

## REVIEWS

a support for alternative cultural practices in the real world.

Fleras and Spoonley see constructive engagement as the 'best practice' solution in the decolonizing process. This will require a rethinking of Maori policy to emphasize the acknowledgement of Maori differences (including internal diversity), moving from need-driven policies to others based on rights, and cutting the Gordian knots of claims settlement. Were academics ever to rule the world, even in a Machiavellian sense, *Recalling Aotearoa* might be useful. As it is, it appears more as fodder with which to conduct post-modernist discourses. Its history is slender and revisionists like Belich receive scant attention.

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*A Voyage Round the World*. By George Forster. Edited by Nicholas Thomas and Oliver Berghof, assisted by Jennifer Newell, 2 vols. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu. 860 pp. US price: \$115.00. ISBN 0-8248-2091-6.

GEORGE FORSTER'S *Voyage Round the World*, first published in 1777, is arguably the richest of any eighteenth-century narrative about Pacific peoples. It describes Captain James Cook's second voyage, a voyage unprecedented for the range of its contacts with the people of the South Pacific and for the sustained character of interaction with some populations. Cook's ship *Resolution* stayed for 47 days at Dusky Bay, for example, and for a total of 102 days at Queen Charlotte's Sound. Forster's account of the voyage is considerably longer than Cook's and a great deal richer in description than any other narrative from the voyage. It does not limit itself to the voyage, but rather weaves together narrative, ethnographic, geographic and biological observations with reflections on human society and customs. Dating from a time before science started to aim for an objective account, this natural history tries, with a surprising degree of success, to give an all-encompassing description of all of the author's observations, reflections and emotions in a vivid and aesthetically pleasing form.

How did a German, who was just 18 at the beginning of the voyage and 23 when the book was published, come to join Cook's *Resolution* and write such a prestigious book? At first, a group of naturalists including the famous Sir Joseph Banks were supposed to accompany Cook. But when they declined at short notice, Johann Reinhold Forster and his son qualified for places since they had translated a number of philosophically informed travel narratives. On the journey, George was just an assistant, but when his father fell out with the authorities and was banned from writing a travel narrative (see the letters in the Appendix of the book, if you enjoy argument and intrigue), George stepped into his place. He used his father's journals, but he changed and expanded them considerably by introducing his own experiences, aesthetic elaborations and extended reflections. His style clearly reveals the influence of German pre-Romanticism (*Sturm und Drang*), and his own position as a political radical. He was very critical of what he perceived as tyrannical and parasitical despotism among South Sea peoples.

An edition of Johann Reinhold Forster's *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World* was published by the University of Hawai'i Press in 1996. This new scholarly edition of George Forster's account makes a further important work from Cook's second voyage readily available to English readers. With such a complex and multi-layered text, which influenced the development of science (witness Forster's influence on

Alexander von Humboldt), philosophy and literature (there were even plans to establish a writers' colony on Tahiti), the editors were forced to make a decision about the focus of their critical apparatus. Their clear emphasis on anthropological questions means that it is still worthwhile for readers with a knowledge of German to turn to the East German critical edition of George Forster's work (most of its annotations are in German), but for those mainly interested in the history of the South Pacific this edition is ideal. The footnotes reveal a highly impressive knowledge of the relevant anthropological and ethnohistorical scholarship, and compare in detail Forster's account with current opinion. Altogether, these detailed discussions further reveal the value of Forster's text: it does show a marked, though obviously uneven, ethnographic sensitivity, and many of his interpretations of the indigenous perceptions he encountered have survived the test of time. The openly subjective character of the account, moreover, foregrounds quite clearly 'the colour of the glass through which I [Forster] looked' (p.9) so that both sides of the cross-cultural encounters come into view.

Surprisingly, many of the names mentioned in the volume, and indeed in Forster's texts, are not indexed, but apart from that this edition leaves little to wish for. The introduction is competent and helpful, the detailed and reliable annotations very useful, and the reproductions of maps and pictures of high quality. Nicholas Thomas and Oliver Berghof have not only produced a very useful, but also an aesthetically pleasing edition.

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*Mr Explorer Douglas: John Pascoe's New Zealand Classic.* Revised by Graham Langton. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000. 320 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 0-908812-95-7.

EXPLORERS are back centre-stage thanks to the currently fashionable 'new Imperial history', environmental history, and 'postcolonial' theory. Each of these approaches to understanding our colonial past stresses the important role played by explorers in naming, claiming and legitimating European appropriation of lands occupied by indigenous peoples, thereby opening up those lands for European settlement. Graham Langton's revised version of John Pascoe's 1957 version (reprinted in 1969) of Charlie Douglas's journals and letters is, therefore, timely and welcome.

I first encountered John Pascoe when I began my postgraduate researches back in the antediluvian days before Rogernomics, word processors, managerialism and stakeholders. He struck this naïve youth as something of an archetypal, grey-suited Wellington bureaucrat who occupied an office in National Archives. I did not realize then that the apparently desk-bound archivist was also an expert mountaineer and a champion of the great outdoors who idolized the tough Scottish explorer, prospector, and surveyor of remote and mountainous South Westland. Langton fails to reveal Pascoe's idealization of this archetypal 'man alone'/'kiwi joker' but he has served a new generation of scholars and students well by making Pascoe's affectionate and brief biographical introduction readily available.

Douglas's own journals and letters produced during his lifetime (1840–1916) are, however, much more interesting to the historian despite his typically nineteenth-century failure to acknowledge adequately the enormous debt he owed his Maori guides. Langton has rightly left Douglas's wild spelling intact, which adds to the flavour of the documents and endears him immediately to all bad spellers of the world. Douglas reveals himself as