

Maori art. He leaves behind him a valuable contribution which will be mined, no doubt criticized, and used by scholars of the future.

Those of us who are still studying Maori art must make our personal contribution with the same attention to detail which characterized much of Archey's work. If the present students of art can solve some of the problems which handicapped Archey in his work he would be pleased with us. Much remains to be done and it would be a mistake to think that the two grand coffee-table books which we now have (Barrow's and Archey's) together say all that needs to be said about Maori art. Serious research into Maori art has, in fact, barely begun.

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Bristol and its Municipal Government 1820-1851. By Graham Bush. Bristol Record Society, Bristol, 1976. 264 pp. U.K. price £9.00.

SCHOLARLY histories of British or New Zealand local government are comparatively few. And more's the pity, for such works provide the vital substructure of urban history. The research of Dr Graham Bush is thus to be welcomed. The author of *Decently and In Order* (the centennial history of the Auckland City Council) has published a second study based this time on his Ph.D. thesis.

The origins of the book account for its orientation. Dr Bush is concerned to show how Bristol was governed in the years before and after the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. The scope is narrow, but approach important. To Joseph Parkes, a moving spirit behind the Act, 'Municipal Reform is the steam engine for the Mill built by "Parliamentary Reform"'. For their part, the Tories also saw municipal reform in political terms. Inevitably, contemporary perceptions coloured subsequent interpretation. To the Webbs, authors of a massive and indispensable study on English local government, the 1835 Act was 'revolutionary' in its intentions and effects. Yet how revolutionary was the change from the 'unreformed' to the 'representative' system?

Dr Bush treads warily. He emphasizes the continuities. However profound the changes after 1835 might seem to have been nationally, in Bristol there were considerable continuities in the structure, functions, composition and politics of municipal government. After 1835, the three tiers of Mayor, aldermen, and councillors remained. And aldermen were still chosen by co-option. Partly as a result the political purposes of the 1835 Act were nullified in Bristol. The Conservatives captured control of the aldermen and thereby maintained their ascendancy in the new Council. Nor was an Anglican oligarchy replaced by a nonconformist 'shopocracy' — in Bristol at least. (However, the author does not analyse separately the backgrounds of the Conservative and Liberal councillors: any subtle differences remain undetected.) Affluent Anglican merchants continued to predominate in the ranks of the new councillors. Why? This question is not tackled directly, but

some elements of an explanation are provided. The sense of political and religious exclusion, which the Webbs see as impelling the movement for reform elsewhere, seems to have been less strong in Bristol. And certainly 1835 brought no radical extension of the municipal franchise. The burgesses still comprised only 20 per cent of the householders. The lower middle classes as well as the proletariat remained beyond the pale of municipal politics. 'Station' and 'Respectability' still counted.

Nevertheless, Dr Bush argues, 'the word "revolutionary" is not altogether inapt'. There were basic changes between the 'unreformed' and the 'representative' system as the labels imply: changes of attitudes, both in the way councillors viewed their role, and in the way the Council was regarded by the 'citizens'. Crucial to the change was the introduction of the elective principle. Elections shattered the domination of municipal government by a tightly-knit group of 'corporation' families and friends. A broader segment of the municipal élite was recruited to the new Council. 1835 also ushered in a new conception of local government. The old exclusive corporation had viewed itself as a private body which had obtained some public duties. Its main *raison d'être* was to defend its inherited rights and privileges. It was not accountable to the citizens. Irrevocably the confidence of the citizens was alienated. By contrast the 'representative' Council was sensitive to the 'public interest', albeit narrowly defined. And so where the attempts by the old Corporation to impose a county rate had been resisted, the new Council could levy a relatively high borough rate without causing a vigorous reaction from the ratepayers (before the 1850s at least). Dr Bush establishes his case with meticulous research.

In some measure then, Bristol stands in counterpoint to cities such as Birmingham and Leeds. It is a pity that comparisons are not sustained, despite the suggestive work on these cities of Gill, Hennock, and Fraser. A pity also that developments after 1851 are not glanced at. Even so this is a useful contribution to the mosaic of nineteenth-century urban history.

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The Loyalty Islands: A History of Culture Contacts 1840-1900. By K.R. Howe. Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1977. xvi, 206 pp. N.Z. price: \$13.60.

FOR the historian of culture contact in the South Pacific, the Loyalty Islands are a worthwhile field for investigation. During the nineteenth century the three islands of Mare, Lifu and Uvea, lying to the east of New Caledonia, were visited by a succession of European traders, labour recruiters, missionaries and colonial administrators, and by the 1880s, the Loyalty Islanders were regarded by European visitors as 'the most advanced of any natives in Western