

by the peninsula and its coastal region, this ‘environmental history’ engages across conceptual borders with these other disciplines, even including the pūrākau (narratives) and taonga tuku iho (heritage concepts) of te ao Māori, and utilizing many studies of the minutiae of the Otago Peninsula environment. As a research methodology, this interdisciplinary approach avoids the potential limitations of a local history, and, with a seamless integration of these disparate perspectives on the peninsula, yields clear, incisive historical writing.

The history of the Otago Peninsula is a bicultural one, and when writing on the Māori aspect, West reveals a unique skill in being able to write realistically of Māori environmental history, conflict, the effects of land loss and the more recent attempts to (re)assert rangatiratanga. This is not done at the expense of his excellent writing about the farming narratives of the Pākehā who settled there. Readers interested in the entwined histories of both peoples will find much to challenge them and much to admire.

The production values of the book are excellent. High-quality colour photographic and artistic illustrations support the writing, historical maps and surveys contextualize material, and all this combines with extensive use of colour pages and deft graphic design to produce a significant book of which West can justifiably be proud.

Ōtākou/Otago Peninsula is a place which deserved a closer examination of its unique history and its remarkable environment. With a significant part of the region having retained the status of Māori land in the face of governmental action, settler pressures and ecological change, and with a legacy of 200 years of farming, demographic and architectural endeavours, this is a story that demanded to be told. In recording the comprehensive history in this way, West offers a wero (challenge) to historians of other regions of New Zealand, as well as providing a research methodology for them to emulate.

LLOYD CARPENTER

*Lincoln University*

*Pathway of the Birds: The Voyaging Achievements of Maori and their Polynesian Ancestors.* By Andrew Crowe. David Bateman Ltd., Auckland, 2018. 288pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN: 9781869539610.

FEW BOOKS CLEAVE SO PRECISELY to their titles as this one. Andrew Crowe has interests in Pacific flora and fauna, especially migratory birds and the plants and animals significant to Polynesians, which are discussed and illustrated profusely with maps and images. Behind this attractive foliage lies a tangle of branches that seeks to join the natural history to a discussion of Polynesian voyaging in the early pre-European era. Crowe explains that this ‘is not the work of an academic, but the sincere effort of a science writer to summarise in an accessible way [the work of many specialists, focusing] primarily on the journey or enquiry, rather than on promoting any particular theory’ (p.10). However, the result, far from impartial, promotes a particular theory relentlessly.

Crowe's approach to Polynesian voyaging lies squarely within the modern traditionalism exemplified by an earlier Bateman volume, *Vaka Moana*.<sup>1</sup> In both books, it is assumed that data sourced in linguistics, genetics, archaeology, history and tradition converge on a theory of such manifest self-evidence that no other needs serious consideration. This is not archaeology or history in any analytical sense. Rather, it is a project of continuing deference to the tenets of a century-old model of Polynesian voyaging without understanding that serious questions and new perspectives have arisen in subsequent research.<sup>2</sup> Publications that contradict the traditionalist model are listed in Crowe's references, but not discussed in the text.

*Pathway of the Birds* is mainly concerned, instead, with adding lustre to 'the voyaging achievements of Maori and their Polynesian ancestors' by embellishing the traditionalist story that large, fast, windward-sailing double canoes, using accurate star navigation, made frequent return passages and engaged in maritime trade throughout the remote Pacific. For example, Crowe (p.28) has Polynesians in California, Ecuador and southern Chile, despite authoritative evidence that the Chumash language lacks Polynesian influence and compelling rejection of the notion of Polynesian DNA in pre-Columbian Chilean chickens. Amerindian voyaging from Ecuador to East Polynesia is dismissed, despite historical evidence of windward-sailing balsa rafts in Ecuador (not coincidentally, one might think, the source area of the Polynesian sweet potato) and of pre-European Amerindian genes and material culture in Easter Island.<sup>3</sup> Amongst many similarly dubious conclusions in the book, it is asserted that New Zealand may have been in voyaging contact with the whole of East Polynesia, and with some parts of West Polynesia and East Melanesia (pp.235–6); that an adze of Hawaiian basalt found in Napuka Island, although lacking any archaeological provenance or age, shows that there were early trading connections between Hawaii and the Tuamotus (pp.99, 213, 231); and that Easter Island was connected to the Pitcairn group by trade in pearlshell. That last assertion rests only on an observation in 1722, which Roggeveen himself doubted, and some post-European artefacts. Throughout the book, Crowe relies similarly on evidence that potentially supports the traditionalist argument and ignores that which does not. Navigation by following migratory birds is a prominent theme illustrated by arrows of convergence upon northern New Zealand (pp.148, 161), but the reliability of this might be judged by the Sooty shearwater migration which crosses the equator on a 4000km wide front — described by Crowe as a 'narrow corridor' (p.147) — and is still 2000km wide at the latitude of Cook Strait.

The desire to tell a story that glorifies East Polynesian voyaging achievements is reflected additionally in denigration of the maritime activity of others, notably Europeans (pp. 224–5). Yet two thousand years ago Greeks and Romans were making direct passages of 2500km across the northern Indian Ocean using star navigation and the target-expanding techniques later recorded in Oceania, and before East Polynesia was colonized the Norse were in North America. There is no need to talk up Polynesian seafaring as if it was uniquely capable, and in a sense doing so detracts from what might have been the real achievement of early East Polynesian voyaging: that it accomplished so much despite limitations of seafaring technology and changing wind regimes around the fourteenth century.

The merits of *Pathway of the Birds* lie largely in its maps and images, although many of the 'picture credits' do not specify permission to publish, a matter needing clarification. The illustrations are accompanied by interesting snippets of information

about natural history and its cultural connections in Polynesia. As little of this adds much to a discussion of voyaging, beyond the fact that seafaring was the mechanism for distribution of people, plants and animals, a more coherent and less problematic book might have resulted by focusing on those areas of the author's expertise.

ATHOLL ANDERSON

*Australian National University*

#### NOTES

- 1 K.R. Howe, ed., *Vaka Moana: Voyages of the Ancestors*, Bateman, Auckland, 2006.
- 2 Atholl Anderson, 'Finding Tonganui: East Polynesian Seafaring and Migration to New Zealand', in Frances Steel, ed., *New Zealand and the Sea: Historical Perspectives*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 2018, pp.30–49.
- 3 Atholl Anderson, Judith Binney and Aroha Harris, *Tangata Whenua: An Illustrated History*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 2014, pp.25–26.

*See No Evil: New Zealand's Betrayal of the People of West Papua*. By Maire Leadbeater. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2018. 296pp. NZ price: \$49.95. ISBN: 9781988531212

A POWERFUL ACCOUNT of successive government failures and inaction, *See No Evil* charts the complicity of New Zealand politicians, diplomats and agencies with regard to the deliberate denial of self-determination for the people of West Papua. At a time of increasing international support for the liberation of the territory, this book is an important contribution to the limited scholarship that addresses the topic. It starkly illuminates the campaigns of violence and terror that have marred indigenous communities for more than five decades in what has been described as a 'slow genocide'.

Maire Leadbeater is well placed to tackle such subject-matter. A former Auckland City councillor and committed human rights activist, she was a long-time campaigner and media spokesperson for the New Zealand Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament during the 1980s and 1990s, later going on to publish *Peace, Power and Politics: How New Zealand Became Nuclear Free* in 2013. A dedicated advocate for the political independence of East Timor, Leadbeater also penned *Negligent Neighbour: New Zealand's Complicity in the Invasion and Occupation of Timor-Leste* in 2006. Her tenacious quest to expose the injustices and suffering imposed upon oppressed minorities is testimony to her deep commitment to the ideals of peace and liberty.

*See No Evil* provides a historical analysis of the colonization and subsequent occupation of West Papua. Leadbeater's narrative focuses upon the post-1949 period — the year in which the Dutch relinquished sovereignty of the territory to