



**APRIL 30, 2020**

316 pages, 8 color and 34 b&w illus.  
 Hardback 978-0-8248-8117-7  
 US\$72.00 | £84.95

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# REFOCUSING ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS through OCEANIC LENSES

**Philipp Schorch** with

**Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, Sean Mallon, Cristián Moreno Pakarati,  
 Mara Mulrooney, Nina Tonga, and Ty P. Kāwika Tengan**

*“Refocusing Ethnographic Museums through Oceanic Lenses is distinctive for its layered coauthorship. It offers an important and potentially influential model, striking a balance between the single-authored volume and the edited collection, attractively bringing forward genuine multi-vocality, and the distinctive expertise of those bringing specific Indigenous perspectives/analyses/concepts, yet with a far more robust structure and coherence than the typical edited book.”* —**Nicholas Thomas**, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge

*REFOCUSING ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS THROUGH OCEANIC LENSES* offers a collaborative ethnographic investigation of Indigenous museum practices in three Pacific museums located at the corners of the so-called Polynesian triangle: Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Hawai‘i; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa; and Museo Antropológico Padre Sebastián Englert, Rapa Nui. Since their inception, ethnographic museums have influenced academic and public imaginations of other cultural-geographic regions, and the often resulting Euro-American projection of anthropological imaginations has come under intense pressure, as seen in recent debates and conflicts around the Humboldt Forum in Berlin, Germany. At the same time, (post)colonial renegotiations in former European and American colonies, such as the cases in this book, have initiated dramatic changes to anthropological approaches through Indigenous museum practices.

The book shapes a dialogue between both situations—Euro-American myopia and Oceanic perspectives—by offering historically informed, ethnographic insights into Indigenous museum practices grounded in Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies, and cosmologies. In doing so, it employs Oceanic lenses that help to reframe Pacific collections in, and the production of public understandings through, ethnographic museums in Europe and the Americas. The coauthors collaboratively mobilize Oceanic eyes, bodies, and sovereignties, thus enacting an ethnographic kaleidoscopic process and effect aimed at refocusing ethnographic museums through Oceanic lenses.

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