

## Reviews (Books)

*Māori Peoples of New Zealand: Ngā Iwi o Aotearoa*. Edited by Jock Phillips, Basil Keane and Rangi McGarvey. David Bateman Ltd, Auckland, 2006. 294 pp. NZ price: \$50.00. ISBN 1-86953-622-3.

*MĀORI PEOPLES OF NEW ZEALAND: NGĀ IWI O AOTEAROA* is a wonderfully illustrated book, beautifully presented with over 400 maps and photographs, complete with a glossary of Māori words and a useful reference list for further reading beyond the text itself. It brings together some of the country's leading scholars, whose intimate knowledge of Māori and iwi histories enrich this compilation with a fascinating blend of voices, Māori and non-Māori. Adapted from the highly successful on-line encyclopedia, *Te Ara*, the book provides a range of brief historical introductions to the experiences of Māori and iwi in and beyond Aotearoa/New Zealand. The book sets out to address three major questions: 'Who are the Māori people of New Zealand, how did they get here', and 'what are the main tribal groups?'. These questions, although subsuming iwi and Māori within the story of the 'nation', provide a useful framework, from which the chapters are subsequently organized.

The volume begins with an interesting consideration of early 'Pacific Migration', followed by a cluster of chapters that examine the varying myths, theories, debates and ideas surrounding Māori creation stories, origins, migration patterns, canoe voyages, settlement and the formation of independent tribes in Aotearoa. These opening sections are followed by an alphabetically ordered compilation of chapters that introduce 'the major tribes' of the country, an unfortunate phrase, which some tribes might rightly contest (p.9). In addition to the alphabetical listing of iwi are two further chapters, which consider the experiences of 'Māori Overseas' (Chapter 11) and the unsettled and contentious emergence of 'Urban Māori' (Chapter 41). They are well-crafted introductions and, as Ranginui Walker points out in the Foreword, 'are already well known on the marae' and invaluable in this compilation, where they can 'be found in one place', thus filling an important 'gap' in the literature (p.7). The brief tribal histories are skilfully written and researched, intertwined meticulously with an array of both quantitative and qualitative data, including personal communications, interviews and statistics.

In resisting the urge to write a totalizing narrative of the Māori in Aotearoa, the editors have wisely divided the chapters amongst iwi, allowing them to compose histories on their own terms. This, as the editors note, was an issue of some importance, with contributors, as much as possible, 'drawn from the iwi themselves' (p.9). Consequently, the chapters are infused with a distinctly personalized interpretation of each tribe's oral traditions, histories, whakapapa (genealogies), whakataukāki (proverbial sayings), and mōteatea (chants). However, as much as the tribal histories are empowered in this sense, the title *Māori Peoples of New Zealand* serves as a reminder that the short introductions are merely part of a grander narrative, which positions them as 'essential' components 'of our nation's story' (inside cover). Indeed, the very fact that 'Māori' in this volume remains simply a subcategory within *Te Ara*'s more dominant theme, New Zealanders, is an issue that historians, and particularly Māori scholars, might consider more closely. Writing iwi histories on our own terms is one thing, but compiling them within an overarching framework that renders them still a subcategory within a more dominant 'national' history is something quite different.

Despite these cautionary concerns, this is an important collection of histories, easily accessible, and a worthy reference point for both lay readers and seasoned researchers. The consideration of Māori beyond a local context is an important one, and offers a quick glimpse of an all too underdeveloped area in Māori historical scholarship. Furthermore,

this volume might have benefited from some additional chapters regarding some of the dynamic leaders, movements and moments in Māori history. Although iwi histories provide necessary intersections beyond the binaries of Māori and Pākehā, the flourishing Māori media, the struggles and successes of Māori women, and a new generation of outspoken Māori youth and entrepreneurs operating beyond just iwi contexts are arguably some of the ‘major’ threads that bring us together as a people, yet highlight the dynamic nature of our own diversity. Nevertheless, there is only so much that can be squeezed into any publication.

The authors and editors of *Māori Peoples of New Zealand: Ngā Iwi o Aotearoa* have produced a much-needed text. It is interesting to note that this book, although based on the information and vision of Te Ara, has been published in English with no alternative Māori language text. This is certainly a curious omission, but one that perhaps reflects the still significant distance between the production of popular histories for public consumption and the need to imbue them with the tools necessary for transforming ‘normalised’ (and still oppressive) conceptualizations of what history is, or should look like. To this extent, this book takes an important step in that direction. It provides a long-awaited treasure chest of tribal histories in one place, whose views illuminate the complexity beneath essentialized understandings of who Māori are and have been. Most importantly, it brings Māori perceptions of what is important in our history to the fore, while at the same time acknowledging the problematic tensions in the evolution of our knowledge and identities.

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*Settler and Migrant Peoples of New Zealand*. Edited By Jock Phillips. David Bateman Ltd, Auckland, 2006. 308 pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN 978-1-86953-623-7.

NOT EVERYONE ENJOYS or has access to the realm of hypertext. This reviewer is one of many who will warmly welcome the publication in book form of essays originally researched and prepared by a team at Te Manatu Taonga — the Ministry for Culture and Heritage — for Te Ara, the on-line encyclopaedia of New Zealand.

With its clear and attractive layout, accessible style, comprehensive yet concise coverage of an enormous range of topics, careful referencing and wealth of visual and other illustrative material, this handsome publication will be read and treasured by many New Zealanders; it is also (especially for those who prefer to use the book rather than the web version) a magnificent teaching and learning resource. About one-third of the substantial text is devoted to seven introductory essays outlining and explaining the main patterns and regulatory processes of migration to New Zealand since about 1800, while the remaining 44 short essays, as a collection, provide a strong sense of the diversity of peoples who have reached these islands by sea or air since New Zealand entered the world’s economic system in the late eighteenth century.

Beginning with ‘Africans’ and ending with ‘Welsh’, then followed by an additional essay on ‘Kiwis Overseas’, many of the so-called community essays are written by subject experts. There are 15 or more subject authors contributing to this second section of the book in addition to the regular writers who formed part of Te Ara’s research and production team. Perhaps more than any other book published as an output from the Te Ara project, this work reflects the vision and research expertise of Te Ara’s general editor Jock Phillips, who has written two of the introductory essays and the chapter on the Irish. Te Ara’s essays on Maori explorations and migrations, and the diversity of Maori peoples and cultures are published in a separate book, *Māori Peoples of New Zealand: Ngā Iwi o Aotearoa*.