

equation. To ensure *Te Hao Nui* is a point of difference among similar museum concepts, perhaps Te Manawa could pick up this concept in a few years and renew it as an online resource. It would be an interesting experiment to understand the role of the museum in preservation and customer experience to see whether an online interpretation survives and is perpetuated longer than a hard copy.

Te Hao Nui is a great catch in the context of Te Manawa's fortieth anniversary and as a strategic communication tool for a museum redevelopment. However, it is relevant because it shows how a regional museum can have a broader voice, not just about objects, but about people, museums and places. The role of museums in education, preservation, making objects accessible, as kaitiaki, and on the sharing of perspectives is aptly celebrated and noted by the former Te Manawa Museums Trust Chief Executive. The result is that *Te Hao Nui* is not just another popular publication; it is something of a history of the museum itself. With its diversity of themes, this is an angle that might have been explored fruitfully in a conclusion. If it gains a wide audience, this book will provide a point of engagement for the public and a useful reference for future kaitiaki. In our changing museum world, the message *Te Hao Nui* emphasises is that museums are about people and for people.

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Canterbury Museum

NOTES

1 See Museums Aotearoa News and Notices 29 May 2012, 14 June 2012 and 10 July 2012, <http://blog.museumsaotearoa.org.nz/> (accessed 30 July 2012).

2 Roger Openshaw, Review of Conal McCarthy, *Museums and Māori: Heritage Professionals, Indigenous Collections, Current Practice*, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 46, 1(2012), pp. 94-97.

Early New Zealand Photography: Images and Essays. Edited by Angela Wanhalla and Erika Wolf. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2011. 208pp. NZ price: \$50.00. ISBN: 978-1-877578-16-8.

FOR SOMEONE WHO USES PHOTOGRAPHS intensively in my research and who teaches a postgraduate course in visual culture studies, this book is a boon. Slim yet stylish, with lovely images reproduced well on decent paper, it achieves its aim of opening up areas for consideration and stimulating questions. I am sure the editors' and contributors' many challenges will be met by a series of postgraduate students in years to come, and they will give pause to researchers more generally when they order online yet another Turnbull or Puke Ariki image to grace their article or book. The digitisation of public collections of images has made historical photographs much more accessible, but there is still little in the way of useful critical reflections on what we as historical researchers are doing and how we are interpreting this vast treasure trove.

Early New Zealand Photography had its genesis in a symposium organised by the editors, who have worked hard to bring this book to the public. (And here it must be noted how energetic Otago historians have been in sponsoring conferences and publishing their findings — this is just one of a number of such ventures which are reinterpreting key areas and modes of historical research, particularly for the nineteenth century.) Essentially a collection of 'readings' of single and occasionally two images, the book is anchored by a strong introduction, an extensive bibliography and a comprehensive directory of New Zealand public photographic collections. As the editors note in their introduction, the essays offer a variety of ways of 'reading the visual'. The authors

focus on the photograph as object, its cultural and technological context, circulation and use, rather than just the content of the image or authorial intent of the photographer, as conventional histories of photography tend to do. The introduction effectively brings out the wider themes throughout the bite-sized essays which, refreshingly, run the gamut of photographic technology, from daguerrotypes and ambrotypes, albumen prints, cartes de visite, stereographic views, albums, postcards and photomontages, to studio portraits and snapshots. In the 23 essays tourism, ethnography, medicine, missionary endeavours, colonisation and science all play their part. Colonial commerce takes its place alongside culture, and the material is explored as well as the visual.

The essays include examinations of Māori as subjects of photography, with Christine Whybrew effectively reassessing the well-known Barrett sisters' daguerrotype, Ken Hall discussing the Foy Brothers' portrait of Ana Reupene Whetuki and child, which was the basis of the famous Lindauer portrait, and Angela Wanhallā bringing to light another much less well-known painting of Robert Brown, a 'half-caste', also based on an early photographic image, a cartes de visite albumen print. Wanhallā, like Whybrew, raises intriguing questions about family and intimate portraits and the reasons for such image-making. Her meditation on the meaning of 'colour' and the instructions to ensure that the mixed-race appearance was retained in the painting is insightful.

Pākehā identity is just one theme examined by Chris Brickell in his essay on Robert Gant's photographs of men together and by Kerry Hine in his rumination on men at 'The Old Shebang' boarding house in Wellington's Cuba St. The issue of posing and dressing for the camera is canvassed in delightful ways in these beautifully written essays. Jill Haley explores a group montage portrait of Otago 'Early Settlers', showing how the identity of self-proclaimed first settlers was constructed visually and through exclusion rather than inclusion. I enjoyed Cathy Tuato'o Ross's discussion of 'Water Babies in Maoriland', a photomontage from the *New Zealand Weekly Graphic*. Both technical and cultural aspects are woven together effectively.

Another grouping examines colonisation, settlement and expansion. Wayne Barrar's discussion of Daniel Mundy's topographical images in the service of engineering and surveying, and Simon Dench's consideration of an image of Te Mata Rd near Raglan, nicely incorporate the more utilitarian and commercial side of image-making, which served no less a cultural and ideological function. Rebecca Rice muses about the meanings and effects of Charles Spenser's image of Te Wairoa after the Tarawera eruption and underlines the links between science, photography and commerce, and authority and witness.

Racial ideas were central to science, settlement and collecting of various kinds. Jocelynn Dudding follows the reproduction of a photograph of a Māori man (Tomika Te Mutu) made in the 1860s but collected by museums and ethnographers through the nineteenth century as a representative 'everyman'. Barbara Brookes' elegant analysis of Truby King's photographs of patients at Seacliff Asylum in Dunedin as both record-keeping and tool of analysis raises key questions, followed in other essays, about the agency of the subject of the image and the meaning of this process for them. The 'before-and-after conversion narrative' of remote Christian missions is discussed by Brian Moloughney (Canton) and Antje Lubcke (New Hebrides), while Simon Ryan examines W.A. Collins's images of the pacifist Māori community at Parihaka. The intentions of the photographer, the product that resulted, and the circulation and recirculation of images over time and space receive careful attention.

Commercial photography comes to the fore in the second essay by Christine Whybrew (the Burton Brothers Studio), in Keith Giles's consideration of a rare daguerrotype and its probable connection to Polack and the Jewish community in Auckland, and in Erika Woolf's interesting diversion into stereophotography from the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition in Dunedin in 1889–1890. Sandy Callister makes the case for the humble Kodak camera as the visual historian of the Great War for New Zealanders, and

demonstrates deftly how it helped construct and preserve the family as photographic memory and social unit.

Finally, Roger Blackley, Ruth Harvey and Gary Blackman examine 'both the historical moment of an image's production and the challenges of responsibly interrogating problematic images from the past', whether they include displays of preserved heads, the use of the vernacular in art objects, or reproducing a contemporary image from a historical negative. (Should all the blemishes be included?) It is stimulating to see contemporary issues related to historical photography explored and thus the changing functions of such images over time.

In the end, however, I was left wanting more. Reading the essays sequentially, some authors' analysis became quite mechanical: a close reading, yes, but the more adept scholars could put this in a wider and deeper context. A thematic arrangement, rather than a chronological one, may have been more effective. The editors' introduction lays the ground for — and begs the question of — when someone will have the courage to produce a critical history of the medium in New Zealand in all its complexity, with due attention to the visual, the material and ultimately the cultural meanings this technological marvel had and still has. As Max Quanchi notes in his concluding essay, in a call for considering the region's photographic history as a whole: 'To make the next step we need to trawl through the archives ... we need to select and highlight superb practice and seminal single images; and we also need to highlight the power and influence of the mass of photographic material that entered the public domain and the public consciousness of those who lived in New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific Islands.'

BRONWYN LABRUM

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Jagged Seas: The New Zealand Seamen's Union, 1879–2003. By David Grant. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2012. 383pp. NZ price: \$55.00. ISBN: 978-1-877257-99-5.

THE SEAMEN'S UNION has a long and nearly unbroken history, and this book is a very worthwhile study of one of the major forces within New Zealand's organised labour movement. It begins with a careful chronicle of the union's development in the 1880s and its early successes, notably in challenging the Northern Steamship Company by the simple expedient of chartering union-run ships. Perhaps emboldened by that victory, John Andrew Millar and his colleagues formed the Maritime Council to federate seamen, miners and watersiders. This assertiveness took place against the background of a very rapid wave of unionisation in many trades and occupations, but the council's defeat in the Maritime Strike of 1890 is well known. The seamen, like other unions, had to painfully rebuild, and after Millar's election to Parliament in 1893 the union was dominated for nearly 20 years by William Belcher, a convinced arbitrationist and Liberal. Only slowly did the union recover the ground lost in 1890, and it is clear that up until 1914, if not later, Belcher's moderate brand of labour politics was endorsed by most of the membership.

This moderation remains something a puzzle, for seamen had much in common with miners and watersiders in the arduous and dangerous nature of their work. Grant identifies a number of explanations. The leadership controlled the ship delegates, who dispensed patronage. Seafarers at sea were detached from onshore concerns and could not attend mass meetings. Many older men remembered 1890. Auckland was weak; many mosquito fleet crew members identified with the small shipowner. Of these factors, I suggest that autocratic leadership was the most important; and, in fact, there is much discussion of the rivalries between successive leaders. After Belcher, W.T. Young, not much less