in 1971 justified the subjugation of
the indigenous populations of Australia and New Zealand in terms of the overall
aims to larger numbers of Occidenitals and as part of the on-going historical
process of population mobility.

Opposition to colonial rule and therefore emergent class divisions was
down-played by many writers, and leaders of anti-colonial movements were
imbued with unsavoury motives. Protestant movements by indigenous masses
have been called culis. One leader of such a movement in Fiji, Apolosi Nawal was
described by a colonial administrator turned historian in this way:

This man by reason of his genius for subversive intrigue, his quasi-religious influence over his dupes, his utter lack of scruple, his
abnormally developed and sustained sexual appetite and the case with
which he secures the victims of his lust, his real eloquence, his faith in
himself and his irresistible persistence in all sorts of evil doing, may
well be described as the Rasputin of the Pacific.

Those who collaborated with colonial rulers are given special mention by
historians of colonial administration in the region. Simione Durutalo’s “The
Liberation of the Pacific Island Intellectual” provides a strong criticism of the
historiography of the region, which has by and large failed to be critical of
colonialism and its beneficiaries.

The dualist approach to the study of Pacific societies which perceived
two mutually exclusive and self-contained sectors – the subsistence
rural/traditional and the monetised urban/monetary sectors and impeded
class analysis. This approach failed to recognise the interdependence of the two
sectors. The Pacific region has undergone considerable transformation, and the
two sectors are interdependent. Bryan H. Farrel states this bluntly in his chapter
in Man in the Pacific:

During the past 400 years islands once isolated have become dependent
on world markets for the sale of their produce, ... and most

communities have experienced a partial or even complete transformation of traditional ways.

Part of this transformation is the harnessing of labour to the production of raw
materials for world markets. Colonial enterprises were subsidised by
the extraction of cheap labour from the Islanders. It is worth reiterating that since
the late nineteenth century the use of island labour in capitalist enterprises has
extended from relatively resource rich volcanic high islands and Queensland to
the barren atolls of Micronesia and Polynesia, as the case study of Nukualae
by Doug Munro and Niko Benier in Chapter Seventeen testifies. The
transformation of Pacific societies into labour reserves has continued in the
contemporary period with the movement of workers with and within island states,
as described in the study by John Cornell in Chapter Nine of Wallis and Futuna
workers in New Caledonia and to Pacific rim countries, as depicted in Chapter
Thirteen by Paul Spoonley on Pacific island migrant workers in New Zealand.

Another preoccupation of scholars in the South Pacific which has
inhibited class analysis is that of looking at ethnicity as the primary motivating
force in inter-group relations. Workers are first regarded as “natives”, “Indians”,
Chinese”, etc., rather than as workers. Protest and industrial actions by such
workers have been described as an “Indian strike”, a “Chinese uprising”, or a
“native cult movement”, thereby undermining analysis that looks at the categories
and dynamics of labour and capital. Chapter Twenty by Ian Frazer, on Massina
Rule in the Solomon Islands and its significance as a labour movement, is a
welcome correction to the way that proto-nationalist movements have often been
depicted.

The belated development of the study of gender and women’s
reproductive and productive activities in the Pacific has provided little basis upon
which any understanding of the relationship between class and gender might be
conceived in the colonial and post-colonial development of Pacific societies. This
question has been increasingly attracting attention, as indicated in the studies in
this volume: Chapter Four by Caroline Ralston and Chapter Twelve by Shaila
Shameem.

Thus far we have considered why class analysis does not have a long
tradition in the South Pacific, but this state of affairs is being gradually rectified
by the development of systematic studies that have utilised political economy,
dependency and underdevelopment approaches as well as articulation of modes
of production analysis. Following on from this there have also been attempts to
locate gender, culture and class ideology within Pacific societies.

Before outlining this change in scholarship, we will consider some
studies that have used class-typologies and nomenclature from non-Marxist
perspectives. Authors who have discussed the development of plantation
agriculture or plantation economies have invariably addressed the issues of land,
labour and capital. Scholars examining the specific topic of migrant labour have
had to write about labour extraction and recruitment and systems of indenture. A
quarter of a century ago, Ben Finney wrote about Polynesian peasants and
proletarians. Adrian Mayer’s classic, Peasants in the Pacific provided a glimpse
of the possibility of examining Fiji society as a product of economic forces
beyond race. As long ago as 1934 Felix Keesing’s Modern Samoa dwelled on
the plight of the landless mixed race or ‘part-Europeans’ of Apia, differentiating
them from the relatively wealthy merchant part-European class. In *Cultures of the Pacific*, Thomas G. Harding and Ben J. Wallace asserted that:

Most Pacific Islanders today are peasant farmers, dependent for their livelihoods on the production of cash crops and the import of industrial products. Many are proletarian labourers, working on plantations or in mines and towns. Many aspire to higher technical and professional training ....

Unfortunately this succinct commentary was not accompanied by an in depth and systematic analysis of the emergence of these classes. Neither the process of peasantry nor proletarianisation was analysed.

Harold Brookfield and Doreen Hart have gone a considerable way in describing the transformation of Pacific island societies in Melanesia. Their description of the centralisation and concentration of capital in Burns Philp and Carpenters is cogent.

The two dominant Sydney-based companies have both invested heavily in Australia, and their Australian business provides at least half the profit of each. This metropolitan investment, financed originally from profits made in the islands, has enabled these highly integrated firms to overwhelm most of their island-based competitors.

In 1972 Brookfield observed that most of the ruling elements in island societies:

... are western-educated, and comparatively affluent. Such elites might even have a deeper vested interest in the status quo of society than the colonial administrators they replace.

He also anticipated the advent of the "night of the generals" in the Pacific. With the coup of 1987, Fiji became the first Pacific state to experience military intervention in civil government and direct military rule.

In the recently published *Class and Culture in the South Pacific*, Epeli Hau‘ofa wrote about the transnationalisation of ruling elites. "These elite groups are locked to each other through their privileged access to and control of resources in the region ...." However as with, *Race, Class and Rebellion in the South Pacific*, edited by Alex Mamak and Ahmed Ali, the above volume edited by Antony Hooper et al. falls short of a systematic study of social classes in the South Pacific.

Writers such as T.S. Epstein and Ben Finney have written about the emergence of indigenous entrepreneurship and "capitalists" in Papua New Guinea. Numerous studies have described social transformation in Pacific island societies, both at micro and macro levels, which have not used class analysis but the materials provided do contribute useful raw materials from which class analysis may be fruitfully made.

As shown in Jacqueline Leckie's introduction to this volume, there is currently a greater appreciation in the Pacific of the works of scholars of African societies. French social anthropologists including Claude Meillassoux, Emmanuelle Terray, Georges Dupré, Pierre-Philippe Rey, Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Jean Suret-Canale and Maurice Godet, have examined pre-capitalist societies,

especially in Africa using the mode of production analysis. They have rectified three major shortcomings of earlier anthropological studies. These are, first, the preoccupation with describing phenomena such as kinship, rituals and magic; second, the emphasis on kinship and subsistence self-efficiency with little attention to the inequalities in pre-capitalist formations; and third, giving the impression that many of these societies were autarchic. Similar weaknesses may be identified in anthropological studies in the South Pacific. It is hoped that as the modes of production approach becomes more widely used and refined a better understanding of pre-capitalist South Pacific societies might be gained.

The concept of modes of production is an analytical tool which identifies the forces of production (technological level and 'know how') and the relations of production (social organisation, especially of labour) in a given social formation (or society). This notion considers the material basis of the existence of a given formation, giving particular attention to the relations of production. A number of modes of production have been suggested for pre-capitalist societies such as communal, slave, tribal, petty commodity, Asiatic, and feudal modes of production. In the introduction to this volume Leckie suggests the applicability of two major modes of production in the South Pacific: the communal or lineage mode of production, found in Melanesian societies; and the chiefly or tribal mode as found in Polynesian communities. In his study of Pacific modes of production, Godet has also identified at least two transitional forms between the communal and the chiefly modes of production.

Since the late 1970s there has been an increase in the number of studies that have used class analysis and the modes of production approach. Some of these studies have also utilised the notion of articulation of modes of production which goes some distance in accounting for the persistence of pre-capitalist or traditional social structures long after the capitalist incorporation of island societies. As pointed out by Rey, this articulation of the capitalist modes of production with pre-capitalist modes of production is possible because of class alliances between capitalists and dominant agents of pre-capitalist structures.

Authors such as Azzeem Amrasthi, Ken Good and Rex Mortimer, 'Atu Bain, Simione Durutalo, Stephanie Fahey, Adrian Graves, Peter Fitzpatrick, Mike Howard, Jacqueline Leckie, Jay Narayan, Vijay Naidu, Nii-K. Pfung, John Samy, and William Sutherland among others, have used class analysis and the modes of production approach to examine the transition of island societies.

The work of other writers, generally non-Marxists, who have dealt with the development of plantations and mines, trade relations, company histories, commodities, trade unions, labour migration, protest movements, socio-economic changes and foreign investment have also provided raw materials for class analysis.

2. Jacqueline Leckie

Throughout the debates about modes of production, and with the apparent irreconcilable rift between those who emphasise material forces or cultural forces in the process of historical change, an important consideration needs to be kept in mind. That is the centrality of the people who labour. Their motives may seem obvious but Bergquist has asked why social scientists of virtually all ideological persuasions in the period after the Second World War have managed to put
forward theories of world development and historical change that still put workers on the periphery of their inquiry. In this volume we have tried to not just focus on the modes of production or the incorporation of Pacific Islanders into a world system as passive victims of the "logic of capitalist expansion". We have tried to show how labour and capitalist expansion is not a static structure or an impersonal force but a historically grounded dynamic that at essence concerns real people.

Where we may find disagreement among ourselves is over the question of human agency, the social and cultural incorporation of peripheral areas into the world system and the way we interpret this. This is epitomised in the debate over the relevance of class analysis to Pacific societies. This stems not only from interpretative or ideological differences, but also from differing methodological approaches and as G.E. Marcus and Michael Fischer note, from the problems of representation or textual construction. Many of us following from the lead of Eric Wolf and Peter Worsely, want to see people, culture and ideology restored to broader analyses of economic and political forces. This is not to advocate that analyses of the political-economy should be discarded but that there is a need to pay more attention to process and human agency within this. As reflected through most of the studies in this volume we are aiming to broaden our approach to class, to move a step further from merely criticising "bourgeois scholarship" which we can always call the real life situations for villagers in the Pacific, migrants, destitutes, the self-employed and most of all, the largest group of producers neglected in the study of labour in the Pacific women.

Many papers in this collection articulate the exploitative nature of capitalist incorporation in the periphery. Some, especially those of Ron Adams and Clive Moore in Chapters Ten and Eleven, emphasise what meaning this may have for Pacific Islanders concerned. Their analysis and theirs in general which has been most recently argued by Marshall Sahlin and Roger Keesing who are concerned with the culture of capitalism was incorporated into the Islanders' cosmology. Sahlin does not suggest that "we ignore, the modern juggernaut" but

Yet ... precisely because they cannot be resisted the relations and goods of the larger system also take on meaningful places in local schemes of things. In the event the discourse of the dominant classes are also continuous with the superseded cultural scheme, even as the new state of affairs acquires a cultural coherence of a distinct kind. So we shall have to examine how indigenous peoples struggle to integrate their experience of the world system in something that is logically and ontologically more inclusive: their own system of the world.

However turning capitalist incorporation on its head should not necessarily negate the formation of class consciousness. This is illustrated in an analysis in chapter Twenty of Solomon Island labourers being incorporated into capitalist production. He depicts this from the Islanders' perspective but emphasises their perception of exploitative relations and that they certainly did resist. With Masina Rule, cultural idioms, some indigenous, others incorporated from the hegemonic class/culture became synthesised into new idioms to become expressions and popular movements of labour and political discontent. This can be placed within the "continent of Solomon Islands labour history, where the new classes emerged through the struggle between labour and capital, Fraser's study emphasised that new labour relations were not just incorporated into the Islanders' cosmology but gave rise to a new form of class-based consciousness.

Sahlins has also suggested that we might consider how the encroachment of the world system on the periphery offered the potential for the 'local system' to be enriched. This relates to not only how commodities from capitalist production were utilised but what meaning (and value) was attached to them within Islander frameworks. This point needs to be weighed against the reality that foreign ideologies, values and technologies did draw Pacific Islanders into a shared 'world system' which altered the life-styles and division of labour within indigenous communities. We need to also address the issue of who was "enriched" within the local system? For many Pacific societies the encroachment (or for Sahlin's incorporation) of the world system enlarged the potential for developing hegemony of the elite groups, which played a powerful part in strengthening differentiation within and between societies. Modes of production analysis locates this in relation to the control of the means of production and the way this promotes class formation and class consciousness. Many of the studies in this volume also depict the importance of considering class formation and power in relation to control of distribution and consumption, which is where we need to be sensitive to how commodities were valued and which groups had access to these within Pacific societies. We should also not forget how the control of reproduction and "domestic" production may have been affected by these processes.

As noted earlier Hau'ofa has described how the encroachment of the world system gave way to the development of a new Pacific elite; a new dominant class. He has viewed this as a process developing over a long period through the greater integration of privileged groups in Pacific societies with the outside world system but also between Pacific societies, especially in Polynesia. If the emergence of new elites can be identified then what of the subalterns or the "growing poor" Hau'ofa refers to? Are they a distinctive class, even if separated by regional, linguistic and ethnic divisions? The problem of class consciousness is further compounded by the question of ideological hegemony where dominant groups may take on the ideology of the elite. Although such elites are exploited, their expressions of this has often been articulated in the discourse of the dominant classes in which in part is the discourse of capitalism Sahlins describes. 'Tradition' has also become part of the discourse of the elite but Hau'ofa perceives the poor's adherence to this as a reflection of their economic (and class) subordination.

The poor adhere to some of their traditions because they have been consistently denied any real benefits from their labour. Their adherence to tradition is a matter of necessity, of economic security.

Hau'ofa's attention to the use of tradition in contemporary class analysis has also been emphasised by Roger Keesing who suggests that the elite has recreated the past to suit its present dominance and that myths of ancestral ways of life serve as powerful political symbols. In many contexts, as depicted for example, in Peter Farce's study of Fiji's colonial history, the cultural elaboration of the colonial ideology has been a cultural construction which reinforced colonial and elite domination. This served to dampen subaltern consciousness and their potential to gain
The Development of Class Analysis

Vijay Naidu and Jacqueline Leckie

252.

political power. Keeling further notes that discourses of cultural identity in the contemporary Pacific may claim to produce countercolonial images but in many ways this has also been partly derived from Western ideologies. Jean Chesneaux has discussed this in relation to the formation of Kanak political culture. In many Pacific societies we can not trace the inevitable formation and rise of a working class consciousness expressed in political parties representing the interests of labour. Keeling notes, for example, that the concept of wantoks has taken on new meaning in the "urban jungle". He suggests that through colonial myth-making, formerly antagonistic wantoks have become administrative and economic fictions in the new setting, with new realities. Wantoks (speakers of the same language) have become a substitute for kin, to constitute electorates and become new sources of political mobilisation. Keeling identifies categories such as wantoks as the symbols of class consciousness, but he suggests that these new meanings have been incorporated from the hegemonic discourse. Ralph Premdas also explores the role of wantoks in his study of Port Morebys politics in Chapter Twenty-One.

Sahlins and Keeling have focused on what could be described as a cultural analysis of historical materialism and pointed to some problems in the application of class analysis. Reservations with their approach can be noted. Jonathan Friedman, for example, has not denied the way in which the world system may be incorporated in the local system but cautions against underestimating the impact of the world system on indigenous cultures.

Whether this takes the form of externally propelled if internally structured transformation, or of direct externally dominated reorganisation, it ought to be evident that the hinterland is caught in the grip of a process that is largely beyond its control, with all due respect to cultural variation, harbours a certain sinister finality. This, in turn, implies that there are properties of reality that are not included in the cultural scheme of things, not even in the structure of practice, but in the results and conditions of practice.

Michael Hess illustrated this point in Chapter Twenty-Two where he described the creation of a labour force in Papua New Guinea "to partner and fructify capital as a process fundamentally foreign to indigenous society." This process arose "within the colonial order of necessity." Glenn Peterson in Chapter Fourteen noted that, even when societies such as the Pohnpeian were able to maintain control over their island and culture, at the same time their lives were being transformed.

We would also hope that studies in this volume suggest that class is not just based on myth and that the struggles of labour have a concrete foundation. The studies in Section Three document examples, whether they be waterside workers in Papua New Guinea or senior civil servants in Fiji, where workers have forged new organisations to represent their interests. These workers' organisations share much in common not just within the Pacific region but internationally. This does not deny differences between trade unions, which can be a reflection of particular cultural idioms, but more often reflects constraints imposed by the state and employers.

Michael Burawoy in the Politics of Production has also suggested that we should not overlook how the development of workers' consciousness and subsequent organisations has roots in the labour process itself, and how new forms of production and new patterns of labour brought workers from other disparate backgrounds together to work, for example, in mines, on plantations, in road construction, and hospitals, schools, brothels, tourist complexes and in other people's private homes. But as our case-studies have shown, only in some of these new labour processes were there potential for greater awareness of a common bond as workers and the overt expression for some control of the labour process. The volume has repeatedly documented the powerful role the state-and employers took in dampening workers' resistance although we admit that other cases have made counter mouldings more difficult. We have seen how the dependence upon labour reserves from a subsistence base continues to be a central feature of the capitalist expansion in the Pacific, a permanent labour force did not develop. However external migration can be important in an awareness of some kind of consciousness as workers. For example, it would be naive to suggest that all recent migrants from the Pacific Islands to New Zealand have not been affected by their experience as workers in a society with relatively structured labour relations. Circular migration may have impeded the growth of an established working class throughout much of the Pacific but workers carry some of their labouring experience with them back to villages. This may not be overtly expressed in some societies but it is an important consideration when we consider the need to embrace communities, and not just paid workers, in our understanding of class. Obviously, as for example in 'Atu Bain's study of goldmining workers in Chapter Twenty-Four, class formation takes on a more overt form, especially in areas where the extraction process is largely carried out. Often inau...
however led to a significant growth in the number of ‘traditional’ proletarians who may enjoy job security, a ‘family wage’, are free to sell their labour as they please and are predominately male breadwinners. That image of the working class was as much a myth in much of Europe’s history as it has been elsewhere. If anything, studies of labour in the Pacific testify to the need to redefine and break out of restricted, outmoded concepts. We share the conclusions of other recent studies of international labour, that this does not deny the centrality of that working class, be it urban, rural-based or both, male or female, paid or unpaid, young or old.

NOTES

1. Vijay Naidu

This section of the chapter draws out some significant impediments to class analyses in the South Pacific and identifies some major contributions. It is certainly not a comprehensive review of the development of Marxist analysis in the South Pacific.


2. Jacqueline Leckie

The need to address culture in class and world systems analysis has been extensively discussed by Wolf (1983) and Worsley (1984). Several writers, especially Sahlins (1988) suggest that Wolf did not adequately follow up this issue. Sahlins (1988) also discusses how capitalist labour and commodities are indigenised in other cultural logics. The Sahlins quotation in this chapter is from p 4. Keessing (1989) follows this line but emphasises the political power emanating from ideological and cultural control. Friedman (1987; quoted from p. 75) provides a critique of recent work by Sahlins, although not explicitly of his 1988 paper. A useful analysis of the debate about world systems theory and interpretative anthropology is in Marcus and Fischer (1986) while Worsley (1984:1-60) provides a helpful discussion of modes of production in relation to culture and world development. For lively examples of attempts to combine political-economy with interpretative ethnographic studies of labour outside the Pacific see Nash (1979) and Taussig (1980). See also Bergquist (1984) for a sympathetic critique of the ‘impersonal’ side of world systems theory and its tendency to underplay human and workers’ agency in world history.

Recent comparative collections of international labour studies which address the changing nature of production in the third world and the complexities of class analysis can be found in Boyd, Cohen and Gutkind (1987) and Munck (1988). Fahey (1986) explores this in relation to a case study in the Pacific. For a recent collection of articles on contemporary changes in labour and class formation see the collection edited by Pinches and Lakha (1987) although most of the studies focus on Asia.