

Person and Place

PERSON, SPACE AND MEMORY IN THE CONTEMPORARY PACIFIC - Volume 2

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Ideas, Ideals and the Practice of Sociality on
Vanua Lava, Vanuatu



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Concerned with contemporary notions of personhood and the relationship between persons and places, this book, presents a detailed insight into the Vanua Lavan's engagement with modernity, and examines how they relate to the past, make sense of the present and anticipate the future. Marilyn Strathern's claim that the Melanesian person is a dividual by and large holds for the Vanua Lavan person. But Vanua Lavans have also been exposed to, and creatively engaged with, what can be summarised under the term 'Western individualism'. The author draws together several themes, discourses and conversations which concern Vanuatu specifically, the Pacific as a wider geographic area but also theoretical fields in anthropology: the relevance and expressions of sociality through kinship, concepts of person, issues about land and cosmology, the kastom debate, and questions about continuity and change. In doing so she provides a snapshot of contemporary notions of personhood.

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