

Once Were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania. By Alice Te Punga Somerville. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London, 2012. 265pp. NZ price: \$31.49 (pbk). ISBN 9780816677566 (hardcover), ISBN 9780816677573 (pbk).

This book examines the 'intersections of Indigeneity and migration' in regard to Māori and the rest of Oceania's people and places (p. xx). For historians who might think the title signals a new history, this book will disappoint because its evidence is not archive-based or the outcome of oral histories; rather, its evidence is creative works by Māori and other Pacific peoples. Even so, taken as a history of ideas and the how art reflects life, Te Punga Somerville's critical literary studies approach has much to offer historians and others interested in Oceania's interconnections as well as disconnections. She takes her cue from the work of Albert Wendt and Epeli Han'afa, who both revaluated Oceania as a connected sea of islands rather than 'islands in far sea' (pp. 5-6). In origin, Māori 'once were Pacific', part of this connected world, but to what extent they still are or could be is teased out here via literary and other productions.

This is a subtle and multi-layered critical work for it goes beyond written texts to performance. An appealing conceit frames the study around the cover image by Michael Tuffery (a New Zealander of Samoan, Rarotongan, and Tahitian ancestry), based on the Rāiatean Tupai's painting of an exchange of tapa cloth by Joseph Banks for a crayfish offered by a Māori in 1769. The painting used by Tupai and that of Tuffery link them across time. The tapa becomes the Oceanian region outside Aotearoa / New Zealand but connected, even if by fragments; the crayfish (koura) is Aotearoa / New Zealand. As in the painting, they connect across space.

The book is in two parts followed by a conclusion: Part I, covering the 'realm of tapa' (p. 4), considers how Māori are located within Pacific spaces beyond Aotearoa / New Zealand; Part Two, the 'realm of koura' (p. 95), examines how Māori and other Pacific peoples interact within New Zealand. Part I ranges from the work of Te Ranginira (Sir Peter Buck) as ethnographer and director of the Bishop Museum in Honolulu to performances at the Mormon Pacific Cultural Centre in Hawaii, to a proposal for regional anthologies. The main focus is the work of some who could contribute to these – Vernice Wineera, Evelyn Panawa Nathan and Robert Sullivan – all based or published in Oceania outside New Zealand, as well as the few Māori writers in New Zealand who have articulated Māori experience within Oceania: Wit Ihimera and Hinewirangi Kōhu-Morgan.

In Part II, Māori and Pacific (or Pasifika) connections within Aotearoa/New Zealand come to the fore, as well as some of the complexities and conflicts, making this a more political perspective, absent largely from Part I. Collaborations between Māori and Pasifika peoples are evident in resistance to the nation state, as seen in the ephemeral 1973 multi-Polynesian language publication, *Kōngō*; in music, such as the group Neisian Myrtle; and in poetry, *Polytization*, a DVD made in 2008. The study moves on to consider how Māori – Taylor, Grace and Grace-Smith – write about connections with the region, then how Pasifika writers within New Zealand, mainly Campbell and Milo, portray how they as manuhiri (guests) articulate connections with Māori. In Chapter 7, using *Romeo and Juliet* as the template, Te Punga Somerville critiques the plays *Romeo and Tusi* and *Once Were Samoans*, as well as a TV drama series, *The Marikeri*, that reveal the disconnections between Māori and Pasifika (specifically, Samoan) experiences when intimate relations are involved.

The concluding sections discuss the writer's position as an academic and the need to find hidden or misplaced writings by Māori in English as well as Māori. Far more research is both needed and necessary to appreciate the full creativity of ancestors, both intellectually and of blood and bone, whose work still lies sleeping in old desks, museums and archives.

The conclusion is considerably more controversial, for it raises the issue of Māori-Pasifika disconnection and argues that often competition for the state's resources is at the heart of this. Intervened are settler claims (and Pasifika fit into this on occasion), at least among some, that

in New Zealand 'all people come from somewhere else' (p. 206). This is true, but what tends to be forgotten is that ancestral Māori happened to be the first and should, in their view, be considered indigenous first people, as people of the land. So long as that is remembered by more recent arrivals some real possibilities of positive dialogue will prevail and, as prefigured by Ngāwhiri Tomoana among Pasifika peoples, a 'Hawalki nation' to champion indigenous rights across Oceania could emerge (p. 210).

Because so much of the Māori-Pacific connectedness at least since the late nineteenth century has been mediated or interrupted by the colonial state – as we learn in this work – there is a tendency to put aside how this has had embodied consequences. In relation to ancestors and connections with the Pacific, Te Punga Somerville notes in the final chapter of Part II that at the base of many poukōmanawa (supporting post) of Victoria University's marae, Te Herenga Waka, is a figure representing Te Ranginira, who did so much work in and for Oceania. In addressing colonialism's impact on Māori and on Māori-Pacific relations and thus on their creative works, it is easy to forget there are other layers of complexity induced by second-wave settlers. Just as *Romeo and Juliet*, a product of a colonizing nation, provides a universal theme played out in Pasifika theatre, Te Ranginira and many of the writers and artists discussed in this book along with its author have a European heritage as well as an Oceanic one. Part of their heritage, as much as colonialism, enables them to read, see, and hear each other's work. This richness of identity, while not the central focus to this work, nonetheless deserves some acknowledgement, even if only because manuhiri have become ancestors. As Linda in Patricia Grace's *Murwhenua* reminds us, every branch of whakapapa 'touches every other' (p. 202). More widely, in Oceania's genealogies, with the exception of Ihimera's novella *The Wāiale Rider*, both Melanesia and Micronesia have almost fallen off the map in this study. This attenuated sea of islands extends east from Fiji and south from Hawai'i. *Once Were Pacific* is well researched, lucid, and a significant contribution to literary studies broadly defined. Even so, it is about a Polynesian Pacific. Given the histories of interactions between Māori and the Pacific beyond Aotearoa, be they ancient or modern, it would be more correct to say so in the title.

JUDITH A. BENNETT

University of Otago

Samoa's Journey 1962-2012: Aspects of History. Edited by Leasiolagi Malama Meleisea, Penelope Schoeffel Meleisea and Eilite Meleisea. Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2012, 245pp. NZ price: \$40.00. ISBN 9780864738356.

Samoa's Journey 1962-2012 is a scholarly contribution to the celebration of Samoa's fiftieth anniversary of political independence in 2012. The book has essays from 29 academic and research staff of the National University of Samoa (NUS) and describes in seven chapters selected aspects of legal, political, religious, economic and sociocultural development since independence. The chapters are well written and rich, with noteworthy information on the respective areas of development. This will make the collection useful reading for those wishing to learn about modern Samoa, as well as a good resource for undergraduate teaching.

The introduction by Leasiolagi Malama Meleisea points out that the tone of the book 'is celebratory' (p. 16). This indeed is echoed through the chapters, which emphasize the milestones achieved through each sector of Samoan society over the years. In law and custom, for example, localizing the judiciary has been a meritorious achievement marked by, among other things, the appointments of both men and women judges as well as the establishment of the Law and

Justice Sector. The latter comprises several government ministries that collaborate to 'support the rule of law and the principle of judicial independence' (p.30). Achievements in the social sector include the establishment of the National University, improved health services and the broader recognition of women's participation in national and community work. The chapters acknowledge – explicitly or implicitly – the role of women and overseas-based Samoans in national development. For the former, examples relate to women in parliament, judiciary and government; in church leadership; in education and health; in the material and performing arts; and in sports. Certainly, the book itself stands as a fine example of this achievement, with more than half its authors being women. Contributions by migrant Samoans have been in the form of 'remittances [that have constituted] a major part of Samoa's national and family income' (p.125) and their involvement in sports, health, education, media and the arts is also noted.

The challenges to national cohesion and development that emerged during the last 50 years are acknowledged. Chapter 1, on law and custom, notes the inevitable tension underpinning the coexistence of judicial law and Samoan custom. Issues of human rights conflicting with customary law that upholds the authority of the chiefs define the delicate boundary of legal-customary relations. The two case studies on the splitting of chiefly titles and the changing status of women powerfully demonstrate this. The evolving nature of parliamentary governments, as outlined in Chapter 2, reflects the testing ways in which the political party system and traditional or family alliances have continued to challenge, adapt to and redefine each other. A similar pattern is obvious in the growing integration of the Christian church with culture, as discussed in Chapter 3. While its role in education and social development is well known, the church as a socializing unit itself also has issues that are perceived as burdensome to the people. Matters of 'recent concerns' are noted in Chapters 4 to 7, and include the rising incidence of poverty, costs of technology, non-communicable diseases, natural disasters, contemporary relevance of art, and media freedom. These unfortunately receive a brief mention only and are obviously among the 'many areas' that according to Meleisea 'deserve closer scrutiny in ... future works' (p.17).

As Chapters 4 and 5 show, foreign aid has underpinned social and economic development in areas ranging from infrastructure and road construction to breastfeeding programmes. The education sector has particularly acknowledged 'the valuable assistance of key development partners' behind the improvements in education delivery (p.155). For the most part, Samoa's relations with donors are good ... and [the latter] tend to tailor their aid programmes to the reform agenda and sectoral policies that the government ... has identified' (p.119). What is not clear, however, is the extent of aid donors' influence on areas like project decisions and operation. The authors express a concern about the country's dependency on aid as detrimental, noting that it 'gives the government less control over the economy because relevant decisions are made abroad' (p.119). Others warn that 'it is worth remembering that Samoa ... is extremely vulnerable to the vagaries of not only nature but also the power plays of the dominant nations of the world' (p.156). Nonetheless the achievements that the book celebrates have been possible through the support of Samoa's development partners.

By concentrating on local aspects of history the authors allude to a key theme: the resilience of Samoa as a nation and culture. Despite the seriousness of development challenges that it has had to face over the years, these have not significantly compromised Samoan cultural traditions in terms of language, arts and familial relations. Indeed its buoyancy is why Samoa receives plaudits from the international community. This is appropriately summed up in the analogy of the three boats, as in the Samoan proverb that the editors have chosen as a motto for the book. Each of the boats metaphorically represents the Samoans travelling overseas and returning to visit, the chiefs and young people and the old folks staying at home. It has been the combined contribution of these people that make Samoa what it is today. Celebration of leadership and of renowned individuals at the national and sub-national levels with relevant photographs is

a common feature of the book. As the first to feature a joint effort of several local scholars at the NUS, the book itself is to be commended. It is works like this that admirably map Samoa's journey as an independent nation.

The University of the South Pacific

ASENATI LIKI-CHAN TUNG

Democratic Governance and Health: Hospitals, Politics and Health Policy in New Zealand. By Miriam J. Laugesen and Robin Gauld. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2012, 214pp. NZ price: \$40. ISBN 9781877578274.

The use of history to inform policy is an important new development within the academy: for instance, an online UK forum called 'Policy & History' is designed to place historians' research into contemporary policy discussions. This study forms a contribution to that new endeavour. Miriam Laugesen and Robin Gauld, both specialists in health policy, have used an historical analysis to question whether New Zealand's unique system of elected hospital boards is the best way to ensure high-quality, accessible health services for New Zealand. They believe that history provides lessons for current policymakers. Their preferred model, as a result of reviewing the history of elected hospital boards, is a system of clinical governance based on management-clinician partnerships, with informed and experienced community representation.

While Laugesen and Gauld are drawn to history to explain New Zealand's long-standing attachment to elected health boards, the strength of the book lies in the policy discussion and changes in the management of health care from the 1980s. Indeed, the book changes significantly in tone and in source material once they come to this more recent history. For these more recent decades they draw on official documents and current studies to support their arguments, and their narrative and analysis is rigorous and convincing. This is not the case for the earlier decades. I submit that a 1925 *New Zealand Truth* article on its own is not the best source to illuminate doctors' attitudes to health care in the 1920s, and yet this forms the basis of their evidence. Nor would I rely on two *Evening Post* articles to understand the 1923 Royal Commission of Inquiry into Hospitals. No historians would agree that a publication of the 'International Labour [sic] Office, 1936' followed by an *Evening Post* article in 1932, are the best sources to explain the first Labour government's manifesto for health. What about Labour's own publication by D.G. McMillan in 1934 (*A National Health Service: New Zealand of Tomorrow*), which set out Labour's goals relating to health services, but about which the authors seem unaware? They refer to 'D.G. Bolitho (1979)', but do not specify that this was an MA thesis, and do not reference Bolitho's formative 1984 *New Zealand Journal of History* article on medical responses to the 1938 Social Security Act.

The authors would have been well advised to collaborate with historians or keep the discussion to the more recent decades about which they are better equipped to deal with. They do not appear to understand the use of official archives (for some time now called 'Archives New Zealand' and not 'National Archives' as in their references), or the historian's requirements for citations. For instance, the endnote for a reference listed on page 27 as 'National Archives' includes neither a date nor a file number. Nor is this an isolated case; elsewhere, too, in these early chapters, the source references are far too generalized or lacking in specifics to be of any value. Historians would be a little sceptical of the use of the papers of the Medical Association's leader Dr James Jamieson (again, where in these archives remains unspecified) to elucidate the views of farmers in the 1930s on taxation policy, or a 1980 report by George Gair (the National