

Cameron, in starting the Women's Health League is recognized. Durie's statement that YMP members Maui Pomare and Peter Buck 'worked with local villages, assisting in the development of physical improvements but without challenging the older pattern of leadership' does not accord with his own earlier admission that they 'were favourably disposed to the Tohunga Suppression Act'. The extent to which they believed that the future of the Maori lay in assimilation is not acknowledged.

It is the more recent period, however, that forms the focal point of the book. Here it is clear that Durie is writing with a political agenda. During the early 1980s health became a topic for discussion on marae, rivalling land as the central focus of Maori concern. The objectives for Maori health activism, as outlined at the 1984 Hui Taumata, included integrated cultural, social and economic development, positive funding (rather than negative spending), greater Maori autonomy, and Maori self-determination. These goals are discussed by Durie in relation to government policy and subsequent developments within the Health Department, hospital boards and area health boards. Durie concludes that by 1990 Maori were more actively participating in the health sector. He also notes a greater awareness by the Department of Health from 1984 of the importance of Maori involvement in health policy and health service delivery, if Maori health improvements were to occur, and a greater sensitivity by the department to Maori culture.

Durie's survey of recent reports relating to Maori health status, as well as his discussion of Maori health perspectives, the Treaty of Waitangi, and biculturalism will become important reference points for future policy makers, campaigners and reformers in Maori health. His history was written very much with an eye to the present and the future. That does not detract from its importance for historians. A social history of Maori health and health care has been long overdue, and one would hope that this book will lead to more detailed investigations of some of the historical issues raised here.

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*Otago's First Book: The Distinctive Dialect of Southern Maori.* By Ray Harlow. Otago Heritage Books, Dunedin, 1994. 40 pp. NZ price: \$9.95. ISBN 0-908774-86-9.

*Selling Otago: A French Buyer, 1840: Maori Sellers, 1844.* Peter Tremewan. Otago Heritage Books, Dunedin, 1994. 108 pp. NZ price: \$19.95. ISBN 0-908774-85-0.

THESE TWO books concern the land and the language surrounding Otepoti, presently the location of Dunedin, the 'Edinburgh of the South', and the University of Otago: a Scottish establishment sporting a moniker derived from the Kai Tahu dialect. These texts produced by a local publisher form part of a rising tide of publications detailing the Maori history of Te Waipounamu that has been too long overlooked by most historians.

*Otago's First Book* is appropriately the first in a new series dedicated to marking the 150th anniversary of European settlement in the far south. The work by the linguist Ray Harlow reprints an extremely rare taoka, 'He puka ako i te Korero Maori', known from one surviving copy. Harlow presents his argument, based on both linguistic and extra-linguistic evidence, for this being the work of an early Wesleyan missionary to the southern Kai Tahu, the Rev. James Watkin. The first book is a collection of phrases, prayers and Christian instruction to the early converts to Christianity. By such means

many southern Kai Tahu were able to secure a degree of literacy, a powerful tool in their interaction with the emerging colonial state, though not always a skill shared, as Harlow points out, by local resident Pakeha.

Harlow also emphasizes that this First Book was an early product of Watkin's labour. It shows signs not only of southern dialect usages but also Tongan constructions doubtless picked up during Watkin's mission service in those islands. While acting as decisive evidence for Watkin's hand in this anonymous pamphlet the existence of 'Tonganisms' reminds us of the complexities and hybridity of early colonial life in New Zealand and other parts of the Pacific where individuals were forever crossing geographical, cultural and, inevitably, linguistic boundaries.

The second work in this commemorative series, *Selling Otago*, widens the series' focus to incorporate not only the story of the marginalized Kai Tahu but that of forgotten Europeans who contributed their share to forming the local colonial society. The first part of the book retells the purchase of a block of land around Dunedin by Pierre Darmandarits, a Basque of French and later New Zealand nationality, immediately prior to the declaration of British sovereignty in 1840. Despite the support of a number of the Maori sellers Darmandarits was never able to convince the colonial authorities to recognize the justice of his case. I enjoyed the ironies of a Basque — perhaps the First Nation of Europe — from France being denied natural justice in a British colony but I thought Tremewan was sometimes patronizing (e.g. p.32), as if the historian must get the last laugh at the expense of '[t]he forgotten people of Otago history'.

The bulk of *Selling Otago* gives biographies of the 25 Maori sellers listed on the 1844 deed of sale transferring the Otago block of land (including the Dunedin area) to the New Zealand Company. Together these 'thumbnail sketches' give the reader a sense not only of the personality of each chief but an insight into the dynamics of the Kai Tahu hapu they represented and the pressures of colonization they faced. Each of them adopted different techniques to deal with European influences. Topi Patuki of Kai Taoka demonstrated subtle superiority when he offered free passage from Invercargill to Ruapuke Island in Foveaux Strait to two patronizing Americans but charged from £10 to return. The response of Wiremu Potiki of Kai Te Ruahikihiki and Kati [sic] Taoka was more enigmatic. He apparently performed haka for Dunedin bystanders who threw coins into his hat. Tremewan thinks Potiki demeaned his own culture. Perhaps Potiki was simply presenting ignorant Pakeha with what they expected, a parody of a haka, for which they paid a price: money he could use for his own purposes. Less a demeaning act than an early form of the later cultural entertainment put on by many Maori leaders, such as Te Puea Herangi, for fundraising purposes. The apparent commodification of culture encouraged by colonial life is capable of more complex readings.

These two books out of Otago Heritage Books although small in size are precious contributions to the emerging history from the south. They demonstrate the strength of local history and its potential contribution to a national historical discourse.

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