

## Editorial Introduction

THE FIRST ISSUE of the *Journal* for the new millennium is devoted to the theme of New Zealand within the Pacific. It was decided that it would be appropriate to place some aspects of the country's history in a wider perspective and a comparative one. Outsiders often teach and research New Zealand history in this way, but we, who live here, rarely do so. New Zealand's history has been largely considered — by its local practitioners — within a nationalist framework, perhaps unconsciously reflecting some long-standing assumptions that 'somehow' we did 'it' — 'it' being the colonization and resettlement of three large southern Pacific islands — differently (and even better) than most other colonial settler societies deriving from Great Britain. Such assumptions need to be perpetually scrutinized. This issue, therefore, addresses some problems of cross-cultural and comparative research in the Pacific arena. It suggests that we should place some of our historical experiences in different sociological and geographical contexts than those in which they have previously been addressed.

The ten contributors to this volume include some old hands and some newer heads; we invited writers from different generations of historians and anthropologists working from New Zealand. Kerry Howe's article, which opens the volume, reflects on the different mental images possessed in Australia and New Zealand of the Pacific islands, and some possible reasons for the differences. In it he addresses one of the main themes that we had in mind in commissioning the volume: imagined constructs of both past and future. Angela Ballara comments on the continuing discourse in Aotearoa/New Zealand about methodologies and approaches for interpreting and writing Maori and tribal (*hapū*) history. Michael Reilly compares the experiences and purposes of two nineteenth-century amateur ethnographers, one in Hokianga, the other in Mangaia. Jeffrey Sissons reassesses Apirana Ngata's changing ideas about the future of Maori in Aotearoa. Greg Ryan, the 'unexpected' contributor to the volume — for his essay simply arrived on the editor's desk — analyses some shifting attitudes within New Zealand on the issue of Maori playing rugby (the national sport) against the Springboks during the years of apartheid. Kate Riddell has made an analysis of early New Zealand census-makers, showing how ideology affects even statistical perceptions. Tooelesulusulu Salesa examines some ways in which the 'troublesome' half-caste was perceived differently in Samoa and in New Zealand. Paul D'Arcy begins a long-needed comparison of arms and the man in the so-called 'musket wars' of the early nineteenth century. Phyllis Herda asks questions about the gaps between colonialist rhetoric and medical fact during the 1918 influenza pandemic in the western Pacific. Hugh Laracy ends with a study of the delicate art of making saints that is underway in the Pacific and New Zealand.

The volume concludes with an acknowledgement of the 'doyen' of New Zealand's historians, Bill Oliver, on the occasion of his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. We decided that, at the start of a new century, birthdays are the best things to celebrate.

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