

*Waiheke Island — A History*. By Paul Monin. Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1992. 229 pp. NZ price: \$34.95.

PAUL MONIN'S book relates the history of Waiheke up to 1920, the final date being chosen because of the drastic changes to Waiheke life and landscape following the large-scale opening-up of residential sections and the departure of the last tangata whenua community. The book is divided into three time periods: before 1840; 1840 to 1869; 1870 to 1920. Sixty-nine illustrations reinforce the text, although not all of them have reproduced clearly, and some are not sourced. A map of modern Waiheke would also have helped readers not familiar with the island to follow the latter part of the text more easily.

The author, understandably in these times, has included a disclaimer about his ability to convey Maori history. Nevertheless, his sensitivity towards the Maori past is to be commended. Given this care it is strange that the Ngati Paoa-Ngati Maru retaliatory battle of Waiwharaki is located south of Takapuna (p.24) whereas Leslie Kelly's *Tainui* (p.274) locates the action at Puketona on the Waitangi River, Bay of Islands. Likewise, the claim that Mokoia pa at Panmure was rebuilt in 1810 'to conform to the demands of musket warfare' (p.34) seems a very early date for such a modification.

These criticisms apart, it is a pleasure to read a local history which does not leave the tangata whenua out of the story after an obligatory pre-1840 summary. Monin's account is a good treatment of Maori occupancy of Waiheke Island from the early competing claims of Ngati Maru and Ngati Paoa through to 1914, when the last tangata whenua community moved away to the mainland. Maori Land Court records and oral testimony are used to tell the story of the gradual loss of Maori land holdings on Waiheke, thus providing valuable localized evidence of the alienation of Maori tribal lands in late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

A strong feature of Monin's approach to the history of Waiheke is the way that it is set into the history of the surrounding region. In the Introduction the author claims that Waiheke's past is 'a microcosm of national events'. Consequently, he is not frightened to generalize about the significance of the local event in relation to contemporary national history. This makes Monin's book a good example of how a regional history should be set into the wider historical context.

The major emphases of this work are changing land ownership and use, economic development and social conditions. But it is the interplay of people over the land of Waiheke and the author's analysis of the differing Maori and Pakeha approaches to the utilization of the island's resources which are the strengths of this book. The economic history of Waiheke is treated in depth and in particular provides a fascinating account of the sporadic, and very destructive, exploitive industries of timber-felling, mining and shingle removal.

Descriptive accounts of noted Waiheke personalities and events already exist. Monin's work is valuable in analysing and interpreting the broader issues of social and economic development on Waiheke, while still providing the reader with rich vignettes of life on the island. It is a carefully crafted story told with an eye for significant detail and human interest and one which does not ignore the experiences of women.

This is a highly readable, well-documented history which is sensitively written from a bi-cultural perspective. As a valuable work of reference it should go far towards achieving the author's aim of stimulating interest in the island's history.

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