

towards the east with the variable winds, which sometimes blow, with the idea of being able to retrace their steps by returning with the trade-winds, if they were to discover nothing.

There is much in this book to inform and stimulate the reader on a variety of levels. Incidentally, its publication is further evidence of the estimable contributions to New Zealand and Pacific studies flowing from the French departments of New Zealand universities. Christiane Mortelier's work is a worthy companion to that of Dunmore, Ollivier, Arnoux, Legge, Tremewan and others.

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Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography. By Alan Grey. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 1994. 476pp. NZ price: \$29.95. ISBN 0-908812-34-5.

WHILST THE STUDY of historical geography has had a long, though at times chequered, career in New Zealand university geography departments, no complete study of this country's economic and landscape changes had been published before Alan Grey's *Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography* appeared. The only comparable book is K.B. Cumberland's 1981 *Landmarks*, but this was much more limited in scope and was aimed at a popular rather than academic readership.

Alan Grey was born here, but has for many years taught in the United States, and has the advantage of being both familiar with the New Zealand scene and seeing the wider picture from an outsider's point of view.

His book begins in what has been the traditional way of emphasizing that the study is geographical, namely by a chapter on New Zealand's physical geography. Grey then covers the period from Polynesian occupation, through early pakeha settlement, pastoral and agricultural expansion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to the post-1920s period when there were only a few limited agricultural frontiers left to conquer. The growth of population, of urban centres, communications, the rise and fall of mining, forest destruction and subsequent replanting, tentative manufacturing endeavours, and other geographical aspects are all detailed and commented upon.

Grey ends his study at 1935, but provides a brief afterword which examines the changes in our economy and landscape from that date until the mid-1980s when the Labour Government started dismantling the state's involvement in the economy.

Given the vast amount of factual material the author has included, it is not surprising that a few minor errors have crept in, including, amongst others, allocating to Dunedin the whole of Otago-Southland's 1863 population, wrongly dating New Zealand's first locally-built locomotive, and most surprisingly misquoting the famous and somewhat hackneyed description of the Milford Track as the 'finest walk in the world' by substituting 'best' for 'finest'.

New Zealand's historical geographers have never agreed on what theoretical approach should be adopted for their studies. Grey dismisses the 'static snapshots' which Cumberland and other earlier geographers used in their periodical articles, and instead has emphasized the processes of change. But many earlier snapshot studies of New Zealand at different dates are not as static as the author implies, and Grey cannot divorce himself entirely from that approach, for he makes use of a 'snapshot' of Aotearoa about 1770.

Grey's major contribution lies not only in bringing together most of the diverse and generally narrowly-focused individual studies in New Zealand's historical geography, whether they be published or in university dissertations, but in the way in which he has placed New Zealand's development within the wider-world framework. The author details how as a nation we have always been prepared to take techniques and ideas from overseas and amend them to suit our own environmental and economic needs. Of course attitudes change and Grey warns that we should not judge the actions and beliefs of earlier New Zealanders from our present-day viewpoints, for we are all products of our own times and beliefs. I agree, for too often New Zealanders today condemn the wholesale burning of the New Zealand bush in the past by Maori and pakeha alike, but when challenged to say what they would have done, given the circumstances and beliefs of the nineteenth century, they cannot suggest any realistic alternative.

The maps in *Aotearoa and New Zealand: A Historical Geography* are a major disappointment, not because of their cartography, which is of a high standard, but because Grey has foregone a marvellous opportunity of presenting a fresh visual view of the country's past by his failure to provide original work. Practically all the maps are copies of, or derived from, previously published and generally easily available maps.

A 35-page bibliography reveals the wide range of sources which Grey consulted, but also discloses some surprising omissions such as Harry Morton's *The Whales Wake*, and Eric Warr's *From Bush-burn to Butter*, as well as a number of relevant articles by New Zealand geographers and others which were published in some less well-known journals.

Despite my criticisms, this is a major and useful pioneering contribution to our understanding of New Zealand's changing geography.

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Dunedin

Far from the Promised Land? Being Jewish in New Zealand. By Ann Beaglehole and Hal Levine. Pacific Press, Wellington, 1995. 146pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 0-9583418-4-2.

THERE COULD NOT be a better title than 'Far from the Promised Land' for a book that deals with the experiences of Jews in New Zealand, a country which is not only 'far away' from the mainstream Jewish centres but has only a very small minority of Jews (the census in 1991 counted 3,048 Jews, or 0.1% of the population). The question of survival strategies is not unique to the New Zealand Jewish experience since Jews all over the world face the problem of expressing and passing on their Jewish identity in a modern world. Since it has often been argued that the negative experience of anti-Semitism has an important, even essential, impact on the shaping of Jewish identity, New Zealand seems to present an interesting case study. It has a low level of anti-Semitism yet at the same time it is not a multi-ethnic or multi-cultural society. As the New Zealand-Jewish experience shows, the high degree of tolerance in a mono-cultural or at the most bi-cultural society also had its price: the desire to adapt to this ideal society.

Jews have lived in New Zealand since the early nineteenth century, and immigration waves followed a similar pattern to those in other parts of the 'new world'. However, unlike Australia or the USA, this 'green and pleasant' land is a 'hard country in which to be Jewish'. The small size of the community might be one reason, but size alone does not