
SIMON H. BICKLER

*Auckland, New Zealand*

This volume consists of eight chapters and two introductory essays describing archaeological research in the Trobriand Islands at the eastern end of Papua New Guinea. The Trobriand Islands occupy a privileged place in anthropological circles because of Bronislaw Malinowski’s fieldwork there in the early 20th century and his resulting description of the *Kula* exchange network in the Massim. The two essays provide the most tantalising overviews of the project for those less interested in specific results. The preface by Linus Digim’Rina describes his role as project mediator, developing an understanding between the people of *Bweyowa* (as Trobrianders know themselves) and the scientific teams.

Burenhult’s essay introduces the basic research goals of the project: the timing of initial colonisation, issues regarding long-term cultural continuity, and the origin and movements of people. It may surprise anthropologists and archaeologists working elsewhere that these basic questions remain to be investigated in an area that has been such an anthropological focus during the 20th century. However, debate continues about most key issues in the prehistory of the Massim.

Burenhult assembled a relatively large multi-disciplinary team of 16 archaeologists and osteologists from several institutions, thus allowing them to carry out a range of activities. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the archaeological fieldwork is the use of innovative approaches to working in the often difficult conditions of coral islands—phosphate survey to identify previous occupation, ethnographic research carried out alongside the archaeology, as well as research on cave stalagmites, combined with osteology and more traditional archaeological research.

Davidsson’s chapter provides additional background to the project and outlines the fieldwork. Test excavations followed an initial survey carried out a year earlier in 1998, and included scatters of ceramics, fish bone and some unusual coral blocks perhaps relating to yam houses. She also mentions the general difficulty of finding sites with good stratigraphy in the coral atolls of the Massim. This remains a major methodological problem for archaeologists there. The team’s investigation of the burial ground at Odubekoya is a highlight, but are broken ceramics grave goods indicative of previous nearby habitation? Finding the burials is also important because, based on the preliminary dates presented in later chapters, the primary burials in the northern Massim generally appear to be an earlier phenomenon than the secondary burials found in caves both on the Trobriands and the islands to the east.
Lilja, Linqvist and Olsson provide a brief description of the survey work preceding the excavations. Measuring phosphate levels to indicate previous activities has some use, although it is not clear whether it represents a major improvement on traditional techniques based on surface scatters. The results of the survey show a range of sites, including one stone arrangement with human burials. It is a little surprising that no attempt was made to correlate the more significant sites with those previously recorded by earlier researchers in the area and to provide more detailed information regarding the form of the stone arrangements.

The excavations at Labai and Mwatawa are detailed by Larsson and Svensson, who conclude that they have evidence of a late (A.D. 1740-1930) settlement with postholes and yam house foundations. They also describe the burials and provide dating information, detailed plans and a list of artefacts.

Secondary cave burials have been described in this part of Papua New Guinea for some years, and Venturi’s chapter on those in the northern Trobriands emphasises once more the importance of these sites for archaeologists. Most intriguing is the evidence of trepanated skulls.

Stone and obsidian artefacts from the project are briefly described by Fernstål, Hjulström and Sterner, but the data is not analysed in detail. A comparison of the collection with the tools collected by Malinowki and more recent work on the Woodlark Island industry would be productive. The origin of the obsidian found must also take priority in any further work.

Gustafsson, Linström, Malm and Winter provide a brief summary of the ceramics from Labai and Mwatawa. This paper is only a taster, and there is no real analysis of the information retrieved, but the illustrations indicate the possibility of a range of pottery, probably covering the last 1000 years, from islands near the Trobriands. Previous researchers such as Peter Lauer and Brian Egloff have provided a framework for the ceramics imported into the Trobriands and its relationship with the development of the Kula Ring. The material illustrated in the volume, however, does not immediately suggest the ceramics from Woodlark Island that I collected during my fieldwork, which is interesting, given the well-established relationships between the islands.

Pia Andersson describes oral traditions of the local area where the archaeologists were working. These include origin stories, legends relating to sites that were excavated, as well as more general stories on the origin of the Trobriands. It is an ambitious task for anybody to carry out ethnographic research in the Trobriands now, given the lengthy relationships between Trobrianders and ethnographers. Andersson’s description of the difficulties, her study of some of the modern trends in the education of Trobrianders about their own culture in the local high school, and the infiltration of capitalism should be a springboard into a more thorough study of Trobriand society.

The final paper by Lunblad covers the use of stalagmite analysis to carry out dating and climate change studies in the cave sites described. While the limited results reported were unsuccessful, the potential remains. Recent climate change in the Pacific and its possible influences in island populations remain high on the agenda for many of us.
The volume remains an excavation report, and is therefore a little frustrating as so much remains to be done. However, the questions which Burenhult’s team are starting to answer remain central to research in the area, and the authors are to be commended for their prompt publication of the data. There are a few gems hidden in several of the papers, and some exciting results to come out of their research. The story of the Kula, the importance of mortuary practices, anthropological debate about the origins of Trobriand chieftainship, and the origins—geographic and symbolic—of the Trobrianders themselves will only develop with on-going archaeological research in the Massim as presented in this volume.


MELISSA DEMIAN
*Emory University*

One of the more telling moments in *Conceiving Cultures* is an excerpt from an early interview conducted by Shelley Mallet on conception and childbirth. She asks her interlocutor, a woman named Mona, how babies come to be in their mothers’ wombs. In the course of trying to produce a theory, Mona remarks, “You already know, uh?” (p.103). Therein lies the challenge for any anthropologist who makes a good faith attempt to be explicit about his or her methods and motives as a fieldworker. The people from whom we would elicit knowledge anticipate this desire, and also (rightly) assume that whatever it is we know is complete, that what we seek from others is not new knowledge but different knowledge. And not everyone is willing to produce difference in the forms anticipated by the anthropologist. This is particularly true in the Massim culture area, so beloved of anthropology for so long.

While not every resident of Papua New Guinea’s Milne Bay Province (which roughly corresponds to the Massim) knows precisely what it is anthropologists do, the many and complex relations between these island and coastal peoples and dimdims, that is Europeans, means that more or less everyone knows what it is dimdims do. They come and go, looking for gold or pearls or beche-de-mer. They translate the Bible, scuba dive on the reefs and teach at the provincial high schools. Some of them spend long periods of time in people’s villages, asking nonsensical or embarrassing questions about matters of which every adult person should already be cognisant. Mallett is acutely aware of this problem in her ethnography of the island of Nuakata, located just outside the northeastern end of Milne Bay itself. She lays out a careful and contemplative path for the reader throughout her narrative, signposting at each step the potential pitfalls of fieldwork in a much-anthropologised part of the world at the end of the 20th century. Her feminist *bona fides* are presented in the Introduction, and reappear two chapters later as she describes the disappointment of finding out
that it is not enough to be a woman interviewing other women. The connections we seek in the course of fieldwork are almost never the same ones that people seek with us, as Mallett demonstrates with stark honesty her resignation to the fact that women on Nuakata invariably elected to recognise the relation of difference—Papua New Guinean and dimdim—over the relation of similarity preferred by the ethnographer.

To investigate Nuakata models of conception and relatedness, Mallett relies largely on the minutely observed interpersonal exchange and on linguistic evidence. She eschews nearly all forms of disembodied or, to use the term she favours, “objectifying” data, a strategy linked to her oft-stated commitment to treading carefully amongst the traps and tropes of ethnographic authority. Her analysis is laid out in a chronological arc that moves from a consideration of the colonial encounter in the Pacific and its relationship to notions of health and natalism, to Nuakata homologies between gardening and childbearing, which forms a central motif in the second half of the book. She comes finally to the chapter on death and mortuary ritual on Nuakata, by now obligatory for any ethnography of a Massim society. Not surprisingly, we learn that it is only upon death that Nuakata persons are truly “conceived”, that is, brought into the fullness of personhood through an assessment of their connections to other persons—including, in this case, to the anthropologist mistrustful of her own “voyeuristic” interest in the mortuary process.

Conceiving Cultures effectively throws into relief the difficulties of transforming an experience, especially one’s first fieldwork experience, into a narrative. As such, it would probably be best appreciated by a graduate student readership concerned with the highs and lows of fieldwork and the inevitable metamorphosis of one’s intellectual intentions when they are released into a world of actual relationships. Where the book seems to work less well is in its contribution to Massim ethnography. Mallett revisits such classic Massim themes as reproduction, emplacement and the mortuary sequence, and discusses them with compassion and precision. But it is this very precision which reveals the limitations of wearing one’s ethics on one’s sleeve: if all relationships in the field are anticipated in advance, where does the knowledge come from? It is as if she has agreed, along with Mona, that there is no need to speak of anything beyond what we already know.


BARBARA B. SMITH

*University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa*

Scholars throughout the world who want to expand their knowledge and understanding of traditional Māori music, even though they are not the readers for whom the book was originally intended, should be happy that the third edition of *Traditional Songs of the Maori* incorporates the recordings from which its contents were derived. As stated in the introduction, the authors, Mervyn McLean and Margaret
Orbell, both highly regarded scholars, prepared it for use by Māori wanting to learn to sing some traditional Māori songs (p.9). Indeed, since publication of its first edition in 1975 and continuing through that of the second in 1990, Māori have used it extensively, while many libraries have simultaneously added it to their collections.

To meet its intended use, the authors devote equal attention to the two intrinsically intertwined components of song: text and music. This approach yields a deeper understanding of the songs than has been achieved through the many previous publications of song texts, some with translation but with little or no consideration of the music with which the texts were traditionally conveyed to listeners, or the much smaller number of studies devoted to analysis of the music of these songs.

Also, for the benefit of learners not yet familiar with this heritage, each author wrote a short, helpful essay—Orbell on the language of the songs (pp.23-30), and McLean on traditional song types, i.e., songs in indigenous style rather than those with European-style chord progressions (pp.15-22). The presentation of the 50 selected songs occupies the major portion of the book (pp.31-319). Each song identified by song type (traditional Māori songs do not have titles like European-style songs do), followed by the name(s) and tribal affiliation(s) of the person(s) who sang the songs for McLean to record in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and brief comments about the song. The core content, based on the recordings made by McLean, consists of the text, Orbell’s translation and explanatory notes, and McLean’s transcription of the recorded song to Western staff notation—all visual representations of a valued heritage that traditionally was held in memory, recreated orally on appropriate occasions and transmitted orally-aurally from generation to generation.

These visual representations convey much significant information about the songs, but not all of the aspects that immediately identify them as traditional Māori songs when heard in live performance or on audio recording—aspects such as enunciation, melodic inflection, dynamic nuance and voice production. These distinctive aural identifiers could easily have been incorporated into the first edition on inexpensive 33-1/3 rpm soundsheets, which during the 1970s were incorporated into many scholarly and educational publications, or alternatively as a package of cassette tapes. But they were not, and not because the authors failed to recognise the limitations of visual representations—in fact, they stressed that the book was intended only as an aid to learning the songs, and that listening to expert singers or at least to recordings of them is essential, adding that copies of the recordings were “distributed to tribal authorities to assist learning of the songs by members of the waiata schools and Maori culture groups… and available for the use of students at the Archive of Maori and Pacific Music, University of Auckland” (p.9).

Happily for the convenience of all users of the book—not only Māori living in the homeland near these sites who want to learn to sing the songs, but also their counterparts living in the expanding Māori diaspora with similar aims, as well as students and scholars of both Māori and other ethnicities wanting to learn about (rather than to sing) traditional Māori songs—this third edition incorporates the sounds of the original recordings as mastered by Wayne Laird to two CDs that are housed on the back cover. The brief preface to the third edition (p.4) explains that access to these recordings was initially restricted due to “widespread Maori concerns about
‘commercialism’, and that because these concerns have “largely evaporated”, the authors decided to heed the “demand for recordings from the current generation of Maori people”. However, prospective purchasers of the book—both individuals and libraries—should note the restrictions placed on use of the recordings. As stated on each CD: “Publication of any items on this CD by any process, public performance, or broadcasting is a violation both of tribal protocol and applicable laws, and is expressly forbidden”. Another notice of the restriction precedes the list of CD contents: “These recordings are released in the expectation that they will be treated with respect and in strict accordance with the copyright notices on each of the CDs”.

In addition to the CDs, the third edition has photo portraits of Turau Te Tomo and Marata Te Tomo—two respected bearers of the tradition who are now deceased—who sang many of the songs presented in the book. These portraits face the title page, and should replace any lingering memory of the statement occupying that position in the first edition of the book, which stated that it was published “in celebration of the bicentenary of Captain Cook’s first visit to New Zealand in 1769”—an association that in the post-colonial Pacific seems highly inappropriate to its contents.

There are very few changes in the text though these, for example, the change from “where I will think of Tarawera” to “where I will be acquainted with Tarawera” in the translation of song four (p.45), are evidence of Orbell’s conscientious efforts to achieve the best possible English rendition of the texts. Some readers may wish that the song texts had been revised to indicate long vowels with a macron rather than retaining the double vowel as originally set in the first edition, but the effort and expense of doing so did not justify it.

Because of its greatly enhanced usefulness and intrinsic value through inclusion of the audio CDs, the third edition of Traditional Songs of the Maori should be added to the collections of individuals and libraries—even those that already own a copy of one or both of the previous editions.

ORBELL, Margaret, and Mervyn McLean: Songs of a Kaumātua: Sung by Kino Hughes. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002. xii + 278 pp., bib., 2 CDs, figs, index, musical notation, photos. Price: NZ$89.95 (cloth).

DON NILES
Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies

Songs of a Kaumātua results from the collaboration of experts: Kino Hughes, the performer whose songs are featured; authors Margaret Orbell (on Māori poetry) and Mervyn McLean (on Māori music); and Auckland University Press that has presented these materials in such an attractive, accessible manner. All have collaborated to create a truly essential volume on Māori oral expression.

The authors’ previous book of 50 songs, Traditional Songs of the Maori (1975), presented Māori texts and English translations, with musical notations, but lacked accompanying recordings. In Songs of a Kaumātua, this omission from the 1975 volume is explained as due to Māori fears about the commercialisation of their
music (p.278). A similar reason explains the absence of recordings from McLean’s essential monograph, *Maori Music*. That book also omitted translations of song texts because such a task would have required a Māori language specialist to unravel the dense, allusive nature of many of the texts. The next book by McLean, *Weavers of Song: Polynesian Music and Dance* (1999), considers music throughout Polynesia. While his discussion of Māori music is necessarily brief, a compact disc includes six Māori songs notated in the text, but again without translation of the song texts. *Songs of a Kaumātua* wonderfully addresses these previous omissions: recordings, music notations, texts and translations are finally able to be brought together in one volume. Indeed, the two compact discs accompanying this book are included “at the express request of tribal representatives” (p.278).

The oblong format of *Songs of a Kaumātua* follows the authors’ 1975 book, but here it is of slightly smaller dimensions. A brief biography of Kino Hughes (1891-1986) reveals a fascinating life and the making of a respected kaumātua or ‘elder’. Born of a Tūhoe mother and Ngāti Maniapoto father at Rūātoki, his work diving for logs made him blind for over a decade. After his sight returned in 1940, Hughes began to learn Tūhoe traditional songs. He admired the beauty of the music and poetry of the songs, as well as their importance to oratory and history. At the age of 80, Hughes began recording his large repertoire of over 100 songs for future generations, at the same time teaching Māori song at a weekend *waiata* school. The authors’ 1975 book impressed him, and he persuaded them to promise that a similar book would result from his recordings.

In the preliminary pages, the authors introduce the Tūhoe people, their environment, origins and encounters with social, political and religious changes. Because of their relative isolation, Tūhoe have retained much traditional knowledge and have long shown a commitment to passing it on to others. Māori song types are then briefly discussed. *Song* here includes both sung (such as *waiata*, *oriori*, *pao*) and recited types (*haka*, *karakia*, *pātere*). In contrast to the 1975 book’s focus on traditional songs, those in the 2002 publication often exhibit features of both traditional Māori and Western musical systems. Finally, explanation is given on the ordering of the songs in the book, a solution related to consideration of chronology, context and subject matter.

Sixty songs are presented in the main section of the book (pp.17-256), all following a consistent format. Each numbered song is identified by a Māori and an English title, derived from the first words of the text. The song is introduced with information about its context, explanations given by Hughes, brief musical notes, etc. Then follows the Māori song text and translation. The text is then examined in often considerable and glorious detail. Customs alluded to are explained, the names of people and places are given their proper historical context, and the accomplishment of the poet is emphasised. Finally, the entire song is musically notated in a manner which clearly shows structural features. This section is enhanced with the use of illustrations of people, places and objects germane to the texts.

Even greater scrutiny of the song texts is provided in the following “Notes on the Texts” (pp.257-67). Here, specific words are singled out for discussion, translation difficulties are revealed, comparisons with other related texts are offered, and attempts are made to date the songs from their subject matter. Details of the recordings used for
transcription are given in the next section (pp.268-71). Performers, locations and dates of recordings are all specified. McLean has here drawn upon his extensive collection of Māori recordings, made between 1958 and 1979, although most derive from the crucial collaboration with Hughes in 1971 and 1972. In a number of cases, up to five different recordings of the same song were consulted to produce the composite transcriptions presented in the book. This highlights the fact that the transcriptions are meant to be prescriptive, that is, providing a general guide to performance, rather than a descriptive transcription of any singular recording. Those interested in the latter now have excellent materials available to them. Further recorded examples of Māori music can be found on the compact disc accompanying McLean’s Tō Tātau Waka: In Search of Maori Music (1958–1979) (2004), detailing his personal involvement with the subject.

A list of references is followed by illustration credits, a glossary of Māori words, index of song types and indices of Māori and English first lines. The final page lists the contents of the two compact discs. Forty-seven of the 60 songs discussed are included, one with two versions, all introduced by a dedication from Hughes.

As someone who is not intimately familiar with Māori geography or tribal groupings, a map would have helped my navigation of texts and their crucial discussion. Auckland University Press style does not italicise the Māori words frequently sprinkled throughout the English text, creating some initial stumblings. The glossary, however, helps tremendously in providing translations for these.

The authors hope that the book will “assist new generations of singers to maintain and revive these songs, while directing attention to the richness of the poetic and musical heritage enshrined in the repertoire of this one outstanding singer” (p.2). The vital coupling of texts, translations, transcriptions, analysis, plus recordings wonderfully celebrates the legacy, commitment and scholarship of Hughes, Orbell and McLean.


DAMON SALESA
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

If the last quarter century is any measure, it has become almost ritual for anthropologists to sacrifice colleagues or forebears. While Pacific history, as a discipline, seems to deify or at least revere its ancestors, counterparts in anthropology such as Mead and Sahlins have found themselves part of a different cult(ure).

Thankfully, Serge Tcherkézoff has rediscovered older ways of communing with ancestors, ways that neither worship nor sacrifice, but that are thoughtful, sensitive and critical. The publication of this volume, then, is particularly welcome. It is the only one of a Polynesian quadrilogy to be published in English (the others are in
French), and it offers the first detailed analysis of early encounters between Samoans and Europeans, intending to put it within the larger contexts of Polynesian encounters and specifically addressing the sexual and the divine.

This volume builds on the efforts of Richard Gilson, Richard Moyle and Jocelyn Linnekin with regard to Samoa. It is a nuanced and learned effort. If at times I wished there was more illustration of some of the larger interpretive claims he makes, his interpretations and exegesis are always interesting and generally compelling. His argument, in essence, is “that Europeans have in the past been considered as atua, aitu, tupua, kalou. However they were not deemed to be ‘gods’ (Samoan atua) but, rather, they were considered as ‘images’ (Samoan ata) of the super-human forces. They were envoyed from elsewhere, perhaps from the gods” (p.197). Tcherkézoff is not the first to argue along these lines, of course, but in its specific application to Samoa, his nuance and clarity, he is consistently innovative. Tcherkézoff explores new dimensions of these encounters, particularly regarding the presentation of cloth (siapo/tapa/ngatu) and women to these first Europeans. He argues that rather than simple trade, or sexual offerings, or indications of cultural sexual freedom, they were ritualised, so that the bodies of these sacred women and/or the sacred cloth could “wrap up” the new arrivals, honouring, domesticating and incorporating them (p.181).

Tcherkézoff then extends and compares these Samoan insights to Polynesia as a whole. In a number of intricate steps, Tcherkézoff explores what he suggests was a pan-Polynesian way of “apprehending the other”. He outlines what he calls a “hierarchy of ‘light’ [ao]”, “a pan-Polynesian cosmology in which light, clarity and whiteness” (p.116) were highly valued, and which shaped the way papālagi ‘foreign/European’ visitors in the 17th and 18th centuries were comprehended and incorporated by Polynesians. This was not merely because of the visitors’ pale skins, but was due to various attributes, including their ships, the distance they had travelled, the appearance of their own cultural practices, and their possession of glass, metal and firearms. Tcherkézoff is careful to emphasise, however, that these were not base moments of reproductive thinking, but involved joint processes of “intellectual inquiry” (p.112) and “taxonomic innovation” (p.144-45). Tcherkézoff picks up a number of different topics to develop and support his argument, including gift-giving and dance, though the major topics remain sacred women and sacred cloth. He finishes the book by revisiting his 1999 article on the origins and meaning of the word “papālagi” (published in this journal), responding to the conversations and criticisms that ensued.

Tcherkézoff’s other main argument concerns early European ascriptions of sexual openness to these Polynesian (ritual) practices. He argues that these were mistakes that were to have durable consequences, initiating and shaping two centuries of European and American misunderstanding. Tcherkézoff offers a history, a critique and a corrective of these “cumulative misinterpretations” (p.164). In this vein he revisits the Mead-Freeman debate, though he is primarily interested in the inheritors of the “Western myth about Samoan adolescence” as a group, and not Mead nor her work in particular (p.10). Tcherkézoff actually uses James Côté as his main foil in this respect, and Côté’s ethnographic writings on Samoan sexuality unfortunately illustrate Tcherkézoff’s arguments only too well.
Readers who take a hard line of “Mead-is-right” or adopt a crude “white-men-can’t-be-taken-for-gods” position will probably have trouble with Tcherkézoff. But then, they would be taking a stance rather than reading or engaging. It is no small task that Tcherkézoff has set for himself. He will not convince everyone. Yet, though there are a certain unevenness and some omissions, few of them are glaring. It would have been helpful if the source material had been approached more systematically, particularly with regard to Samoa. Some sources, which could well have enriched the analysis, appear to be missing. For instance, Tcherkézoff rightly focuses on the power and value of glass beads in Samoa (particularly blue ones) prior to around 1830. But evidence suggests these acquired the name “Salupe”, a name with cosmological significance—something it would have been interesting to see Tcherkézoff pursue. Another prominent example is the “Papālagi ship”, in use ritually by a group of Samoans in 1839. One wonders what a study of these practices, among others, might have contributed to Tcherkézoff’s interpretations. The few mistakes that I found were small ones (such as confusing the identity of Captain Drinkwater Bethune)—Tcherkézoff is an astute historian. Others were more important, but still minor—for instance, there were whaling ships calling at Samoa before 1823 (such as the Roscoe in 1822), contrary to Tcherkézoff’s assertion (p.72).

Overall Tcherkézoff is an empathetic and informed student of these encounters, at least as far as Samoans go. Those that Tcherkézoff seems the least sympathetic to are the Papālagi themselves. It is they who see a world where “everything was black or white, the same or different, good or bad” (p.111); their expeditions conform to “the rule of brutality” (p.15); it is French sailors who could not refuse an offer (almost any offer) of sex (e.g., p.46). There is still irony there, though, as Tcherkézoff (p.2) offers his book as “a kind of ifoga” (a ritualised asking for forgiveness), which, in this case, is an act that should be welcomed.


DEIDRE BROWN
University of Auckland

As the title suggests, this book proposes to use the whakairo ‘architectural embellishments’ of the meeting house Te Poho o Tahu as the framework for discussing the history of the house’s Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti hapū (‘subtribe’) of the northern Hawke’s Bay. Mere Whaanga, the author, is a member of the hapū, and her book continues a recent trend in Māori literature and curatorship in using indigenous cultural expressions as narrative structural devices. When Whaanga employs this technique, the result is a seamless shift between the past and present-day worlds of Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti and a celebration of the house as the embodiment of personal, collective and historical identity. In many chapters, however, the house is largely absent from the narrative and standard Western techniques of historical discussion are employed.
A line diagram of the front of the house, placed conveniently after the title page, indicates the position of important Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti ancestors and events, although a corresponding diagram of the placement of ancestral photographs inside the house is not included. Indeed, when Te Poho o Tahu’s whakairo are referred to as a narrative device, photographs of the relevant parts of the building are only occasionally included, despite the book being otherwise well illustrated. Anyone attracted to the book on the promise of a “carved cloak” will be disappointed.

That said, the book does document the story of Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti, its three sections dealing with the hapū’s whakapapa ‘genealogies and sequence of ancestral events’, its whenua ‘land’ and tangata ‘people’. Together, the sections discuss the hapū’s traditional knowledge, cultural expressions and natural resources, looking at issues as diverse as the impact of the group’s economy on the flax industry, the welfare of its taonga (‘treasures’) in museums and the debate about petroleum exploration on its lands—an event around which contemporary group identity coalesced. Chapters within each section are internally-resolved essays about individual issues, such as land incorporation or prophetic leaders, and are often detailed accounts that are based on waiata ‘songs’ and whaikōrero ‘formal addresses’ that have been integrated with historical material. There is no glossary and Māori terms are not always glossed in the text, so readers might be advised to have a Māori dictionary close at hand unless they have intermediate to advanced knowledge of Te reo ‘Māori language’.

Early in the book, the author explains her methodology, which consciously draws on narrative and document-based sources, and sets out comparisons of conflicting accounts, to give a rounded expression of Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti. To achieve this, large portions of primary texts are quoted, which adds variety and new voices to the discussion, although the quoting of secondary texts in the whenua section might have been better integrated into the running narrative. Ultimately the conclusions drawn in the book belong to Whaanga, and from them we gain some insight into the internal dynamics of her hapū. Kinsfolk who used the Land Court to further their own interests sometimes appear in an unflattering light, as in the case of Raniera Turoa and Winiata Te Rito and their conflicting claims over the Mangapoike block in 1884, and there is no attempt to gloss over this difficult phase in the hapū’s history.

Readers of the Journal of the Polynesian Society might be particularly interested in her discussion of the Toki-a-Tapiri waka taua ‘war canoe’ currently on display in Auckland War Memorial Museum. This chapter is a strong statement about the importance of Māori kaitiakitanga ‘guardianship’ in the care of museum-held taonga ‘treasures’. Whaanga is adamant that institutions must consult all previous kaitiaki ‘tribal guardian groups’ of taonga such as Te Toki-a-Tapiri, and not just the most recent “owners”, when it comes to their care and restoration, although how that might work in practice is not really the subject of the chapter. Her penultimate remark on the matter that “meanwhile, Te Toki a Tapiri resides in an institution devoid of contact with its rightful kaitiaki” is a view which denies the authority of Māori who work in bicultural institutions, suggesting that the hapū—the central theme of her book—is the only legitimate agency of cultural advice. Whaanga’s right to express these views cannot be criticised by outsiders, particularly as she informs us that she once worked for Auckland War Memorial Museum. But, her interpretation of the processes that informed the Te
Maori (1984-86) exhibition, as an example of pan-tribal kaitiakitanga, conveniently forgets the huge steps forward in bicultural curatorial practice that produced—and was promoted by—the show, and in this rare departure from form, suggests a perspective informed by personal opinion rather than hapū knowledge.

The stand-alone nature of the essay-style chapters does not assist with the flow of the author’s narrative, at least not as we might expect in a standard historical text. One example of these sudden thematic jumps is the discussion of tangata which begins with a chapter on the late-19th century spiritual leader Te Matenga Tamati that is inexplicably followed by a chapter on the seven whales of Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti. Both chapters make interesting reading, but what is the purpose of putting them together? Kōrero, or Māori storytelling, is episodic in nature, and I believe that Whaanga, who is a highly-regarded traditional storyteller, is reciting a number of personally informed kōrero as we might hear them if we were to visit Te Poho o Tahu. So perhaps A Carved Cloak for Tahu: A History of Ngāi Tahu Matawhaiti might be better appreciated as a collection of important korero relating to the hapū, as if told to us within the poho ‘bosom’ of the house, rather than a history in the Western sense of this term.


MARK BUSSE  
*University of Auckland*

Francis Edgar Williams worked as a government anthropologist in the colonial administration of the Australian Territory of Papua from 1922 to 1941. During that time, he spent more than five years in Papuan villages doing ethnographic research which resulted in major studies of six distinct societies (Namau, Orokaiva, Keraki, Elema, Foi and Keveri) and abbreviated field studies of about a dozen other societies across the whole Territory (pp.36-37). Some of his books have become anthropological classics—e.g., *Orokaiva Magic* (1928), *Orokaiva Society* (1930), *Papuans of the Trans-Fly* (1936) and *Drama of Orokolo* (1940)—and even some of his shorter works and anthropological reports are well known (e.g., “The Vailala Madness and the Destruction of Native Ceremonies in the Gulf Division”, “Creed of a Government Anthropologist” and “The Collection of Curios and the Preservation of Native Culture”).

This wonderfully conceptualised and produced book combines an excellent introductory essay on Williams’s life and work with 235 of his photographs, most of which have not been previously published. It is a significant contribution both to the visual record of the peoples of Papua New Guinea and to the history of anthropology in a part of the world that has been vital to the development of anthropological theory and practice. Williams contributed critically to these developments.

The introductory essay (pp.3-62) is the most complete and detailed discussion of Williams to date. Young and Clark discuss Williams’s background and personal life, his responsibilities as a colonial officer, his relationship with Lieutenant-Governor
Hubert Murray and his position as an anthropologist—both his intellectual position (particularly his critical assessment of the dominant functionalist paradigm of his time) and his position as a professional anthropologist who worked on the geographical and intellectual periphery far from the academic centres of the discipline. After a period of study and residence as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford under R.R. Marrett, where he received a Diploma in Anthropology, he obtained all subsequent academic degrees on the basis of his publications as a government anthropologist. He spent a short period at the London School of Economics in 1933-34.

Young and Clark provide an insightful account of the relationship between Williams’s theoretical views and his professional position. Williams’s disagreement with functionalism stemmed directly from his research as a government anthropologist, in which capacity he was expected to contribute to what Murray called “practical administration” (pp.9, 23) of the colonial territory. For Williams, education was the “very essence” (p.24) of such administration and the planned social change that Murray and others were trying to bring about in Papua, such as the end of warfare, headhunting and sorcery, and the introduction of formal education and Western health practices. The goals of native education, according to Williams, were to encourage what was good in native culture, to remove what was bad and to add positive contributions from European culture (p.25). Williams recognised that this involved value judgments. He paternalistically assumed that such judgments were best made by people of European heritage and that the cultural influence would be unidirectional. But Williams’s experience as an applied anthropologist concerned with the practical consequences of social change also led him to criticise the functionalist principle of cultural integration which he characterised as a “fallacy of overstatement” and “a good idea which has been ridden too hard” (p.52). Instead, Williams argued that not all aspects of culture are equally well integrated or equally important for cultural continuity, concluding that culture “always remains to some extent a hotch-potch and sorry tangle” (p.52), and [t]he most that can be said of culture is that it is partially-organized, semi-integrated” (p.25). In more positive terms, Williams emphasised cultural plasticity over functional integration.

While such an emphasis is not surprising for an applied anthropologist studying social change and charged with planning it, these ideas were “heresy” (p.51) to members of Malinowski’s functionalist school who dominated the discipline in the 1920s and 1930s, and among whom was the New Zealand anthropologist Raymond Firth. Young and Clark summarise the academy’s judgment of Williams as “a talented ethnographer who had certainly earned his spurs, but who would always remain an outsider” (p.51), and note that “[w]hile Williams’ peers praised him, they sniffed with faint disapproval” (p.50). These views appear to have played a part in Williams’s failure to secure the Chair in Anthropology at the University of Sydney for which he applied in 1933 (pp.45-47). While Malinowski initially supported his application, he later wrote to his protégé Firth, who was the acting professor at Sydney, that Williams would be “a considerable risk” to anthropology at Sydney because he “has never done academic work” (p.46).

Young and Clark argue that Williams’s geographically distant and intellectually marginal position allowed him to work without being distracted by passing theoretical fashions (p.43) and gave him “a degree of intellectual freedom” (p.51) which
allowed him to criticise functionalism. Surely, this is only one side of the story. Not only is this a depressing view of the production of anthropological knowledge, but it is a denial of the likely structural causes of what they characterise as Williams’s theoretical “diffidence” (pp.43-45), and what it means to go it alone and to do, for the most part, without collegial conversation. Young and Clark note that those who reviewed his books gave him no credit for his theoretical ideas (p.44). And they, too, state that he was “not a major anthropological theorist” (p.42), while at the same time stressing that his theoretical ideas were ahead of his time—in the anthropology of art, ethnopsychology, and kinship and marriage which “foreshadowed exchange theory and the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss” (p.42). One wonders whether Williams’s theoretical diffidence was instead a clear understanding of his own position at the extreme geographical and intellectual margins of his profession.

The 235 images in this book are only a small percentage of the approximately 2000 photographs that Williams took during his time in Papua. Each image is accompanied by a caption (most of which were written by Williams) and brief comments about what is depicted, drawn from Williams’s notes or published works. Together, the images, captions and comments are a rich source of visual impressions and ethnographic information which complement Williams’s written descriptions, creating a rich and vivid experience of the aesthetics of Papuan lives. Young and Clark characterise Williams’s approach as “photographic realism” in which the goal is accurate documentation (p.58), but they also note that “a warm sympathy seems to have been projected into many of the images” (p.62), an observation with which I entirely agree.

They compare Williams’s photographs with Malinowski’s which were recently published by Young in Malinowski’s Kiriwina: Fieldwork Photography 1915-1918 (1998). Malinowski’s photographs in the main were taken from a mid-distance, offering a totalising view of scenes which emphasised functional relations between people. Williams, in addition to such shots, made many portraits and intimate, candid pictures in which his subjects were clearly familiar with him and his camera, and seem unconcerned.

An equally interesting comparison can be made with Frank Hurley’s photographs. Hurley, a professional photographer who took pictures throughout Papua in the 1920s, also took many portraits of people. What stood out to me, however, is the emotional distance between Hurley and his subjects that these pictures convey, despite the proximity of the camera. Looking at Williams’s portraits, one gets the sense that he is comfortable with the people he photographs and they are with him: there is openness in people’s eyes, they appear mostly relaxed, there are flirtatious glances, and many interact with Williams.

The photographs are superbly reproduced, and the whole volume is pleasing to look at. The volume reminds us of the work of a most prolific anthropologist from the early history of anthropology as a discipline, and introduces us to F.E. Williams the photographer, in whose images we find additional testimony to his capacity for detailed, sympathetic observation. The authors and publishers should be congratulated on a most accomplished volume.