

The death rates in the New Hebrides and New Guinea certainly alarmed some colonial administrators and naval officers like Captain John Moresby. But the response of Aminio Bale to the Administrator in Fiji, before leaving with the Methodist Mission party to New Britain in 1875, 'If we die we die, if we live we live,' pointed to a willingness of some to accept the consequences come what may.

European control largely restrained indigenous independence and autonomy emerging among mission churches in the nineteenth century. The early ideals of some like bishops G.A. Selwyn and J.C. Patteson, and mission administrators like Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson were sold short, particularly in the last quarter of the century as new imperialism and possibly social Darwinism reinforced European paternalism, dependence and control.

A significant legacy of this period, which Lange underlines, was the training institutions set up by the churches. Takamoā in the Cook Islands, founded in 1839, and Malua in Samoa in 1844, continue to the present. The indigenous leadership they and other colleges trained made a significant impact in their own islands and beyond. In some cases, as with Moulton at Tupou College in Tonga, the education offered was not narrowly religious but broadly based.

Lange does not idealize the island ministers or the European missionaries. He points to the undoubted educational and theological limitations of many of the early evangelists, and the falls from grace by some (sex and adultery figured prominently). For Catholics there was considerable success in recruiting catechists, but they had no clerical status and the attempt to develop an indigenous priesthood was a sad story with few successes.

A photograph of Anglican Maori ministers c.1900 used on the inside and back covers of the book points to the rich possibilities more photographs and illustrations could have brought. The photos referred to in the text (pp.243, 267) would have added much if they had been reproduced. The Maori clergy in the only photo in the book are dressed in black suits and clerical collars, with watch-chains in some cases. They represent how the European influenced indigenous religious leadership, but as Maori speakers they lived and worked among their own people. The 'island' ministers became representatives of the new religion but also agents for both retaining and changing their own cultures.

The lack of recognition for women religious leaders in the nineteenth-century Pacific reflects both the European missionaries own churches and Pacific societal attitudes. Lange points to the importance of ministers' wives, but their contribution and that of women religious leaders still needs more research. By naming island ministers and describing their achievements Lange has given them a prominence they fully deserve. Undertaking a twentieth-century study to complement this volume would be a huge effort, but it would provide significant insights into the ongoing contribution of indigenous leadership to the shaping of Pacific life in ways often more important to local people than European missionaries and colonial administrators. Lange's work has provided new ways of looking at Pacific Christianity.

ALLAN DAVIDSON

The University of Auckland

Christianity, Modernity and Culture: New Perspectives on New Zealand History. Edited by John Stenhouse, assisted by G.A. Wood. ATF Press, Adelaide, 2005. 364 pp. NZ price: \$44.95. ISBN 1-920691-33-2.

ACCORDING TO ALLAN DAVIDSON in the final essay in this collection, the Christian churches can and should be a voice at the margins of society, standing as a 'prophet at the gate' for New Zealand in the face of economic and social injustice. It seems an

apt comment, given that religious history, too, can be seen as something of a marginal discipline in New Zealand's academic historiography. Still, New Zealand history writing is increasingly — albeit partially and tentatively — reconsidering the role of religion in our past.

John Stenhouse has been one of the most articulate and insistent apologists for the importance of religion in New Zealand history, and his arguments in the introduction about secular bias in academic history writing will be familiar to many readers. According to Stenhouse, historians have allowed personal bias against religion to colour their perception of New Zealand's past, marginalizing or reviling religious figures and ideas in the process. However, religious history is not solely a victim of the spectre of Keith Sinclair and his secular proclivities — religious historians have sometimes been reluctant to come out from under their shell and engage with broader questions in New Zealand history in order to be taken seriously by the wider history-writing community. This book aims to offer 'new perspectives' on religion in New Zealand's past, ones that will integrate religious history with cultural history, if the title is anything to go by.

Stenhouse remarks in the introduction that 'Clifford Geertz constitutes this book's intellectual patron saint' (p.14), but some of the essays in this collection seem to be paying Geertz only lip service at best. Geertz's insistence that religion be taken seriously is pushed repeatedly, yet few of the essayists succeed in engaging in any real depth with the wider insights that modern cultural history owes him. The drive and energy of the introduction for radical new approaches that integrate religion with cultural history is not shared by all of the book. The erratic quality of the content is something of a hurdle to reading the collection as a whole; however, there are a number of very interesting essays scattered through the book, and most of the contributions succeed in at least challenging old orthodoxies.

The best essays in *Christianity, Modernity and Culture* show rather than tell the reader that New Zealand cultural history needs to take the role of religion in the past seriously. This tends to happen in the cases where the contributors go beyond merely pointing out where existing historiography has alienated or minimized the role of Christianity in the past, and suggest new directions for historical research.

In the first section — 'Cross-cultural Christianities' — Tony Ballantyne provides a robust and detailed analysis of international historiographical trends around religion and the British Empire, and uses them to elucidate religious issues surrounding cross-cultural interactions in the early years of Pakeha colonization. In putting early missionary activity in the context of wider trends in the British Empire, Ballantyne shows the importance of understanding the meaning of Judeo-Christian ideas in both Maori and Pakeha communities. Lyndsay Head's essay in the same section offers a detailed case study of Wiremu Tamihana in which she explores the nature and meaning of Maori belief.

The second section is organized around the idea of 'popular Christianities' — patterns of Christian cultural practice that exist beyond churchgoing and formal religion. Alison Clarke's piece on ritual in colonial Otago explores the religious meanings of the patterns and habits of the everyday lives of nineteenth-century Pakeha colonists. In doing so, Clarke investigates the role of belief in shaping the emotional and psychological structures of colonists, tapping into the seldom-recognized relationship between religious expression and personal, subjective emotional patterns. Her essay is a model of how religious belief can illuminate previously unexamined aspects of New Zealand's cultural history.

The third section is focused on the relationship between Christianity and politics. As Davidson suggests in his essay, this is something that is topical to both churches and society as a whole. It is also something that has been approached in a methodologically haphazard way in New Zealand political history. G.A. Wood's survey of Christians in New Zealand political history is broad but shallow, and while suggesting a number of potential topics for study it does little to provide a coherent vision for how our understanding of

the undoubted Christian belief of past politicians can be integrated with broader political action and ideas. On the other hand, Susannah Grant's essay on George Grey provides a more promising framework for understanding the links between Christianity, politics and culture. Grant takes a step back from the traditional historiography to try and understand the religious context of, in this case, New Zealand's most famous colonial governor. In doing so, she makes a persuasive case for the importance of Grey's background as a liberal Anglican in shaping his policies.

Perhaps because of the diversity of essays, there is a significant lack of attention on the early twentieth century — a key period of change and conflict in terms of the role of Christianity in New Zealand culture. Stenhouse's case study of women in Dunedin from 1885 to 1935 provides some interesting and innovative reflections on gender, religion and class, suggesting that working-class individuals, women in particular, had a larger role in urban Christian churches than has been traditionally assumed. However, other than this, the early twentieth century is largely unexamined, in stark contrast to the numerous essays on nineteenth-century topics. In some ways, this absence serves to further underscore the untapped potential of religion as a tool of cultural analysis in New Zealand history.

Unfortunately, the book's production values are erratic. The quality of the illustrations and figures is poor, there are a few obvious proofing errors, and some of the essays seem unpolished. I have only seen *Christianity, Modernity and Culture* on a store shelf once. Published by an Australian theological press, the book will find its audience limited to a small group of New Zealand historians and theologians. This is a shame, because the strongest essays are highly relevant, in terms of both argument and method, to some important discussions in New Zealand history. If religious belief is to take its deserved place as a tool for analysis in New Zealand cultural history, more consistent and widely distributed essays and monographs are required. In the meantime, this book goes quite some way towards making straight the path.

TOBY HARPER

The University of Auckland

A Driven Man: Missionary Thomas Samuel Grace 1815–1879: His Life and Letters. By David Grace. Ngaio Press, Wellington, 2004. 375 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 0-9582243-5-8.

THIS ACCOUNT OF T.S. GRACE, written and edited by his great-grandson, deserves a careful reading by historians. Although aspects of the book more resemble the nineteenth-century concept of a 'life and letters', the work as a whole is thorough, thoughtful, well referenced and indexed. It is a not uncritical look at a strong-minded missionary. Grace arrived in New Zealand in 1850, and so he was among a younger generation of missionaries, but he was under the control of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) committee, not the local Anglican Church, and was wont to appeal to England against the instructions of the local CMS committee.

In 1928 an earlier generation of the Grace family published the book *A Pioneer Missionary among the Maori* from his letters to the London secretaries of the Church Missionary Society. In the process they deleted many passages and letters which were sharply critical of other missionaries in the CMS. The merit of this work is to give these critical letters full attention. This is not a supplement to the 1928 book but a fuller biography, so although letters are typically quoted at length or excerpted in feature boxes, they are not reproduced in full.

The differences between the 1928 Grace and the 2004 Grace are marked. The 1928 Grace was perceptive, cautious of the government influence, full of admiration for 'old-