

Body Trade: Captivity, Cannibalism and Colonialism in the Pacific. Edited by Barbara Creed and Jeanette Hoorn. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2001 (with Routledge, New York and Pluto Press, Sydney). 296 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-877276-12-X.

BODY TRADE: Captivity, Cannibalism and Colonialism in the Pacific is a collection of 13 essays that emerged from a symposium in honour of Gananath Obeyesekere. Obeyesekere's own contribution to the book is celebrated in the book's foreword, written by Peter Hulme, as an addition to that important strain of postcolonial work which brings together literary analysis, historical contextualization and anthropological understanding in truly interdisciplinary fashion to unpick a set of colonial 'truths' (p. ix).

This set of descriptors for one 'strain' of postcolonial work acts as a coda for my own reading of this book. It promises to be about the captive body, or the image of the captive body, and examines the body as its main site for the convergence of ideas about 'race', sexuality, colonialism and captivity. Thus its focus is upon a body gazed at and controlled. But its other site is the Pacific, historically constructed as 'a site of unspeakable horrors', a site where all kinds of myths about the body and its captivity, cannibalism and colonialism also intersect. These connections are made reasonably well in the book's introduction, but the complexity of possible readings of these two sites could be framed even more convincingly.

Pacific studies and studies of colonialism are growing fields which are gaining much from such interdisciplinary, or we might say, post-disciplinary, work. The two editors of *Body Trade*, Barbara Creed and Jeanette Hoorn, are better known for their contributions to Cinema Studies and Fine Art history respectively. The particular flavour of this book — its emphasis on spectacle, the 'signs' of Oceanian and Pacific identity, narrative and the role of fiction — owes a good deal to this editorship. The emphasis in the editors' introduction on showing readers the relevance of feminist and psychoanalytic theory for postcolonial theory is important, but perhaps not a key aspect of every chapter, and is certainly not every author's passion.

Contributors also come from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and include trained historians now working in cultural studies and Australian studies (Chris Healy and Kate Darian-Smith); historians (Paul Turnbull); museum and art curators and art historians (Yves Le Fur and Mary Mackay); literary critics (Robert Dixon, Paul Lyons and Susan Martin); and anthropologist Obeyesekere.

Presumably these writers also think of themselves as working across disciplines. Healy's chapter on breastplates shows that interrogating the body, and the Pacific, as sites where exchange and encounter took on 'ambivalent' meanings, is inevitably and intrinsically an interdisciplinary endeavour. Healy deftly reads breastplates, used by Europeans to mark Aboriginal chiefs as both leaders and as men subjugated to Europeans and their modes of 'recognition', as material culture, as texts, and within postcolonial social memory. Healy's work is convincing because he articulates these intersections with flair and sensitivity, and he has an eye — and an ear — for historical detail. The multiple meanings of breastplates, from insignia to shackle to pre-emptive reminder of genocide, are carefully historicized.

The drawbacks of this 'approach' might be that specific studies and collections of essays become a loose collection of ideas that people have been exploring in their own ways. This book does not fit this description, partly because it addresses key themes that help interpret the subject of 'body trade'. The four themes used to shape the contents of this book, including the 'cannibal' body, captive white bodies, film and the colonized body, are useful.

The opening theme of the collection is the idea of 'spectacle', including the circus and bodies traded. The 'traffic in skulls' provides a useful starting point for the idea of bodies, or at least their parts, traded among colonial 'experts'. Turnbull's chapter describes the work of colonial medicine through this postcolonial lens. Colonial exhibition, in the chapter by Yves Le Fur (part of the exhibitionary complex explored elsewhere by Tony Bennett), demonstrates that like medicine, display underlined the way Pacific bodies became objects of desire for white Europeans through their use as 'spectacle'. Obeyesekere's own contribution is a piece about 'the act of cannibalism as a mythic construct' explored through the (fictional) writing of seaman Peter Dillon in the early nineteenth century. Obeyesekere argues that Dillon reveals his own identity in his narrative about cannibals; Dixon and Lyons similarly investigate cannibalism as it was 'seen' and narrativized.

These pieces interest me — as historian — and other chapters in the collection, including the pieces on white women in captivity and the two contributions on film by Hoorn and Creed, show that the direction of post-disciplinary studies are indeed exciting. The work on captivity, and Creed's chapter, brings gender into histories of colonial exchange and encounter, and furthers it (in the case of Creed) in a contemporary postcolonial setting. This is important work that was begun by Ann McGrath some years ago. Hoorn's chapter on documentary interests me for its fresh approach.

Finally, the particular publishing circumstances of this book are worth mentioning. *Body Trade* is a co-publishing venture; it is published by Otago University Press in New Zealand, by Routledge in New York, and by Pluto Press in Australia. This kind of publishing arrangement seems sure to reach a wider audience, and to break through the bind in which much publishing in Australia and New Zealand finds itself. Being seen, purchased and read outside these confines and context is important. It is also attractively presented by Otago University Press. All of this bodes well for future editors of collections: their function is important to scholars, readers and publishers.

CATHARINE COLEBORNE

University of Waikato

The Waterlily Diary of Jack Atkinson. Edited by Colin Amodeo. Clerestory Press, Christchurch, 2001. 100 pp. NZ price: \$30.00. ISBN 0-9582201-1-5.

COLIN AMODEO bears a notable name in the history of New Zealand shipping. His forebear Captain Frank Amodeo was a master operating out of Auckland (Amodeo Bay on the Coromandel Peninsula is named after him), while Colin himself — preferring the desk to the deck — has written extensively on the subject. The present work fits comfortably within his *oeuvre*, which has a strong Canterbury focus. It presents the diary of Jack Atkinson who, in 1932, with six of his old school chums from Christ's College seeking a spot of adventure, set out on a Pacific Islands cruise in the ageing 66-foot auxiliary ketch, *Waterlily*. Atkinson's father ran a wool-exporting business in Christchurch, and two of his companions were grand-nephews of William Pember Reeves.

Setting out from Lyttelton in March 1932 to the accompaniment of the Christ's College haka, the 'Waterlilies', as the crew styled themselves, planned to follow the south-east trade winds to New Guinea. After a leisurely cruise up the east coast to Russell, their first Pacific stop was at Fiji. There they spent four congenial months sailing around the group as well as enjoying the hospitality of Suva. Indeed, two of the party, the Reeves brothers, left the expedition there.