

seem to be the same. Cook appears to us designed to carry out the tasks he was set impeccably, but Beaglehole shows him as a man, not a mechanism, a man who needed always to weigh and balance each possible achievement and the means available for its attainment. The expeditions progress by fits and starts, the ships bound to one another or parted by weather, the course laid out in the journals as time is passed and recorded, within the limitations which sail and the maintenance of healthy crews at sea demand. There is a certain monotony in the records of all sailing voyages, but this is never absolute; it is one of the many merits of Beaglehole's handling of Cook that we see him in a myriad different situations, many of them very similar, but having, each, something unique, and so we build up ourselves our sense of the man of action as he was, not always clear what was the best thing to do in particular circumstances, taking advice, hesitating, changing his course of action, sometimes it seemed for very minor reasons, yet always clear about his broader course and always able in the longer run to maintain it. There are few seamen whose decisions, on the average, so nearly coincided with their objectives. The galaxy of islands he revealed in the South Seas were never brighter than when he first saw them and were rarely revealed more sharply than in the records of the voyages. They are seen again in the *Life* through Cook's eyes in the characteristic, somewhat mannered, but always certain prose of John Beaglehole's finest work. Cook deserved a bi-centennial biography of the highest quality and he has got it.

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The Lost Caravel. By Robert Langdon. Pacific Publications, Sydney, 1975. 368 pp. Australian price: \$14.50.

THIS is an audacious, formidably argued, lavishly produced and persuasive book. In it Robert Langdon argues that the development of the peoples and cultures of Polynesia — especially in the Tuamotus and Society Islands — has been subject to an important, but hitherto largely unsuspected, influence, that of a group of sixteenth-century Spanish castaways.

Langdon offers this theory to account for an accumulation of anomalies for which there does not appear to be an obvious alternative explanation. For instance: how did the old woman that Quiros met at Hao Atoll in the Tuamotus in 1606 come by a gold ring set with an emerald (p. 68)? how did 'Spanish' dogs, easily distinguishable from the short-haired native Polynesian dog, get to the Tuamotus, where they were observed as early as 1606 and 1616 (pp. 68, 74) and from where the Tahitians derived the long dogs' hair which decorated the ceremonial collars, *taumi*, observed by eighteenth-century explorers (pp. 97, 112)? why should the construction of the large canoes, *pahi*, of the Tuamotus so closely resemble that of European craft rather than other Polynesian vessels (p. 182)? why should observers, including a physical anthropologist, have considered the people of Fangatau to be remarkably similar to Europeans in appearance (p. 207)? why should the Tuamotuan creation chart gathered on

Vahitahi in 1930, but unlikely to have been derived from missionary contact, so closely parallel the first chapter of Genesis (pp. 225–8)?

Taken singly, any of these questions could easily be dismissed; taken together however, they appear to constitute a genuine problem which requires a serious and comprehensive answer. Langdon offers this, with a wealth of detail, in attributing them to the survivors of the vessel which left four early sixteenth-century cannons on the reef of Amanu atoll. This was most likely the Spanish vessel *San Lesmes*, which disappeared in the south-eastern Pacific in 1526. From Amanu Langdon traces the genetic and cultural impact of castaways throughout the Tuamotus and even as far as New Zealand over the next few centuries.

In regard to New Zealand, however, the balance of probability is less clearly in Langdon's favour than it is in respect of the islands with which the bulk of his book is concerned. On the basis of Tahitian and Maori oral traditions he identifies a Europe-bound party of Spaniards with the occupants of the Tainui canoe under the command of a man called Hiro. But the historical value of such traditions has not yet been validated to the point where they can sustain such a weight of interpretation. (D. R. Simmons' article, 'A New Zealand Myth: Kupe, Toi and the "Fleet"', *New Zealand Journal of History*, III, 1 (April 1969), 14–31, offers a warning here.) Nor does the fact that observers have commented on the occurrence of 'European' types among the Maoris prove anything. What are European features? Physical form and pigmentation vary widely among Europeans, as with other peoples. Also inconclusive is the sixteenth-century 'Spanish helmet' dredged up from Wellington Harbour towards the end of last century. Its condition was far too good for it to have been in the water for any length of time (see Evelyn Stokes, 'European Discovery of New Zealand before 1642: a review of the evidence', *New Zealand Journal of History*, IV, 1 (April 1970), 3–19.

However, New Zealand, like Hawaii and Easter Islands, is only peripheral to the main argument. It is now up to other scholars to disprove Langdon's conclusions if they do not like them. For while he may not have established truths he has at least contributed a new crop of questions to the debate on the origin and nature of the Polynesians. And they cannot be ignored.

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Ask That Mountain. The Story of Parihaka. By Dick Scott. Heinemann/Southern Cross, Auckland, 1975. 216 pp. N.Z. price: \$8.50.

DICK SCOTT's revision of his earlier work on Parihaka is the beneficiary of the extremely efficient Heinemann publicity machine and has been lavishly advertized as a 'magnificently researched' documentary history, 'superb', 'gripping', 'startling', 'a revelation'. The advertising men have gone too far, of course. Scott's book is none of these things. It is substantially a collection of quotations from fairly orthodox sources, arranged in chronological order but unrelieved by much explanation or analysis. Scissors and paste appear to have been the main literary tools employed and the book is as near to papier-mache as to history.

The basic technique employed — that of stringing together quotations with