

(South Seas) Ltd, W.R. Carpenters Ltd, the Union Steamship Co. Ltd, Lever Bros Ltd or the nickel, phosphate and copra industries. Such studies would go a long way towards providing an understanding of the development experience of this part of the world. Michael Moynagh is to be congratulated on his contribution.

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1 A. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*. London, 1979, p.230.

The Collector: A Biography of Andreas Reischek. By Michael King. Hodder and Stoughton, Auckland, 1981. 196pp. N.Z. price: \$13.95.

THIS BOOK fills one more gap in the developing historiography of New Zealand science, itself, as King rightly points out, until recent years a much-neglected field. Reischek has long been ripe for balanced biographical study, not so much for his attractiveness as a person—he is here portrayed convincingly as charlatan, fraud, plunderer, looter and showman with ‘a strong streak of masochism’, ‘a self-proclaimed ethnographer . . . not a reliable witness of Maori customs, values and ritual’ (p.62)—but rather more to allow scholars a more adequate assessment of his important, if mostly secondary role, in the developing network of home-based museum and field science in post-settlement New Zealand. For as a field ornithologist—he published eighteen papers on natural history in the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* between 1881 and 1888—taxidermist—where he excelled—and minor explorer (there is a most useful summary of the expeditions at Appendix I) he accomplished a good deal. His main preoccupation, however, was to *collect*, and not primarily for the museums which employed him in Auckland, Canterbury and Wanganui, but for the institutions of his native Austria where, lacking the prerequisite academic or scholarly kudos and training so necessary in the German-speaking world, he never really rose beyond the status of competent but neglected ‘technician’ after his return, following twelve crowded years in New Zealand between 1877 and 1889.

He had, it is true, influential and sympathetic patrons and passports in Ferdinand von Hochstetter, long remembered affectionately by his erstwhile Maori hosts for his courtesy and discernment (but where is the mention of Charles Fleming’s excellent Hochstetter translation of 1959?) and Julius von Haast, who became his local adviser on matters scientific, domestic and matrimonial, and he was well promoted by other contemporary leaders in New Zealand science such as Buller, Hector, Cheeseman, Kirk and Thomas but, all that and his ornithological abilities notwithstanding, he has left no happy legacy of praise among conservation-minded New Zealand naturalists. He is recalled by many rather as the virtual exterminator in some localities of a number of rare New Zealand species, although conversely W.R.B. Oliver refers to him as ‘the best ornithologist New Zealand ever saw’. Among anthropologists and Kingite Maoris, as

Michael King so carefully and dispassionately shows, his reputation is soured by the memory of his plundering the burial grounds and tapu places of Northland and the funeral caves of Hautapu, near Kawhia, and his fraudulent abuse of the privileges granted to him by King Tawhiao and others during his travels in the recently-opened King Country in 1882.

The great merits of this book are its objectivity and careful researches into Reischek's 'repute and disrepute' in New Zealand (especially chapter X) long beyond his death in 1902. King attempts, too, a study of the Austrian scientific and social milieux, although his direct sources are meagre, largely because the surviving Reischek family in Austria denied him proper scholarly access to papers in their possession, claiming that most were destroyed by Russian bombardment of Vienna in 1945. Yet, following earlier spurned attempts to offer Reischek's manuscript, diaries, reports, letters and sketches to New Zealand in the 1920s for the then princely sum of £500 (Johannes Andersen advised buying for £50 in 1922!) his only son, also Andreas, compiled from this collection the popular *Sterbende Welt. Zwölf Jahre Forscherleben auf Neuseeland* (Leipzig, 1924, translated and edited by H.E.L. Priddy in 1930 as *Yesterdays in Maoriland* (London, Jonathan Cape)). This perforce was King's principal Reischek source—suspect in many ways because of its author's romanticizing and *penchant* for self-aggrandizement. But, as we might suspect from a modern author so diligent in pursuing archival and manuscript sources (of government departments, museums and individuals) as well as personal interviews with descendants at home and abroad, Michael King has fleshed out his biography into something more than the conventional; into a study of Reischek's progress in the emerging confident world of New Zealand scientific intelligentsia and into a modern statement of 'the state of play' concerning those most controversial remnants of Reischekian plundering, the so-called 'Kawhia mummies', allegedly so significant ethnographically and culturally, but now, the more important one at least, reposing in a 'cobweb-wreathed cupboard, not valued highly by the Museum für Völkerkunde [in Vienna] and seen by few people' (p.174).

This book will revive that row, that anthropological controversy. It will also prove that New Zealand scholarship can objectively view the contributions of 'foreigners', especially 'Germans', to our culture, which was a most obfuscated and chauvinistic area in the past. This book is by implication, I think, also polemical: the polemic being that *all* New Zealanders might well bestir themselves more about their culture. From the archival-manuscripts viewpoint we are grateful, too, for the list of Reischek manuscripts as offered in 1921 for £500 sterling. If the manuscripts have *not* been destroyed fully, to offer even that sum would today seem, I suspect, sublimely silly. What would become via scholarship of Reischek's personal and anthropological reputation we cannot say (is he ripe for the 'psycho-history school'!?): his natural history could only be enhanced.

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1 Ferdinand von Hochstetter, *Geology of New Zealand. Contributions to the Geology of the Provinces of Auckland and Nelson*. C.A. Fleming, trans. & ed., Wellington, 1959.