

Rere atu, taku manu! Discovering History, Language and Politics in the Maori-Language Newspapers. Edited by Jenifer Curnow, Ngapare Hopa and Jane McRae. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2002. 241 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-86940-279-0.

He Reta Ki Te Maunga. Letters to the Mountain. Māori Letters to the Editor 1898–1905. Introduced and translated by Margaret Orbell. Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd, Auckland, 2002. 167 pp. NZ price: \$29.95. ISBN 0-7900-0844-0.

Pāpāwai. 15 Maehe 1898. He pānuitanga tēnei, kia mōhio ai koutou, ka tū te hui a te Kotahitanga ki Pāpāwai, Kereitāone, Wairarapa, a te 14 o ngā rā o Āperira, a te 2 o ngā hāora p.m. o taua rā . . . . H. Mangakāhia P[irimia]. Me te Tiamana o te Kotahitanga, [me] Taare Tikao.

Pāpāwai. 15 March 1898. This is an announcement to let you know that the session of the Kotahitanga [parliament] will be held at Pāpāwai, Greytown, Wairarapa, on 14 April [1898], beginning at 2 p.m. that day . . . [signed] H[āmiora] Mangakāhia, Premier, with the Chairman of the Kotahitanga, Taare Tikao.

THAT, with the addition of some extra punctuation and macrons, was part of an announcement in No. 2. of 1898 of Te Puke ki Hikurangi, a Māori-language newspaper written and edited by Māori, printed on a Māori-owned press by Māori compositors, financed and distributed by Māori for Māori. It concerned the next session of a Māori parliament held on a marae, built and extended by Māori for the previous session of that parliament. The Kotahitanga parliament that year occupied itself with debating and amending draft legislation introduced by Premier Richard Seddon and Minister of Native Affairs, James Carroll, to the colonial parliament. Many of the Kotahitanga amendments and suggestions, published in Te Puke ki Hikurangi, were incorporated into the 1900 legislation which became the Māori Councils Act, 1900 and the Māori Lands Administration Act, 1900.

Māori newspapers are exciting. They are an incredibly rich resource, not only for Māori political history, but for waiata, whakapapa, cultural forms and practices, social history, the development of the language and many other matters. As the authors of Rere atu, taku manu! write, they are unprecedented as witness to Māori activities and opinion for 100 years or more from 1842. When used by historians, they provide one antidote to the kind of historical writing about Māori which relies on Pākehā sources of information. They are not a new resource, most having been available in the National Library as microfiche or hard copy. But in this new millennium, they have been re-introduced to the attention of scholars, Māori and Pākehā, because many of them have become available for the first time on the Internet, through a project undertaken at the University of Waikato between 1999 and 2001. That project, with all its difficulties, problems and splendid results, including English-language summaries of content and search options, is described by its designers in the last chapter of Rere atu, taku manu!

Not all the Māori-language newspapers, some with parallel texts in English, some not, were generated by Māori themselves. Some, especially the earliest, were the product of a colonial government concerned to promote its own policies and propaganda amongst Māori, 'disaffected' and disenchanted as many of them were by the realities of colonization. Others were the work of philanthropists or of the various churches, anxious to proselytize and to inculcate the values of British 'civilisation'. To a modern readership such works are patronizing at best, and at worst, overtly racist. But most of these other-generated periodicals still provide valuable historical evidence, and many were redolent of Māori wairua from the contributions of their Māori readers. The strains imposed by

dual cultures, divided editorship and Pākehā and colonial cross-purposes are discussed in papers by an impressive collection of authors, not all of which can be reviewed in detail here. Jenifer Curnow's 'A Brief History of Māori-Language Newspapers' in *Rere atu, taku manu!* is essential reading for anyone entering the world of the Māori newspaper. Jane McRae and Timoti Kāretu explore the rich bird and canoe imagery so often adopted by Māori writers, demonstrating the conventions carried across from the oral traditions of the marae into the written word. Lyndsay Head discusses the Māori political predicament in the colonial world. Steven Chrisp explores some of the 'great' newspapers, miracles of achievement and effort from the tiny Wairarapa Māori population, led by talented men and women from a few, relatively wealthy, chiefly families.

Margaret Orbell's collection of 'letters to the Mountain' is a selection of letters to the editor of *Te Puke ki Hikurangi* from 1898 to 1905, edited with commentaries and provided with parallel English texts. Her work complements that of Curnow, Hopa, McRae and their co-authors, providing us with glimpses of the riches to be found in only one of the 40 or more Māori newspaper series. Her collection is selected for its cultural mores, charm, wit and humour, as well as some glimpses of tragedy, rather than the more serious political movements and debates of the time. But even though the choice is perhaps purposely 'light' in its tone and content, it, and any selection from these sources, has tremendous value, if only for the parallel texts of Māori and English, accurately and elegantly translated for second-language learners.

It is to be hoped that more selections from the newspapers will be made available and translated in the future, perhaps with the help of scholars of the high standards of Timoti Kāretu. His sophisticated translations are a pleasure to read and are a contrast to the tendency amongst many translators to use simplistic and literal vocabulary to convey the often highly complex thought patterns of Māori authors. I would like to see new selections come to grips with the serious philosophical debates often embedded in editorials concerning the Repudiationists and the purposes of Kotahitanga, the evidence of splits within Māori opinion concerning these movements, the land legislation of the colonial and Māori parliaments, the debates on sovereignty, on Māori language, on tohunga, religion, tradition and whakapapa. How about translations of the weightier writing of Māori intellectuals such as Īhāia Hūtana or Hāmiora Mangakāhia; now there is a challenge!

Neither book is perfect. What book is? There are always errors that no one spots because the authors are too close to the work and the copy-editors too distant. One of the grosser errors lies in a photo caption in *He Reta Ki Te Maunga*, where it is asserted that 'the Māori Parliament (Te Paremata Māori) never sat at Pāpāwai' (p.12). (Otherwise, the photos in Orbell's work are particularly apposite and complementary to her selection.) As the quote and discussion at the beginning of this review demonstrates, the Māori parliament sat at Pāpāwai in 1897 and 1898. But there are few other major faults in either work; a few printing errors (*Rere atu, taku manu!*, p.1) or misplaced or absent macrons: pāremata when it means parliament should have one (see above); tangata whenua (*Rere atu, taku manu!* p.81) should not. (Tāngata is plural; tangata whenua is always treated as a singular collective phrase.)

Some minor matters of interpretation seem questionable; Head writes that the heyday of the Māori newspaper was relatively brief (p.147): even if one takes that heyday to be 1874–1913, four decades is a long time in human affairs and in the publishing of newspapers; in fact Māori were contributing to and reading newspapers in Māori from 1842 for at least a century, not counting any recent revival. Curnow's three phases of publishing seem a little artificial and rigid given the degree of overlap among her given categories (p.17). Surely the major distinction between kinds of Māori newspapers is, on the one hand, colonial government papers and those put out to serve their own purposes by religious bodies and temperance-driven philanthropists, and on the other hand, those

which were entirely Māori efforts, inspired by the great political and religious movements over the years. Amongst them were the Kīngitanga, Repudiation, Kotahitanga, Te Rūri Tuawhītu and Rātana movements. These are names and movements whose meanings can continue to resound in historical writing through our increased access to Māori newspapers. We are introduced to them well through these two books.

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*The Maori Language and Its Expression in New Zealand Law: Two Essays on the Use of Te Reo Maori in Government and in Parliament.* By Phil Parkinson. Victoria University of Wellington Law Review Monograph, Wellington, 2001. 60 pp.

THIS BOOK comprises two well-referenced articles — one previously published by the *Victoria University of Wellington Law Review* — as one of that journal's occasional monographs. The author, an Alexander Turnbull librarian, has used many previously unknown documents in Maori and this work foreshadows more wide-ranging outcomes of the library's Early Maori Imprints Projects. Plates reproduce various documents referred to in the text.

The first article, 'The Path of the Perfected Law', discusses the use of Maori in the government of New Zealand 1840–1865, when most of this government's subjects were Maori. James Busby's 1835 Declaration of Independence was conceived by him entirely in English and only printed in Maori in 1836.<sup>1</sup> Governor Hobson began — as the colonial administration largely continued — by leaving in English even his initial proclamations declaring his assumption of office and banning further private land purchases. By contrast, the Treaty of Waitangi, intended for Maori readers only, was printed in Maori on 17 February 1840 and not in English until 1844.

Only missionaries possessed the expertise necessary to help the infant colonial administration. William Colenso, the de facto government printer, attempted to translate a proclamation relating to military deserters, but as Henry Williams had found with the Treaty, the impenetrably technical language obliged a paraphrase to make any sense at all in Maori. There was no grammar or dictionary available other than Kendall's 1820 attempt, so Maunsell published one in 1842. George Clarke, the Protector of Aborigines, founded the well-received newspaper *Te Karere* in 1842, although this and all Maori language publications were shut down by George Grey, along with the Protectorate.

Maori publications during Grey's first governorship were ephemeral, his interest in myths not extending to the living language. Gore Browne revived the *Maori Messenger/Te Karere* and printed some other documents. Most significantly, following the 1856 Board of Inquiry's report, the compendium *The Laws of England* was published in 1858 under Francis Fenton's guidance. Although much legislation greatly affected Maori, the first statute to be printed in te reo was the Native Land Act 1862, and then only in 1865 when it was about to be revised.

Parkinson's second article, 'Strangers in the House', takes the theme on from 1868 — the arrival of te reo Maori in the House with the new Maori members — to 1900. In 1865, James FitzGerald created the *Kahiti* [= 'gazette'] *o Niu Tireni* to communicate notices in Maori; it endured until 1930. Standing orders for the printing in Maori of all legislation affecting Maori were frequently ignored — in 1872 Walter Mantell forced the government to admit they had translated nothing. However, more than printed documents were now necessary to involve Maori in the process that had subjugated them. Maori parliamentarians originally all spoke in Maori, their speeches were generally reprinted in Maori newspapers, the Hansard translation giving but a 'meagre representation'.