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<https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.132.4.514-517>

O'MALLEY, Vincent: *Voices from the New Zealand Wars | He Reo nō ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2021. 420 pp., author bio., ack., bib., ed. note, further reading, index, iwi and hapū names, map sources, timeline. NZ\$49.99 (softcover).

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Voices from the New Zealand Wars | He Reo nō ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa is a book I have been excited to read as a historian, and as one of Pacific descent born and raised in Aotearoa New Zealand it holds even more significance for me. History as a discipline has frequently marginalised the voices of those who are not part of the dominant culture, and even though many pay lip service to including those marginalised voices in their histories, often they are only peripheral to what is considered the "main" story. This book places the voices of those typically marginalised by history next to those of Pākehā (New Zealand Europeans), making them just as or even more important in the historical narrative of the New Zealand Wars between 1843 and 1872. It connects the reader to the personal stories of those who took part in a series of wars that, as O'Malley states in his introduction, have relevance for the present. Featuring the voices of the people involved and highlighting their stories makes a topic that many of us have studied at school or have some basic knowledge about much more personal in terms of who we are as a people—in O'Malley's words: "This history is not over and done with. It's the story of how we got to where we are today" (p. 4). It is intended as a textbook of sorts for students of history, but it is also a book for mainstream Aotearoa and should be gifted to all who would appreciate learning about the story of the New Zealand Wars through the voices of those who were there.

The reliance on firsthand accounts to guide the story of these wars is unique, especially as some of these have not been publicly shared before. As a historian who loves being in the archives, the hours and hours it would

have taken to gather these sources are not lost on me—nor the determination that would have been needed to dig deep and find the voices of Māori and women in amongst the louder voices of Pākehā men. Primary sources are vital to the way we practise history, and as a product of O'Malley's research expertise, in this book students of history can see demonstrated not only the importance of these documents but also the fallibility of the historical record by showing that the lines of history are drawn through people's perspectives. The decision not to shape the primary sources to the narrative but instead feature them in full (often alongside the full Māori text) is one of the reasons this book is so historically significant, as is its focus not just on the large questions of the wars but also, as O'Malley states, the more intimate episodes as “acknowledgements of a shared humanity” (p. 3). As readers we are able to trace this through the different types of primary sources—newspapers, government documents, diaries, memoirs and letters.

Voices of the New Zealand Wars is organised by nine of the key locations and conflicts of the wars between 1843 and 1872. The reader can navigate the book through these different chapters or can refer to the Voices listed across from the table of contents and flick from story to story. I tried the latter first, but the historian in me wanted to understand the overall narrative and context O'Malley gives to guide the reader from story to story; each reader will approach this differently. Due to space limitations I can mention only a couple of the many stories in this book that could be highlighted. The stories of women, especially Māori women, stood out to me as extraordinary: an account of a discussion between the artist Joseph Jenner Merrett and Hariata Rongo, the wife of Hone Heke, that took place in late 1846; the testimony of Koroneho Te Karipa detailing the active part women played in events surrounding the battle at Moutoa Island in 1864; the account written by Heni Te Kiri Karamu published in the *New Zealand Herald* in 1898 stating it was she who had given water to Lieutenant Henry Booth as he lay dying at the battle of Gate Pā in 1864 and not the previously claimed male figure; the account of the bravery of Ahumai Te Paerata, who incited the women of Ōrākau to refuse the offer to surrender the women and children and to stand together against the British in April 1864; the testimony of Maata Morewarewa and Mereana Matau to the parliamentary commission of inquiry on the attack led by Thomas McDonnell on Pōkaikai in August 1866; an account from Maraea Morete of Te Kooti's attack at Matawhero in November 1868; a letter in September 1870 to the government from the wives of the Pakakohi men convicted of treason (after their surrender) and sent to Dunedin to do hard labour; and a remarkable account from an unknown Māori woman of the attack on Rangiaowhia in February 1864 told through a letter written much later in 1991. The account of this horrendous and treacherous attack led by Lieutenant-General Duncan Cameron aimed at weakening

the Kingitanga is told through the accounts of multiple people in this book, demonstrating one of the book's key strengths in the presentation of different perspectives of history, even from those who were there at the time. This is an important part of understanding the transmission of historical narratives and the role of the historian not in finding the "truth" but in presenting and assessing different perspectives. There are many other stories to be read in this book, some well known and some not, but these stories stood out to me as an example of why this book is significant.

This review would not be complete without mentioning the visual impact of the book. Aligning the voices to the pictures added a dimension to the storytelling that I appreciated as a reader and, by being able to read the words of those who were there and see that time brought to life through images, sometimes in horrid ways, I was able to connect to a vital part of Aotearoa's history. Anyone who wants to understand Aotearoa's past and how it continues to have impact today should read this book. In the foreword, Māori scholar Arama Rata writes of her hopes for this book beyond the significance of it as an important historical narrative, in words that I think are appropriate to conclude this review: "I hope ... that by considering the voices of our past ... you [the reader] come to a deep understanding that this history has never stopped repeating, and that you strengthen your ability to recognise its ever-evolving forms. Only then will we be able to write a new story" (p. vii).

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LOPESI, Lana: *Bloody Woman*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2021. Ack., essays, foreword, gloss., notes, preface. NZ\$39.99 (softcover).

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Bloody Woman created quite the buzz within Pacific communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. It's not every day you get to see yourself written in text, especially if you're a Sāmoan or Pacific woman. This book makes visible the sacred experience of being a Pacific woman. Although this is clearly a tribute to Pacific women, it is highly beneficial for all to read, whether you're a Pacific girl dad,¹ a devoted husband, a flamboyant fa'afafine (third-gender or non-binary) or a friend of Pacific peoples. This review of *Bloody Woman* is a written talanoa (discussion) between two Pacific women who read this book as part of their PACIFIC 712 course in Pacific Studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau The University of Auckland under the guidance of Dr Emalani Case.