

Te Timatanga—Tatau Tatau. As told to Dame Mira Szaszy, edited by Anna Rogers and Miria Simpson (Wāhanga Māori). Photographs by Margaret Kāwharu. Māori Women's Welfare League and Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1993. 325 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 0 908912-35-8.

HE MIHI TENEI ki a koutou e kui mā e whakatakoto mai ana i ngā kōrero ake a ō koutou whānau i mua i te aoaro o te ao whānui hei pānuitanga mā te katoa, ā, hei taonga tuku iho ki ō koutou uri. Ki a koutou kua haere ki tua o te ārai, moe mai rā i te poho o tō tātou kuia o Papatūānuku. Koutou e hāpai tonu ake ana i ngā tikanga o tō tātou iwi i te Aotūroa nei, tēnā rā koutou katoa.

It is timely that this book was published in 1993, the centenary of women's suffrage, to remind New Zealanders of the political impact which Māori women have had on our society over the last century. The book adds to the understanding of Māori women's role in our society, not only at a political level, but also in the area of social, educational and spiritual development. From the very foreword of *Te Timatanga—Tatau Tatau*, written by Te Arikiniui, Te Atairangikāhu, one can not help but be emotionally involved in responding to the content of this significant addition to Māori women's historical literature. The dialogues of the founding members of Te Rōpū Wāhine Māori Toko i te Ora leave one in awe of the work achieved by these women, and elicit laughter and tears. The book could be criticized for not having more dialogue with prominent leaders of the League such as Dame Whina Cooper. Perhaps the emphasis was placed on giving precedence to the many women whose voices had hitherto not been heard.

The ages of the sixty-six women being interviewed range from 60 to 100 years. The women are affiliated with tribes throughout Aotearoa, bringing a diversity of background and language. A common thread of aroha ki te iwi bond these kuia whose combined voice is powerful and direct. The interviews are presented in alphabetical order by surname with accompanying portrait photographs. The major themes discussed by the kuia were their respective memories of childhood and adulthood, of the poverty experienced by most during the Depression and World War Two, the Māori way of life at that time and of their involvement with the Māori Women's Welfare League. They, as founding members, reveal their wisdom and commitment to their people. As one reads, one gains an insight into Aotearoa's past 100 years through the eyes of Māori kuia. With this comes a sense of the political astuteness of our kuia, and of the impact which the League had on Māori society and on New Zealand's future, being at 'the forefront of efforts to improve the health, economic status and education of Maori' (xvii).

One of the outstanding features of *Te Timatanga—Tatau Tatau* is the natural switch which is made between Māori and English throughout the interviews. This has an immediate impact on the reader, sending one scuttling for a Māori dictionary if one is unfortunate enough not to be bilingually literate. No English translations of the Māori are provided, making a strong statement for the unqualified use of Māori in written texts. For many Māori readers this could be quite refreshing and extremely empowering. The speakers move with ease from one language to another, creating a comfortable and intimate atmosphere.

Dame Mira Szaszy, interviewer, Anna Rogers and Miria Simpson, editors, and Margaret Kāwharu, photographer, are to be congratulated for producing a book which will provide its reading audience with a profoundly rich basket of knowledge. In documenting history from not only a Māori perspective but a *Māori woman's* perspective (a rare opportunity indeed when one searches the library shelves) it provides a valuable resource for all levels of education, not only for history but also for Māori language and cultural studies, linguistics, and the social sciences. Secondary school teachers, in

particular, should make extensive use of this material as there is a richness of resources to be tapped. Most importantly, this taonga will provide fascinating reading for the many, many descendants of these matriarchs of Māoridom.

My thoughts are often drawn back to the women's stories, the richness of life they experienced despite their poverty and most of all the determination and aroha which united them. The power of the women's voices is keenly heard and provides an incentive for us, who follow in their footsteps. *Te Timatanga — Tatau Tatau* is a taonga to be treasured. How better said than in the words of Te Arikiniui: 'What a precious legacy for our children of tomorrow'.

Nā reira, e kui mā, nā koutou anō te taonga nei i tuhi mai, i tuku mai mā ā tātou mokopuna. E tangi ana, e mihi ana te ngakau ki a koutou ko ngā pou whakaara o te Rōpū Wāhine Māori Toko i te Ora. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

AROHA YATES-SMITH

University of Waikato

Women Together: A History of Women's Organizations in New Zealand: Ngā Rōpū Wāhine o te Motu. Edited by Anne Else. Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs and Daphne Brasell Associates Press, Wellington, 1993. 569 pp., indices, list of authors, list of names. NZ price: \$59.95. ISBN 0-908896-29-8.

HISTORIANS OF NEW ZEALAND, like those elsewhere in the English speaking world, long adhered to a definition of 'politics' which excluded one of the central political phenomena of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: women's voluntary associations. Before 1893 New Zealand women, like those in the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia and doubtless many other places were denied access to most of the formal political institutions of their societies. One response to this exclusion was the development of all-women associations which allowed their members to shape a public role for themselves. At least fifty such organizations existed in New Zealand before parliament enfranchised women in 1893, and hundreds more were created in the decades that followed. The process still continues. In New Zealand as in the US the development of women's history as a field of study led to the recognition of the significance of women's associations. The process of uncovering and analysing their dynamics is still under way.

In recognition of the centenary of woman suffrage, the Historical Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs asked Anne Else to prepare a comprehensive history of the subject. She rounded up more than a hundred collaborators, and together they have created this important source book.

The earliest lasting organization treated here was founded in 1853; the latest are three new associations organized in 1993. In a succinct introduction the editor lays out the ground to be covered. The body of the book is composed of thirteen segments beginning with a chapter on Maori women's organizations and ending with recently formed lesbian societies. In between are chapters on politics, religion, welfare, education, employment, health, service, rural groups, literary and artistic associations. Each chapter begins with an analytical essay, generally written by a professional historian, and followed by (usually brief) descriptions of a very wide variety of organizations. Each segment concludes with a valuable list of sources. Analytical indices and lists of names are useful; identification of the authors by more than their names would have been a welcome addition.