economic return on their land even to the present day. Chapter 12 offers a personal experience looking at the Tainui Claim. It starts with the attempts at settling a claim between Tainui and the Crown during the 1940s and concludes with the negotiations that led to settlement in 1995.

There is no concluding chapter to summarise the whole book, however there is a very useful appendix providing a timeline of confiscation legislation in New Zealand. This appendix summarises all relevant legislation and highlights key sections.

This book provides a well-rounded look into land confiscations on a national and international scale. The editors have selected essays that offer perspectives from all concerned parties and analyses confiscation from all angles. It is a valuable research tool for students and academics, as well as educational for the general reader.


NOEL JAMES OSBORNE
*Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*

From the time Kupe first arrived in the Tai Tokerau region, the seed was sown for what would become a distinguished art form unique to Aotearoa. With a need to refit the great ocean-going *waka* Matahourua, and an abundance of suitable timber from the north and stone from the south, so began the evolution of what we now refer to as Tai Tokerau Whakairo Rākau or Northland Māori Wood Carving.

Deidre Brown has compiled a resource that will inspire descendants of Kupe and stimulate discussion and debate amongst many who share a fascination for the mastery imbued within our *whakairo rākau*. Having been “greatly encouraged by the recurring comment made by elders, museum professionals and students that more people in academic positions should be working to make tribal knowledge accessible to a Māori audience” (p. 14), the author has made information on the Northland Carving Tradition, which is publicly available, much more accessible. From among its non-academic, non-museum-professional “Māori audience” (which may encompass the majority of the descendants of Kupe) it could prove frustrating—for some. The book does provoke consideration about how we continue to grow our understanding in a realm that still poses many questions and it suggests debatable theories—many of which could be elucidated by casting a wider net when fishing for answers. The lack of input from *tohunga whakairo* ‘master carvers’ leaves some questions unanswered and debatable theories un-challenged. It need not be a study in the esoteric knowledge of carving, but rather answers to questions that may be best asked of the *tohunga* of today. One would be hard pressed to find *tohunga whakairo* who would reiterate the myth that Tai Tokerau art and heritage “…did not exist, or thought it had disappeared and was not retrievable” (p. 6), just as one would not be hard pressed to find carvers and teachers of Māori art who still find the use of the term “decoration”, to describe surface patterns, inappropriate, despite the considerable revision of this
term in architectural literature that leads some to believe no longer denotes a lesser
importance. Architectural literature should not be the only forum from which such
revision should be considered when there is a wealth of understanding accessible
from within the ranks of our carving elite.

This book acknowledges the role of women in the Tai Tokerau carving tradition,
albeit in one instance that infers the contribution of the master in the role of assistant,
as in the example of the Rangikurukuru house completed in 1935 in Dargaville.
Most carvers would say that you teach what you have been taught in regard to this
contentious issue, and to have a Tai Tokerau perspective included in this book is
important and relevant.

The use of wakatūpāpaku ‘bone caskets’ imagery asks the reader to question
whether this is appropriate or not, when they were never intended to be seen after
being deposited in burial caves and are tapu or sacred. They have not “found their way
into public collections” (p. 15)—they were taken; and although they make up a third
of Tai Tokerau carvings in public collections, it is debatable that they have proven
to be a saving grace for the revival of northern carving to the extent that it mitigates
the disregarding of tapu. The stylised heads depicted on the wakatūpāpaku images
in this book can also be seen on pare ‘door-lintels’ and whakawae ‘door-jambs’ and
there are other sources. This dilemma brings to mind a recent discussion regarding
access to taonga when a colleague was asked by a descendant of Te Rauparaha if she
could wear a cloak once owned by the great chief, to which he replied, “If you could
ask Te Rauparaha himself—what do you think he would say?”

It is essential to the discussion of provenance that the wave of known migrations into
and out of the region in pre-European times be given due mention, and, as the author
states, it would be beyond the scope of this book to describe these tribal movements.
Suffice to say that the influence of iwi such as Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou,
Rongowhakaata and Ngāti Awa can not be accurately measured in the assessment of
provenance for many Tai Tokerau carvings, but it has been well acknowledged in this
book. The fact that museum professionals were not overly concerned with recording
provenance before the mid-20th century exacerbated the problem of accurately
attributing provenance, as did “the unscrupulous nature of some collectors who would
not pass locational details on to museums because they had obtained carvings without
consulting local Māori” (p. 28).

Augustus Earle’s 19th century watercolours provide images of the general
structure of northern pātaka kai ‘food storehouses’ and their prominent features,
with written descriptions from early European voyagers filling in some of the gaps.
When we compare images carved on whakawae and wakatūpāpaku to the haunting
‘Whakapakoko III’ by Manos Nathan (Plate 11) a sense of connection emerges that
links the past with the present, showcasing features that are prominent in the teaching
of northern styles in many carving schools. Other contemporary works from Tai
Tokerau artists illustrate how the use of whakairo symbolism has been incorporated
into paintings and other media but it is surprising that there is no mention of carvers
such as Roi Toia, one of our leading international tohunga whakairo, or examples of
his artistry as can be seen in the stunning “Ngāpuhi Taniwha Rau—Mask of Pride”.
As we read through this account of the pre-European development of Tai Tokerau carving, to the influence of the new arrivals with new materials and tools, and on to the decline and ultimate renaissance of Tai Tokerau Whakairo Rākau this book evokes emotions of wonderment, frustration, innovation, despair, hope and admiration. The well-compiled catalogue of images, many of which are usually inaccessible, backs up the assertion that Tai Tokerau does indeed have a fine carving tradition and a unique perspective of Whakairo Rākau. Deidre Brown has led us in the right direction in seeking a greater understanding of this often covert world. It is with some anticipation that hope remains for more of the same with broader input, and a focus on where this journey has taken the descendants of Kupe today—from its essential beginnings to the whare whakairo and art galleries of the world, where much of the shining light emanates from Te Tai Tokerau.


JIM WILLIAMS (NGĀI TAHU)
University of Otago

What a beautifully presented book! It will quite quickly become a taonga to many families, especially those from the North.

There are many regional (and quite a few national) sayings that, having stood the test of time by being transmitted orally across the generations, become part of the wisdom of the group. Merata Kawharu has collected a large number from the Tai Tokerau and they, together with a mixture of relevant photographs and copies of artworks, form the substance of her book. Tāhuho Kōrero is organised regionally: Auckland, The Bay of Islands, Hokianga, the Far North, Kaipara and the mid-North, East Coast and Whangarei districts are each handled separately. Dominating the contents are a series of whakatauki ‘aphorisms’, waiata ‘songs’, tauparapara ‘chants used in speechmaking’ and pepehā ‘statements of identity’, together with some quotations of wise sayings from elders. Accordingly, it may be thought that the main interest would be to tribal members, but that would be taking a way too narrow view. The traditional sayings are put into context and explained so that the underlying metaphors, often inaccessible to non-speakers of Māori, are understood. However, it is in the book’s geographical organisation that, in particular, the historian will feel somewhat dissatisfied; because those sayings that are related to different phases of the past are scattered according to their origins so it becomes difficult to gain any overall view, for example, of events involving Kupe or the signing of The Treaty of Waitangi. Undoubtedly, such was not an objective of the book, but it could have added immeasurably to its usefulness.

This reviewer is not especially conversant with the Tai Tokerau, but it does seem that some iwi/hapū are favoured over others. In particular, some among the plethora of Hokianga groups seem to have received scant cover.