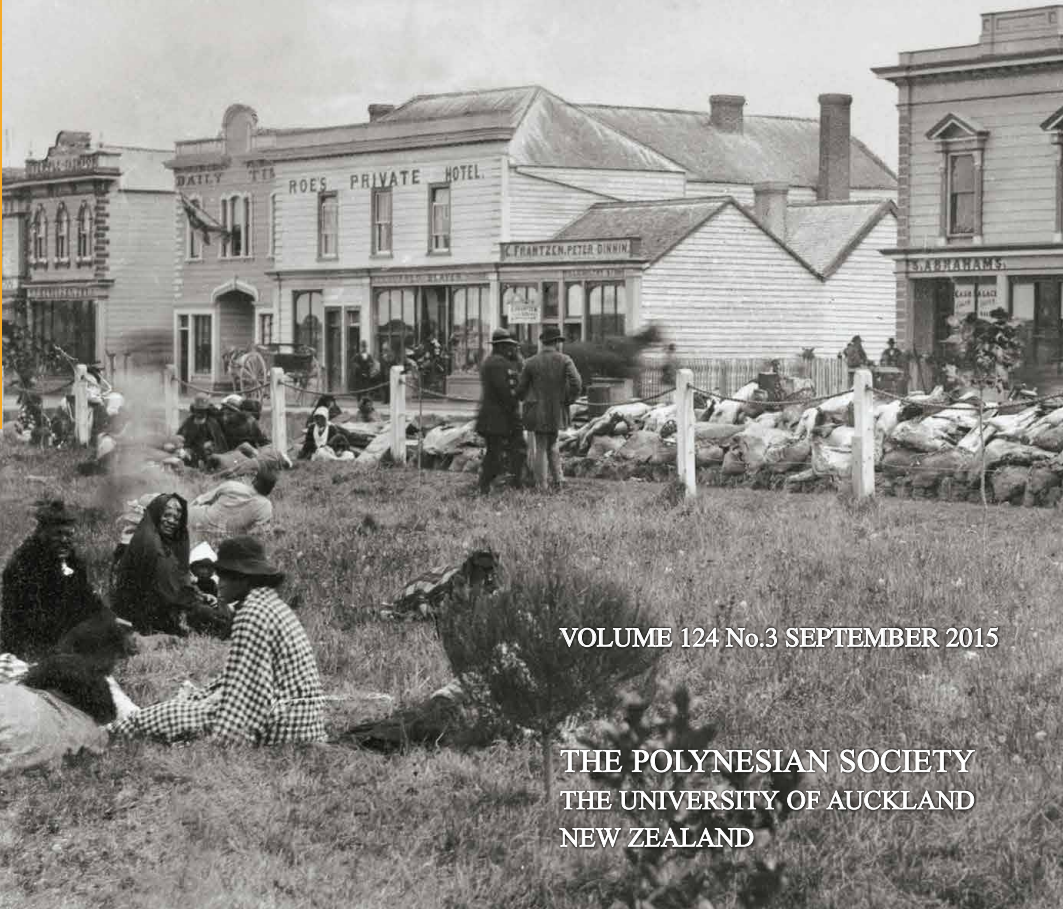


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REVIEWS

Martinsson-Wallin, Helene and Timothy Thomas (eds): *Monuments and People in the Pacific*. Studies in Global Archaeology, No. 20. Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2014. 374 pp, illustrations, maps.

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This new volume of the Studies in Global Archaeology series published by Uppsala University brings together 12 contributions dealing with the question of monumentalism in the Pacific. Some of these papers were presented at the eponymous session during the 8th Easter Island and Pacific Conference held in Santa Rosa, California in 2012. This session was chaired by Martinsson-Wallin, one of the co-editors of this book with Thomas, and they present the main topics in an introductory chapter focussing on epistemological considerations.

Both the introduction and the article by Ballard and Wilson put into perspective the classical Western conception of monumentalism within the Pacific context. For someone unfamiliar with the cultures of the Pacific, no site in Oceania (except for maybe Nan Madol and the *ahu moai* ‘shrine statues’ of Easter Island) would rival the massive architecture in Egypt, Greece, Mesopotamia or South America for majesty and visual impression. However, by returning to the definition of a monument—architecture designed or serving to celebrate or commemorate a person or events—there is indeed an abundance of monumental remains in the Pacific. Identifying the variable and often multiple functions of these structures requires a fine-grained analysis of complex archaeological datasets and ethnological information, encompassing oral traditions and “social memory”.

The strength of this volume is to gather a series of case studies that relate to a wide range of social and ritual behaviours, and explore multi-layered relationships between monuments and people. They include, among others, the questions of socio-political complexification paired with the development of a centralised authority, funerary practices associated with high-ranked status, and material expressions of religious identity and beliefs. As such, the reading of this book turns out to be a necessary reminder of how informative monuments are in reconstructing historical trajectories. As noted in the introductory chapter, these papers also promote reconsideration of architectural structures within extended “cultural landscapes”, a notion that has recently gained popularity in the context of cultural heritage management and appears quite useful for tackling the idea of places as monuments. The articles are grouped following the three classical divisions of Oceania: Melanesia (two papers), Micronesia (four papers) and Polynesia (six papers). These groups are justified by differences in research traditions of these regions, but greater discussion of the reasons for these groups would be welcome.

For Melanesia the paper by Ballard and Wilson discusses monumentalism using two recently nominated sites on the World Heritage List (Kuk in Papua New Guinea and

the Roi Mata Burial in Vanuatu). In another chapter, Thomas poses pertinent questions about the practice of shrine construction and its evolution in the Solomon Islands.

In Micronesia, the attention of archaeologists has long been centred on the impressive examples of monumentalism that have no equivalent in the rest of the Pacific. The stone-built cities of Nan Madol on Pohnpei and Leluh on Kosrae, the massive earthworks of Babeldaob on Palau, alongside the Yapese stone money and the Latte architecture in the Marianas all captured the imagination of the first Western explorers who encountered them. Without surprise, the articles presented in this book concern these major sites. Liston focusses on the ritual and ideological functions of the Palau earthworks that became symbols of emerging elite. Ayres and Seikel offer a very fine synthesis of mortuary practices identified in the stone tombs of Nan Madol, called *lolong*, and highlight differences of increasing status over time. In a second article on Nan Madol, Esteban discusses the meaning of the tombs of Nan Madol in the framework of Pohnpeian cosmology. This archaeo-astronomical contribution is important as it reveals another aspect of monumental studies in the Pacific that has long been neglected, except for a few examples in French Polynesia and Hawai'i. Finally, Beardsley presents her work on the Menka sites on Kosrae Island where she identified an architectural ensemble of two temples associated with a sacred landscape, which is interpreted in the light of the traditional belief system orchestrated around the deity figure of Sinlaku, the goddess of breadfruit.

Turning towards Polynesia, Clark discusses the concept of "social memory" through the case of the royal tombs (*langi*) of the Tu'i Tonga chiefdom at Lapaha and shows how together archaeology and traditional history can contribute to a better understanding of the Tongan trajectory in late prehistory and after European contact. Martinsson-Wallin also questions the social memory of people in Samoa in relation to the large prehistoric mounds whose existence and functions have now been forgotten.

Finally, four articles are related to the development of the *ahu marae* 'temples, shrines' complex in Eastern Polynesia, which has been a primary subject of interest since the beginning of research in the region, especially for the archaeologists of the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, who conducted the first surveys of temple sites on the islands of Hawai'i and French Polynesia. In a particularly challenging article, Anderson brings a new perspective to the virtual absence of independent *ahu-marae* sites in New Zealand and out-lying archipelagos. By reviewing ethnohistorical and archaeological data, he argues that religious activities may have been entirely transferred to the fortified sites known as *pa* that combined multiple functions. Wallin builds on the concept of "fashion" to explain the development of Oro-dedicated *marae* sites in the Society Islands. On Easter Island, Martinsson-Wallin and Wallin propose a new statistical analysis of *ahu* structures and places to investigate expression of power between groups. Finally, Ayres and colleagues reconsider the life cycle of Rapa Nui image *ahu*, thanks to a detailed investigation of *moai* statues associated with the site of Ura Uranga.

Most of these articles illuminate the nature and functions of monuments by bringing together different kinds of large datasets: traditional names, physical features, astronomical orientations, connections to landscapes and chronology. As a result, we have at our disposal a series of texts that serve as synthesis of regional monumentalism, while also introducing some innovative and fresh reflections on concepts that help

better define the specifics of monumentalism in Oceania. Therefore this volume will be of great interest to both scholars and students involved in Pacific research, as well as to a broader audience looking for a stimulating entrance into Pacific cultures.

O'Malley, Vincent: *Beyond the Imperial Frontier: The Contest for Colonial New Zealand*, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2015. 280 pp., bib., endnotes, maps, index. NZ\$49.99.

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The 1985 extension of the Waitangi Tribunal's jurisdiction to include retrospective claims back to 1840 generated a vast quantity of historical research with the capacity to enrich New Zealanders' knowledge of their nation's history and deepen their understanding of race relations today. Unfortunately, most of that work has remained under the public radar but Vincent O'Malley's new book draws on several facets of that historiography to place some key events under a sharper light.

The frontier, perceptions of which have changed from late 19th century visions of brave white settlers conquering savagery to encompass the more complex and dynamic concepts of recent scholarship, provides a "loose organising theme" for this collection of 13 essays. Just over half have been published in earlier forms in various academic journals. Here, in roughly chronological progression, they explore some of the legal, social, judicial, military and political instruments employed by the Crown to extend its areas of influence, setting those against Māori strategies developed in response.

Following the Introduction, Chapter 2 offers an overview of cultural encounters up to 1840. Then "Manufacturing Chiefly Consent?" details some of James Busby's efforts to shift Māori authority away from rule by consent to chiefly rule or something more akin to Western-style aristocracy.

As the author notes, historiography is a reflection of its time and O'Malley's long career in Tribunal history is reflected in his book. So, in Chapter 4, "Beyond Waitangi: Post-1840 Agreements between Māori and the Crown", he laments the more conservative approach taken as a consequence of sustained academic critique and public hostility, which peaked in Don Brash's 2004 speech to the Orewa Rotary Club. Here, he makes the important point that labelling those many agreements (some of which he suggests might be better recognised as treaties) as simple real estate deals is "a travesty of history". The small immediate recompense for the land transferred was not intended to be the full and final payment but a forerunner to the provision of schools, hospitals and other amenities, including the economic benefits of locally-established settler communities. Although this is a key aspect of our contested history, it is still not well recognised by New Zealand's wider public.

Therefore there are many good reasons for bringing these histories into the public arena. However, some of the essays presume a level of prior knowledge on the reader's part which may not always be present. As non-New Zealand readers may not be familiar with Brash's 2004 speech, the non-specialist may not comprehend Chapter 4's subheading "Ngāi Tahu and the 'Nine Tall Trees'", a term used to represent the nine

parts of their 1990s claim presented before the Tribunal. Similarly, the significance of Chapter 8's references to the cattle killing movement and its impact on the Xhosa in British Kaffraria might be elusive to readers unfamiliar with the history of resistance movements in other parts of the Empire.

Because the essays have their origins in distinct journal articles there is some, perhaps inevitable, repetition of information. That is particularly noticeable in Chapter 5, "English Law and the Māori Response", and Chapter 6, "Reinventing Tribal Mechanisms of Government". Some material, such as details of Governor Grey's proposals for a district *rūnanga* system (pp. 81, 103), is repeated almost word for word. The point that government was unable to impose British law to the extent they had hoped, and the idea that *rūnanga* 'governing councils' and *komiti* 'committees' in their various incarnations are examples of government-favoured institutions subverted to Māori purposes become oft-repeated points. So, too, does the democratic nature of Māori politics which required consensus rather than rulings from chiefly authority. Despite being derived from three previous articles, these two might have worked better as a single chapter.

For readers already familiar with the previously published work, Chapter 7 is more exciting. "Te Riri ki Waikato: The Invasion of Waikato and its Aftermath", supports the view that Grey sought to take the Waikato "by hook or by crook[ed]" means. It also reminds us, perhaps a little too subtly, that not everyone's sense of identity began with the First World War. Taking a new approach to estimating casualty figures, O'Malley suggests that the Waikato tribes may have suffered greater losses on a per capita basis than New Zealand as a whole in the 1914–1918 war. War in the Waikato "was not simply a sequence of brief frontier skirmishes, but a deadly and devastating affair" for those tribes caught up in it. That assessment highlights the anomaly in the vast sums of money and attention lavished on commemorating the First World War's centennial, while the 50th anniversary of the invasion of the Waikato passed with barely a murmur. If that war and, especially, the Gallipoli campaign, represent the genesis of a national identity, as is often claimed, it must be assumed that New Zealand still has two histories: one Māori and one Pākehā, or that a tendency to historical amnesia remains alive and well.

The theme of Grey's intent to acquire the Waikato recurs, if quietly, in Chapter 8, reminding us that land confiscations under the New Zealand Settlements Act of 1863 were less about punishing "rebels" than acquiring land for settlers. Chapter 9 builds on that theme by examining the complex mix of personal, commercial and government interests behind an 1860s battle for oil-bearing land on the East Coast. Although a coveted asset even then, extracting the oil eventually proved unviable. This detailed account reveals not only that alienating Māori land for Pākehā interests was far from a simple procedure whereby government and settlers were united in their support for confiscation, but also that "government" was not immune to manipulation by insiders.

In their 2014 book, *The History Manifesto*, Jo Guldi and David Armitage, controversially argued for historians to give greater attention to macrohistory, the grand overview. Thankfully, O'Malley has taken a different stance. Blurring regional and tribal differences in favour of homogenised national histories does less to enhance our understanding. Microstudies such as his ensure that history is not reduced to an easily-digested mess of pottage.