Some of the sayings are mentioned as whakataukī, others as tauparapara or pepehā, and excerpts from waiata, too, are sprinkled among the rich offerings, but many are not classified and many readers would appreciate an explanation of the various classes.

The index is minimal: places, iwi and people feature in the main, but a thematic index could have been especially useful. This reviewer endeavoured to look for sayings from related, published sources such as Sissons et al.: The Pūriri Trees are Laughing and Matiu and Mutu’s Te Whānau Moana, but in many cases the index was not up to it (or perhaps the reviewer was not!).

While Tāhu Kōrero is an excellent reference book for the area it covers (Auckland, north), it is a splendidly illustrated coffee table book as well. Other iwi should encourage their own scholars to follow this model and have a similar book done for their own area. Such a set of reference volumes would provide an invaluable aid to tribal members and academics, indeed everybody with an interest in tribal sayings.


SAFUA AKELI
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

The cover image for Warm Winds of Change:... taken by Sāmoan photographer Evotia Tamua, depicts a familiar shop setting in Sāmoa. Stacked pisupo ‘corned beef’ and eleni ‘tinned fish’ cans line the shelves, along with Zap mosquito spirals and Klin washing powder. At the centre, tacked onto the wooden shelf, is a small picture of the risen Christ. In a visual sense, this candid image captures change in Sāmoan diet, spirituality, technology and economy since the 19th century.

Through a sociological approach, Warm Winds of Change documents this ongoing transformation in a contemporary Sāmoan society. A key question that I and perhaps many Samoans have asked is inherent throughout the text. To paraphrase: Is Sāmoan society sufficiently fluid and dynamic to allow significantly dramatic changes to occur without destroying the idea of Sāmoa in the process? The Macphersons present conclusive evidence that Sāmoan society has coped with dynamic changes since settlement of the islands 3,000 years ago. In the process, they probe the “idea of Sāmoa”, and the “indices” that signify elements of change in Samoan society since the 1970s, and to some extent before.

In the book’s six chapters, the reader is taken through different phases of Sāmoa’s history, influenced by politics, culture, economics and missionary enterprises. The longest chapter is dedicated to “ideas and social transformation”, which suggests ideas more than technology and migration have had the greater impact on Sāmoan society. Rather than a case study of a particular ‘āiga ‘family’ or nu’u ‘village’, the Macphersons take a broader approach. They focus on Sāmoa as a “composite” site, made up of various parts that add to the layers of Sāmoa’s complex contemporary society.
Chapter 1 outlines the structure of the book, and convincingly argues that Sāmoa’s engagement with “global forces” since 1800 set in motion some major irreversible changes in Samoan society, which with increasing pluralism, in recent years, has weakened Sāmoa’s ability to cope with the rising number of external forces. In the second chapter, Sāmoa’s interaction with the outside world is briefly and chronologically outlined, from settlement to independence and migration. Highlighting the pace of transformation since the 1970s, the authors forewarn that “Sāmoa is now confronted with new and rapidly intensifying incursions and impacts” (p.58). Adding to this increasing tempo of change has been the movement of Sāmoan people overseas.

Chapter 3 on “migration and social transformation” charts the journey and impact of Sāmoan migrants travelling and settling abroad. One memorable account is a conversation between the authors and a relative about the whereabouts of people of the nu’u. The geographic space of travel included Missouri, London, Brisbane and Wellington. These scattered, though connected, populations of Samoans abroad have directly influenced the organisation of the ‘āiga and nu’u in Sāmoa, and vice versa. In some cases, features of transformation are more obvious with the impact of the labour market, as Samoans leave home to pursue employment opportunities. In others, particularly with the flora and fauna, changes have occurred invisibly over time. Overall, migration has extended the Sāmoan world view.

Chapter 4 has 47 pages, and is the most critical in the book, as the Macphersons delve into the impact of global ideas. Excerpts of experience from Samoans are woven into the narrative, revealing tension between and within these “modern transnational villages”. The internal and external struggle of understanding the fa’asāmoa plays out, and it becomes increasingly clear that the boundaries of both ‘āiga and nu’u extend far beyond their point of origin. Conversations which once centred around the fono (meeting) of the nu’u, now include dialogue between ‘āiga in the United States, New Zealand and Australia.

Technology has also played a key role in the process of change, from telecommunication to refrigeration. Illustrated in Chapter 5 through moving images, the technological impact and the subsequent shifts are examined in detail. The basket to bucket metaphor reveals a society willing to embrace innovative technology that will assist in day-to-day life. This is an ongoing process. For example, in Te Papa’s Pacific Cultures collection, a number of discarded Sāmoan to’i ma’a ‘stone adzes’, which were once used for carving or cutting, are now stored in ether foam drawers. No longer a primary tool, these to’i ma’a have become resource material for research and display. Although some cultural items such as ‘ie tōga ‘finely woven mats’ have remained “resilient”, others have changed, and these, as the Macphersons point out, have and will continue to impact on Sāmoan society.

In Chapter 6, an emphasis is placed on “gathering storms” as the Macphersons dispute the “conservative cultural” view, held by Sāmoan scholars such as Aiono Dr Fana’aafi Le Tagaloa and Unasa Dr Felise Va’a. These views, according to the Macphersons, ignore the “dynamic” and underlying “vectors” that are transpiring. Recapping on the opening question, the Macphersons reiterate their concern about the flexibility of the fa’asāmoa to cope with a pace of change that diverges greatly
from changes which occurred in the 19th century. These concerns pose important questions for the future such as the stability of chiefly authority and the maintenance of support from migrant communities.

This book project was developed from the 2007 Macmillan Brown Lecture series, enabling the authors to draw on their fieldwork and research over the last 40 years. It shows the Macphersons’ commitment to their subject in the context of Sāmoa. I appreciated the personal insights the authors alluded to, as they added a layer of empathy and humour. However, there are few images throughout the book, and the inclusion of maps would have been a helpful reference. While *Warm Winds of Change* documents a key moment in Samoan history, this evidence reveals that Sāmoa’s journey to date has been one of change, but also one of continuity. The durability of the *fa‘asāmoa* in the next 40 years, and beyond, will bring new challenges and opportunities for the future. Written in the early 21st century, *Warm Winds of Change* is an important reference to Sāmoa’s contemporary history, and makes a valuable contribution to the literature on globalisation in the wider Pacific region.