

Thereafter, the Crown found it necessary to deal with tribal or pan-tribal confederations, like Te Arawa and Tuwharetoa, as historic issues were settled. The rise of the Ratana movement took the Crown a little by surprise, especially as its political pretensions and its preference for a socially sensitive political base, became known. This saw Ratana gravitate towards the Labour Party, then on the rise. As a consequence, as a conservative reaction, 'Ngataism' prevailed as the basis of Maori public policy. Hill describes 'Ngataism' as 'the conscious adjustment of Maori society in all its elements to the changed conditions and standards of life' (p.146). Until Ratana candidates were able to win office, the Maori search for autonomy would largely rest upon tribal initiatives, rather than the later Ratana-influenced 'supra-tribal' initiative.

The advent of war in 1939 brought about a major 'pendulum swing' in the Crown's engagement with Maori aspirations for autonomy. The creation of the Maori War Effort Organisation was brought about for functional purposes; to increase Maori recruitment rates and to enlarge Maori support for industry at home and the boys overseas. Parire Paikea MP, however, harboured the hope, shared by his Ratana colleagues, that the organization could provide the template for a post-war network of autonomous tribal authorities. The 1946 Maori Economic Social and Advancement Act put an end to this aspiration, instigating an era of increased control from the Maori Affairs Department centre.

In the end, says Hill, Maori were adaptive and resilient 'in the face of great odds'. Maori continued their 'enduring quest' for autonomy, started in the nineteenth century, against a state which possessed an 'overwhelming power' which would always be used to pursue its own agenda. This is a sobering conclusion, to be sure. Hill castigates historians who continue to ignore this hegemonic facet of the longstanding Maori-Crown relationship. His description of this process, beginning in the nineteenth century and reaching (for now, until a new book is completed) the 1950s is told with both sophistication and elegance; and New Zealand's historiography of Crown-Maori relations is much the stronger for this scholarship.

DANNY KEENAN

Victoria University of Wellington

Historical Frictions: Maori Claims and Reinvented Histories. By Michael Belgrave. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2005. 388 pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN 1-86940-320-7.

THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL'S PROCESS OF ENQUIRY AND REPORTING is slowly generating a literature of its own, written mostly by participant observers and including contributions by Tribunal members, lawyers and historians. Michael Belgrave's outstanding book is the most sophisticated and extended meditation on the Waitangi Tribunal process to date. The author is particularly well-placed to embark on such a project. Having been an early appointment to the Tribunal's research staff in 1987 (he went to Wellington, he says, 'reluctantly', believing that 'land deeds and court decisions appeared a dull window into New Zealand's past', but found that he 'could not have been more wrong' [p.vii]) he continues to be actively engaged with the Tribunal process as the leader of a prominent research team which has presented high-quality historical research to the Tribunal in a number of important recent enquiries.

Belgrave wrote this book as a consequence of his Tribunal experience, and seeks to grapple with some of the deeper historical questions that the Tribunal process sometimes side-steps, glosses over or resolves by considering them — as it has to — within the framework of its jurisdiction as a legal body. The author is in no doubt as to the

importance of the Tribunal's work. The Tribunal's investigations, as he notes, 'are by far the most comprehensive and extensive review of any country's colonial legacy' [p.1]. The Tribunal has now released 98 reports, ranging in size from a few dozen pages to massive documents of several volumes, and the research reports written for the process would fill a small library. The process is of course one of judicial enquiry into the past, its legal nature operating as an important determinant of both how the Tribunal functions in practice and of its approach to history.

Belgrave sees the process as one by which a complex present, with its own priorities and concerns, engages with a complex past via a legalized process of enquiry, research, presentation of evidence and reporting. He makes the important point that in a way the Tribunal process is nothing new. A consistent feature of New Zealand history has been engagement between colonizer and colonized in front of courts and tribunals: 'the court has been much more important than the battlefield' (pp.16–17). The Waitangi Tribunal process is just the latest instalment of a lengthy history of court hearings, special commissions of inquiry, parliamentary investigations, royal commissions and so forth. This means that much of the Tribunal's work in any given claim can be taken up with reviewing and commenting on earlier judicial and quasi-judicial investigations. These earlier investigations were to a considerable extent about Maori issues *inter se* as much as they were concerned with Maori engagements with governments. This remains true of the current Waitangi Tribunal process as well, despite its ostensible focus on 'the Crown'. Indeed, in some enquiries, Maori issues involving other Maori are as important, or occasionally even more important, than interaction with the colonial state. (Examples are the Chatham Enquiry, and to a lesser extent the recent Northern South Island Enquiry.)

Belgrave approaches his topic partly by means of general reflection and analysis, and partly through case studies. A substantial part of the book is taken up with detailed examination of the Ngai Tahu, Taranaki, Muriwhenua and Chatham Islands Enquiries, these being the most important Tribunal reports of the 1990s. His method in each instance is to review the historical background to the Tribunal's Enquiry, to comment in detail on the Tribunal hearings — paying welcome attention to the historical evidence adduced by the various parties — and then to reflect at length on the Tribunal's findings as set out in its report (which may take some years in the writing). The objective in each case is to site the Tribunal process in its historical context, but also, and of equal significance, in its contemporary political and policy context.

An example of Belgrave's method is his discussion of the Chatham Island claims in chapter six. Here he begins with the general history of the Moriori people and of the Moriori–Ngati Mutunga encounter, before moving on to deal fully with the Tribunal investigations and with the evidence led, respectively, by counsel for Moriori, Ngati Mutunga and the Crown. Belgrave is well aware of the high stakes involved in this Enquiry in terms of access to cash and benefits through contemporary settlement processes, in particular the allocation of fisheries assets under the Maori fisheries claims settlement legislation enacted in 1989 and 1992. The Tribunal was not able to deal directly with fisheries allocation, that part of its jurisdiction being removed as an outcome of the settlements, but its findings as to traditional title to the islands would be likely to have significant outcomes in terms of access to entitlements. This was something that all parties to the Tribunal hearings were well aware of. The claims process was also in its own right an important aspect of a resurgent and highly self-conscious Moriori identity, vindicated and asserted through the Tribunal process. The claims were fraught ones and were stressful and tense for everyone involved (as this reviewer can attest). To deal with the claims the Tribunal adopted certain strategies and approaches in its report, one of which was to deny to Ngati Mutunga the validity of their assertion of a title to the islands by Maori custom. This was a harsh outcome for Ngati Mutunga, who throughout the

hearings felt that they, rather than the Crown, were the real defendants, and Belgrave is clearly dubious about some aspects of the wisdom of the Tribunal's strategy. The Tribunal handled the Chatham Islands enquiry 'according to contemporary sensibilities' in attempting to devise a fair solution for the present day, but in doing so has 'simply handed another grievance on to future generations, this time Ngati Mutunga, as had the court hearings of the past' (p.316).

A final chapter deals with the settlement process of the present day. 'Settling claims', as Belgrave observes, 'is the other side of making claims, a process that has proved just as malleable over time'. Crown-Maori settlements have their own whakapapa. Belgrave traces earlier settlements, beginning in the 1920s, before analyzing very trenchantly some aspects of the settlements of the present. He reveals the failure of recent governments to develop a coherent settlements policy, and notes too the unrealistic expectations of governments and other parties as to how long it was all going to take. In this chapter perhaps more could have been said about the role of the Office of Treaty Settlements and the ways in which the settlement process is coming to complicate, frustrate or distort the Tribunal's enquiries.

The case studies and the opening and closing sections of the book are well integrated and Belgrave has certainly succeeded in his aspiration to contextualize the Tribunal's inquiries both historically and in the contemporary world. This reviewer would have preferred perhaps less general history in the case study chapters and even more analysis and reflection on the Tribunal process, but no doubt many readers will welcome the more general background material without which those parts of the text dealing with the Tribunal hearings and analysis would have little meaning. This is an undoubtedly provocative, well-written and interesting book which makes an important contribution to a topic of great national moment.

RICHARD BOAST

Victoria University of Wellington

Frontier of Dreams: The Story of New Zealand. Edited by Bronwyn Dalley and Gavin McLean. Hodder Moa, Auckland, 2005. 416 pp. NZ price: \$59.99. ISBN 1-86971-006-1.

THE PUBLICATION OF NEW GENERAL HISTORIES OF NEW ZEALAND has accelerated in the past few years, from James Belich's 1,000 pages in two volumes to Michael King's *Penguin History*. *Frontier of Dreams* appeared after my Cambridge *Concise History*, and a 30-chapter *New Oxford History of New Zealand* is in progress. What distinguishes *Frontier of Dreams* from these other histories is its partnership with a lavish television series and the associated visual component, combined with the team approach to writing by historians at the Ministry for Culture and Heritage who filled out storylines drafted for each of the television episodes by historians from the ministry and academia. The result is a large and attractive volume with the sort of cover that you would expect for a book of a television series, a volume which serves both as an accompanying text for an on-screen interpretation of the national story and as a stand-alone history of New Zealand.

This tome is substantial in every sense, testing the range of my kitchen scales at 2.3 kg. It would not transport easily on a bus or on a plane; it is even too heavy to read in bed. Evidently the producers envisaged a coffee table book, and you need to be seated comfortably to read it, and to study its rich and colourful illustrations. Such practicalities matter when a book claims to be the most accessible of New Zealand histories. To my mind this requires being transportable. The claim of being comprehensive is more valid (if not the 'most' comprehensive), and so it should be, at over 400 pages.