

Reviews

The Welcome of Strangers: An ethnohistory of southern Maori A.D. 1650–1850. By Atholl Anderson. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 1998. 249 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-877133-41-8.

THE WELCOME OF STRANGERS is a valuable addition to the burgeoning literature concerning the history of Ngāi Tahu Whānui. Atholl Anderson, a prehistorian and himself of Ngāi Tahu descent, presents us with a particular ethnohistorical interpretation of this southern history: particular in the sense that he has largely excluded the evidence of archaeology on the grounds that it is well nigh impossible to correlate its data with that found in the traditional tribal histories. Instead, he has relied on Ngāi Tahu traditions and European observations. Out of these latter sources he has constructed a sequence of chapters (One to Three) which simulate the region's history from the point of view of a traditional wānanga: the origins of the various iwi in the south (Te Rapuwai, Waitaha, Ngāti Mamoe and, finally, Ngāi Tahu); the migrations southwards of the various chiefs and hapū which descend from Ngāi Tahu's eponymous ancestor, Tahu Pōtiki; and lastly, the complex relationship between Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Mamoe which eventually led to the former's recognition as holding the manawhenua over this southern land. The following two chapters extend this historical review: Chapter Four describes the contact and connections between the takata pora (Pākehā) and the local Māori communities; Chapter Five recounts the nineteenth-century crises which threatened the integrity of Ngāi Tahu, including the inter-hapū warfare (kai huanga) of the 1820s and Ngāti Toa's incursions under Robulla (Te Rauparaha). The next sequence of chapters reflects Anderson's anthropological interests. Chapter Six details the chiefs who governed the diffuse hapū of Ngāi Tahu, the shift to a rūnanga style of governance as a response to the colonial situation, and the hapū which make up this widely spread tribal polity. Chapter Seven describes the forms of land management engaged in by various hapū including the hypothesized wakawaka and mahinga kai systems, and Ngāi Tahu's distinctively mobile lifestyle across vast tracts of land, rivers and sea. Chapter Eight focuses upon the mahinga kai, providing insights into the varied range of southern resources, notably the tītī (muttonbird) and pounamu: Anderson believes the exploitation of both commodities was stimulated under Ngāi Tahu. The twinned chapters Nine and Ten enumerate the settlements, population sizes and resources found in the northern (Canterbury, West Coast) and southern (Otago, Foveaux Strait, Fiordland) regions respectively. Chapter 11 reviews the population estimates for Ngāi Tahu Whānui (accepting 5000 as the fairest figure) and the evidence for its decline (by more than a half) due to a combination of war, disease and the marriage-out of many of its young women to Europeans. The final chapter stresses the transformation experienced by Ngāi Tahu during the mid-nineteenth century as its traditional ideas and practices gave way to an increasing acceptance of their European opposites. Anderson ends on a buoyant note, stressing the numbers who identify today as members of Ngāi Tahu Whānui.

The book's value is enhanced by its comprehensive index, bibliography and rich archive of illustrations. My criticisms of them are minor: indexed names do not show their occurrence in the book's whakapapa charts, the bibliography's

compartmentalization makes finding the Harvard-style author citations a little confusing, the caption for figure 7.3 is in reverse order to its illustrations. The book's illustrations deserve especial praise. They are excellently reproduced and are helpfully located near the relevant portion of the text. There are many images of villages, landscapes and individuals, detailed whakapapa charts, and maps of the various regions, some locating traditional sites and others providing statistical details about their fluctuating populations and migrations.

If Anderson succeeds in achieving a dynamic sense of Maori southern history, appropriate to such mobile iwi, he is clearly writing a history informed by the present construction of these groups as part of a larger Ngai Tahu. Without detracting from his oftentimes sensitive and perceptive reading of the traditional narratives, Anderson is presenting an interpretation from the point of view of the dominant hapu and iwi. The earlier chapters present Ngai Tahu's progressive colonization of all the regions: other groups recede to the margins. Anderson dismisses any simplistic understanding of the Ngati Mamoe-Ngai Tahu relationship, emphasizing the complex connections amongst the chiefs and hapu; nevertheless, those Ngati Mamoe who opposed the Pouputounoa truce are labelled 'The Unreconciled'. An alternative reading could equally consider them heroes who successfully sustained their mana. Perhaps this only shows, as Anderson himself suggests, how much any history is a partial view of the past, reflecting the understandings of particular (and victorious) individuals and social groups. Writing from the margins of tribal histories may remain a future challenge for Maori historiography.

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Iwi: The Dynamics of Maori Tribal Organisation from c.1769 to c.1945. By Angela Ballara. Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1998. 400 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 0-86473-328-3.

IWI is an important book. Angela Ballara's research is meticulous. She draws on material from a wide range of sources, including a good summary of published material and extensive use of manuscripts, government records and Maori Land Court minute books material. *Iwi* is probably the single most valuable contribution and certainly the most thorough research on Maori historical traditions since David Simmons' *The Great New Zealand Myth* (1976).

Iwi contrasts the political roles of pre-nineteenth-century hapu with modern twentieth-century iwi. Ballara describes how hapu were the primary political and economic entities in pre-European Maori society. Each hapu acted independently with a sovereignty of their own while also enjoying obligations and connections to the others. Ballara outlines the dynamics by which hapu formed and unformed, or shifted about, and how they related to one another through descent and allegiance. Hapu were not static, rather they were ever changing, dynamic, always in a state of flux.

Pre-European iwi, which comprised a number of related hapu, did not exercise the political authority they do today. Ballara argues that iwi relationships served to give a range of options for alliance, allegiance and co-operation. They might equally serve as justification for dissent or conflict. Hapu, despite acknowledging common descent, recognized their authority to act autonomously of each other. What Ballara emphasizes is the traditional primacy of local, community hapu autonomy over a more centralized but further reaching iwi model. Her point is a valid one. The first Europeans saw hapu as the tribe; so did the Treaty of Waitangi.