

Book Reviews

Te Wai Pounamu: The Greenstone Island: A History of Southern Maori during the European Colonization of New Zealand, by HC Evison, Aoraki Press, Wellington and Christchurch, 1993.

Reviewed by RP Boast*

Harry Evison is a Dunedin-based historian who has devoted much of his life to recording the history of the Ngai Tahu people of the South Island. In 1952 he received his MA from the University of Otago for a thesis on Ngai Tahu history. More recently he has published a number of short monographs on Ngai Tahu history; since then he has played a significant role as an expert witness for the claimants in the massive Ngai Tahu case before the Waitangi Tribunal, reported on by the Tribunal in 1991 and 1992. Now, with *Te Wai Pounamu* we have Evison's magnum opus, the product of a lifetime's work and reflection, sumptuously produced by Aoraki Press.

Evison's book marks something of a new departure in historical writing on the impacts of colonisation on Maori. While various tribal histories have been published these tend to be reworkings of traditional history rather than systematic accounts of the impact of colonialism, although some of the great tribal histories, such as Stafford's *Te Arawa*,¹ do carry the story down to the years after the Treaty of Waitangi. Certainly some specialist monographs on particular aspects of Maori regional history have been published, such as Dick Scott and Hazel Riseborough on Taranaki, Peter Webster, Judith Binney et al, and Jeffrey Sissons on the Tuhoe, and Michael King on the Chatham Islands.² But nothing quite on the scale and comprehensiveness of Evison's study of the southern Maori has been seen before. One might hope that following his lead we might see from other scholars similar accounts of other key regions such as, say, Hawke's Bay, East Cape, the Waikato or the Far North. The impact of colonialism varied considerably from region to region, and in this reviewer's view it is impossible to fully comprehend the process in the absence of a collection of detailed regional studies.

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1 DM Stafford, *Te Arawa* (Reed Books, Auckland, 1967).

2 Dick Scott, *Ask that Mountain: the story of Parihaka* (Heinemann/Southern Cross, Auckland, 1975); Hazel Riseborough, *Days of Darkness: Taranaki 1878-1884* (Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1989); Peter Webster, *Rua and the Maori Millennium* (Price Milburn/Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1979); Judith Binney, Gillian Chaplin and Craig Wallace, *Mihaia: the Prophet Rua Kenana and his Community at Maungapohatu* (Oxford University Press, Wellington, 1979); Jeffrey Sissons, *Te Waimana: the Spring of Mana: Tuhoe History and the Colonial Encounter* (University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 1991); Michael King, *Moriiori: A People Rediscovered* (Viking, Auckland, 1989). None of these however are exactly 'regional' history in that they attempt to survey the whole history of the colonial period and its impacts on the Maori people of a defined region.

former, a constitutional court has broad competence, whereas in the case of the latter the court's competence vis-à-vis the legislature ought to be much more restricted; and in the case of the latter any judicial interference with legislative choice must pass tests as to commitment to the text of the constitution, rationality of the argument, and compatibility with the constitutional system of separation of powers.

Van Koppen's paper on the Netherlands shows that in that country judicial involvement in policy-making is an essential element in the political process, for it allows the political parties to fudge certain controversial issues and leave them to the courts and the justice system to deal with. This is especially necessary in light of the finely balanced system of coalition government prevailing in the Netherlands. While I do not propose that this is the system for New Zealand, the essay offers an interesting new perspective on the role of judges in the political arena. Finally, Bzdera's essay on the reform of the Court of Justice of the European Communities raises interesting questions about the neutrality of a federal court whose main function is to decide upon the powers of the federation vis-à-vis the member states. He critically analyses proposals for reform of the Court made by respected commentators Weiler and Jacqué, and puts forward his own proposals which build on the experience of other federal adjudicative bodies.

In conclusion, this collection of essays provides useful, if sometimes brief and superficial, material upon which to consider issues pertaining to judicial involvement in policy-making. Written broadly with the political scientist in mind, the essays do not always provide the type of analysis or weight of authorities that lawyers are perhaps used to. Nonetheless, as a sign of growing interest by political scientists in matters judicial, this book is welcome.