

identity was shaped by more external influences or international trends than we sometimes admit.

At a time when nuclear issues appear to be rearing again, and when New Zealanders are contemplating the costs of their own anti-nuclear legislation, this book is essential reading. Written to the most rigorous historical standards, and committed to balance it lays a path for historians around the world to write dozens of more focussed works. It is an essential aid to understanding key features of contemporary New Zealand politics and identity and enduring international issues.

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Taua: 'musket wars', 'land wars' or tikanga? Warfare in Maori Society in the Early Nineteenth Century. By Angela Ballara. Penguin, Auckland, 2003. 543 pp. NZ price: \$59.95. ISBN 0-14-301889-2.

RON CROSBY'S *MUSKET WARS* put the pre-1840 period of conflict in New Zealand back on the historical radar screens and reminded historians that they had neglected a very important and compelling segment of this country's history. Angela Ballara's *Taua* takes the period by the scruff and comprehensively maps it out, analyses it, and produces a masterful historical work. Its value lies in (a) the comprehensive research it is based on (there is a wealth of information in this book), (b) the author's ability to crystallize and discuss a range of key concepts and occurrences, (utu, muru, take, etc) and (c) the book's balance. Ballara's discussion on cannibalism, for example, carefully and professionally weighs the evidence. *Taua* is superbly written, accessible to a general readership and is a sound scholarly contribution to knowledge.

Ballara has dispensed with the label 'musket wars' and challenged the assumption that they were the main catalyst for conflict in the period. She dismisses myths about the devastating impact of muskets, citing examples of highly destructive pre-contact conflict. Ballara admits to lacking knowledge of the technological detail of weaponry. This is a common problem among New Zealand academic historians. Knowledge of it is not superfluous, but essential to a better understanding of conflict in New Zealand in all periods it occurred. Information about the technological weaknesses of early nineteenth-century firearms (in particular the most commonly available 'white' powder 'trade musket') would assist Ballara in explaining why muskets were not as devastating as we have previously assumed. The argument would be strengthened further still, by drawing out the correlation between universal experience with eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century firearms. Much of this experience would tie in with early nineteenth-century conflict in New Zealand. The weakest part of the book is its chapter on tactics which relates various defensive measures, feints and ploys, but does not analyse battle situations for their tactical components.

Ballara's analysis of the causes of war, of the relationship between war and tikanga, of the causes of peace (which is an essential element in understanding conflict), and the techniques of peacemaking is superb. The deep understanding of utu, the reciprocity that stems from it, and the complexity of its functioning in the early nineteenth century is informative and compelling. The consciousness Maori had of a 'balance' to be maintained in dealing with dispute and conflict is vitally important. Ballara's analysis of the causes of conflict offers insights even into the fighting of the 1850s and 1860s, where close analysis of the evidence can show important parallels, for example Te Kooti's attack on Mohaka in 1869 in response to Ngati Pahuwera opposition to him the year before.

Similarly too, peacemaking techniques in the various bouts of conflict in the 1850s must certainly have roots in the period Ballara discusses.

Ballara is also conscious of levels of warfare, from ritual (non-combative) forms of confrontation, where 'anger was often managed and channelled' away from conflict, to limited and seemingly controlled levels of violence — to total escalations, and she is aware also of occasions when tikanga, or the rules of war or utu, did not work.

Ballara handles the end of the conflict period particularly well, stressing that the transition to less intense conflict levels after 1840 was the result of varying times and nature of change. There is a strong list of the types of changes: trade, Christianity, literacy, new ideas, and change in chiefly attitudes. A very good example for the change in Maori society, not used in the book, is the experience of the Rotorua chief Tohi Te Ururangi whose centrality to the tension following the Ongare incident in 1842 is discussed, but not his importance to the peace that followed. In taking the Governor's love in place of his dead son, Tohi took on a role that was fundamental to the establishment of peace in 1845, and his subsequent role in the 1850s as a mediator between warring Maori groups says a great deal for the Maori role in the transition from conflict to peace. Nor was he alone.

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Shifting Centres. Women and Migration in New Zealand History. Edited by Lyndon Fraser and Katie Pickles. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2002. 213 pp. NZ price \$39.95. ISBN 1-877276-32-4.

IN LYNDON FRASER'S OWN CONTRIBUTION to this collection, Mrs Ryall, an Irish woman living in Barrytown on the West Coast, is recalled walking along the beach each night saying the rosary 'because she believed the breeze blew straight from Ireland'. Her behaviour is slightly eccentric only if considered without regard to the dislocations and relocations inherent in migration. Far from being a substitution of one place, one life, one identity for another, migration, this collection suggests, is as much about accumulation, circulation and the maintenance of connection, of cultural and interior universes that transcend spatial distance. Lyndon Fraser and Katie Pickles' *Shifting Centres* seeks to tip the fulcrum of migration studies towards women, towards contemporary approaches of diaspora and transnationalism, and in a direction that dethrones the nineteenth-century 'pioneering' story in favour of an expanded view of migration and migrant identity.

Understandably then, the nineteenth century is dealt with lightly. Of the ten chapters only two address nineteenth-century migrant groups while five deal with post-World War Two migrant experience. The title refers both to the literal act of shifting house and the collection's historiographical purpose. Less directly, it also points at the great variety in the ways histories of transition can be told and the centrality of those stories — for individuals, in families, within communities and in societies at large. The first and last chapters illustrate, in starkly different ways, why such stories are important. The story of coming from somewhere else is perhaps more important to Polynesian New Zealanders than it is to Pakeha New Zealanders, for it is these journeys that bestow identity. Angela Wanhalla's wide ranging discussion of Maori women in waka traditions establishes stories of origin within the ambit of migration as well as recognizing their key function as identity markers. Her consideration of the waka traditions' immense popularization and the scholarly controversy over their interpretation emphasizes the constant reworking of such stories. At the other extreme the most recent arrivals, German women of the 1980s and 1990s interviewed by Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, tell stories of their migration in order to confirm the choice they have made. Personal narratives of expectation, trial and