

when the verbs and nouns of belonging and location no longer automatically function' (p.267).

This is a smart, provocative, and richly insightful book. By its end, however, I was left with a slight anxiety that its individual parts might be worth more to New Zealand literary studies than their whole, because I keep coming back to the question of how Settlement Studies as a grand theory understands the relationship between settler identity, culture and history. To be fair, each reading is deeply contextualized in service of 'connect[ing] the way stories take shape in these settings to the actual history of Pakeha settlement' (p.vii), yet this occurs within an overall commitment to treating culture in isolation from the domains of law, politics and economics. By ring-fencing culture in this way, the book's central temporal claim about settler society – that 'the foundational problems, injustices and consequences of European settlement of this country will not disappear' (p.x) – struggles to account for the different ways those 'foundational problems, injustices and consequences' have manifested themselves over time. Put another way, organizing the book in spatial terms blurs any clear argument about how and why settler literature might have changed over time, and what this might say about changes to settler identity. The other aspect that stands out is the rhetorical role played here by the use of a collective 'we'. Calder has chosen to restrict his focus to 'an account of Pakeha literary and cultural history' (p.x), but there is an occasional slippage here between a Pakeha and a national 'we'. On the beach, so to speak, it is a Pakeha 'we', but when faced with looming 'we' are New Zealanders; the difference is significant because the latter implicitly constructs a homogeneous national identity in Pakeha terms. In a book that so powerfully questions what New Zealand literary criticism is and how it is done, one further question it raises is whether Settlement Studies requires Maori to occupy rhetorically the space and time of 'Old New Zealand' in order to guarantee the modernity of the settler nation.

The Treaty of Waitangi Companion: Māori and Pākehā from Tasman to Today

edited by Vincent O'Malley, Bruce Stirling and Wally Penetito
Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2010
x, 422pp. ISBN 9781869404673

Reviewed by Melissa Matutina Williams

If there's truth in the rumour that 'Treaty fatigue' has beset the nation, then the publisher and authors of *The Treaty of Waitangi Companion: Māori and Pākehā from Tasman to Today* should be commended for this

latest addition to Treaty history literature. As Wally Penetito writes in the introduction, not only does the book invite readers to explore the relevance of the Treaty in Māori-Pākehā relationships and engagements over time, but it does so in a way that allows readers (who are probably fatigued for different reasons) to discover, consider and question the meaning of a broad range of evidential sources, from archival records and newspaper articles to posters and poems (p.1).

Producing such a text was a risk; it required confidence to forego an in-depth historical narrative of the Treaty and let the sources take centre stage. In this sense, and as the book purports, it is a ‘novel’ (p.2) approach to history – one that some reviewers of *The Companion* have already acknowledged, especially in terms of its value as a teaching resource alongside more traditional Treaty history texts.¹ I think the risk paid off – but not only because the book is loaded with Treaty-related documents and images that breathe new life into the relevance of the Treaty to New Zealand history. It also paid off because the absence of a full historical narrative provides more room for the authors to focus on periods and aspects of New Zealand’s past seldom included in Treaty narratives.

Of particular interest is the way that the mid-twentieth century period is presented in the book. Most Treaty texts treat this period like a kind of dead space between Māori dissatisfaction with 1940 centenary commemorations and the so-called Māori ‘renaissance’ and protest era of the 1970s. *The Companion*, however, includes a significant number of sources related to Māori urbanization and the state’s policies of assimilation and integration. Indeed, this section of the book connects the dots between the Treaty and the local realities of mid-twentieth century Māori citizenship, encouraging readers to reflect on how the Treaty is also central to aspects of daily life. By including evidence about the difficulties Māori faced finding good housing, and the frustration of being excluded from a theatre for being a ‘Native’, the book gives readers an opportunity to learn how the Treaty has never just been about land claims or the foreshore and seabed.

Yet while this section of the book shows the advantages of including primary and less well-known secondary sources, it is notable that most the sources derive from government officials or from *Te Ao Hou*, the Māori magazine published by the government between 1952 and 1976. The problem of interpreting Māori experiences and understandings through official documents or Pākehā observations is more prevalent in chapter one, where Māori understandings about early encounters with Pākehā are provided by early explorers, missionaries and British officials. Interpreting these types of sources is normally left to historians, and the authors of *The Companion* did well to guide readers through what are sometimes complex layers of

meaning. Inevitably, however, the provision of such guidance amounts to a running commentary throughout the book – a commentary that effectively mirrors standard Treaty history narratives.

Indeed, having highlighted how the *Companion* is a novel addition to Treaty literature, it is necessary to point out how, beneath the structural and at times confusing layout of the book, there exists a pretty standard narrative and conservative approach to the selection of sources. In terms of the latter, the authors write that they sought ‘published versions of documents where possible’ ‘to assist readers who might want to follow up entries’ (p.x). While such reasoning is sound, it is difficult to see how a reliance on already published sources will ever significantly push the boundaries of our knowledge about the Treaty. The book is also structured in a standard chronological form, with the authors providing a skeleton narrative of the Treaty in ten brief chapter introductions, beginning with the early encounter period to the current and future relevance of the Treaty on New Zealand society. Each chapter also contains sub-sections, within which a series of sources are listed numerically. Both the chapter introductions and the authors’ commentary (which accompanies each evidential source) direct the reader to the relevance and value of the source by way of standard summaries of narratives contained in extant Treaty texts. In turn, the persistence and strength of the authors’ voices have the potential to cancel out any self-directed learning about the Treaty, as offered in the introduction by Penetito.

Furthermore, the complex structure of the book, combined with the use of uniform text, sometimes makes it difficult to differentiate between the chapter introductions, the source commentaries and the actual sources. I know that such a format is quite straight forward, and that it allows readers to read the book both cover-to-cover and as a reference resource. But perhaps the use of different fonts or a little colour coding would have helped separate the sources from the authors’ commentary. This lack of imagination extends to the selection of a cover image – Marcus King’s 1938 painting of the signing of the Treaty smacks of ‘same-old’, as does the choice of nineteenth-century paintings of Māori, which were the only images selected for colour print.

These criticisms are relatively minor given the overall positive contribution of *The Companion*. The authors acknowledge the limitations of the book and played to their strengths. Indeed, it is a book that comes across confidently and well informed – a reflection, no doubt, on the knowledge base that Vincent O’Malley and Bruce Stirling have acquired as professional historians with more than forty years combined experience working in the Treaty of Waitangi process. But if Treaty fatigue is an issue in this country, it may well be prudent to remember that people do still judge books by their covers

and, I suspect, still judge books about the Treaty according to pre-conceived ideas about what the Treaty means and does not mean to them. As Claudia Orange recently noted, Māori and Pākehā held divergent views about the Treaty in the late 1970s when almost no scholarly texts on the Treaty existed.² Now, over forty years later and despite a plethora of Treaty texts, divergent views about the Treaty remain. I have no problem with different views about the Treaty, just so long as they are informed views. From my everyday experiences, and reports in the media, many people still need to work on educating themselves. Indeed, something new and creative is clearly required to encourage the New Zealand population and especially a new generation of readers to explore the meaning and relevance of the Treaty to our past, present and future. *The Companion* makes a contribution to that requirement in many ways, but especially by including document sources that connect the Treaty to human experiences and the daily realities of living and engaging with each other in Aotearoa New Zealand.

1 See review by Aroha Harris in *Te Pouhere Kōrero*, 5 (2011), p.85.

2 Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, 2nd ed., Wellington, 2011, p.9.