Angela Ballara, *Proud to Be White? A Survey of Pakeha Prejudice in New Zealand.* Auckland: Heinemann Publishers, 1986. NZ$19.95.

Reviewed by Barbara Harrison, Waahi Whaanui Community Training Centre, Huntly, New Zealand

When I first visited New Zealand in 1985, I was on a mid-year break from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks and was visiting friends who were on sabbatical leave from that same university. In New Zealand for only a few weeks when I arrived on their doorstep, they were quick to inform me of all they had so far learned about the country. Among the first things I was told was, "There is no prejudice in New Zealand." I was skeptical, but my two-week vacation was too short a time to allow further exploration of the topic.

I returned to New Zealand in September 1986, this time on my own sabbatical leave. I was affiliated with the Centre for Maori Studies and Research, University of Waikato, but I spent the year living in the Maori community at Waahi Marae in Huntly, where I conducted an ethnographic study of educational programs in the community. I quickly learned that the Maori view of prejudice in New Zealand was quite different from that told to me by my American friends, and, over the period of my ten-month stay, I observed repeated expressions of Pakeha prejudice toward Maori. (Pakeha is the New Zealand term applied to people of European descent.) I concluded that the belief that no prejudice existed was a convenient myth. I wondered, however, about the source of the myth as well as its fuctioning in New Zealand society.

Thus, Angela Ballara's book, *Proud to be White? A Survey of Pakeha Prejudice in New Zealand,* was of particular interest to me when it was published in late 1986. After reading it, I was left with no doubt as to the validity of the author's major premise: Ethnocentric and racist attitudes among Europeans have been pervasive factors in the development of New Zealand society.

The book is based upon a systematic sampling of newspaper articles and cartoons, beginning with New Zealand's earliest publications. Newspaper accounts have been supplemented with other published

accounts, manuscript material, and official records. The author states that the quantitative frequency with which "eurocentric" themes occurred determined the direction the study took.

The text is intended as a supplement to more comprehensive works on New Zealand history. The emphasis is on the role of the beliefs of Europeans about Maori in the significant events of the nineteenth century--the Treaty of Waitangi, the land confiscations and wars, and the removal into the King country. The rapid decline of the Maori population during the nineteenth century led Europeans to believe that the Maori were a disappearing race, and the population decline was used as justification for the suppression of Maori culture and language.

The earliest documentation selected for analysis came from the missionaries who began arriving in New Zealand in 1814. It will not surprise most readers to learn that the early missionaries had little or no sympathy for the indigenous culture and that they equated the expansion of their Christian religion with the expansion of civilization. Early settlers held similar views. European prejudice was most devastating in its impact because the beliefs supported the European right to acquire the land. The beliefs of the settlers in the inferiority of Maori culture and race provided justification for the settlers to reject the right of the Maori to own the land.

European prejudice continued to influence government policy throughout the twentieth century. Ballara describes segregation in churches, schools, theaters, employment, and other institutions based upon a color bar that persisted until after World War II. The increase in the Maori population in the first half of the twentieth century, however, made it impossible to maintain the myth of the disappearing race, and, by the 1950s, government policy centered on the notion of assimilation --the belief that Maori people would eventually be absorbed into the dominant European culture and society.

The resurgence of Maori culture and political strength in the past thirty years has forced further adaptation of government policy. Ballara writes with some optimism about the changes of the 1980s:

> But by the 1980s all the major parliamentary parties have recognised and adopted at least nominally the ideal of multiculturalism. Institutions such as the Race Relations Office, the Human Rights Commission and the Waitangi Tribunal have been set up. The principle of consultation where Maori legislation is concerned has been established, and the principle of affirmative action in some employment and training situations

> recognised. Encouragement of Maori bi-lingualism has been initiated by Maori leaders, some of them in government positions, but has received state financial backing to an increasing extent. (P. 169)

The author continues, however, that "it would be falsely optimistic to assume that a multi-cultured Utopia is near" (ibid.). Nearly two centuries of prejudice in New Zealand has had an effect on the present generation of both Pakeha and Maori. If the goal of a multicultural society is to be achieved, further change in attitudes of Pakeha about Maori will be essential.

I am now in my second year of residence in the Maori community at Waahi Marae, and it seems to me that many Pakeha are learning to value certain dimensions of Maori culture. For example, "Te Maori," the exhibit of Maori treasures that attracted wide attention in the United States, attracted equal attention in New Zealand. But, there is a much more limited acceptance of other dimensions of Maori culture. Currently proposed legislation related to the protection of children does not take into consideration the role of the extended family and tribe, for example, and control of the administration of institutions and government funding remains very much in the hands of the dominant group rather than in a multicultural administrative structure.

If the present policy aimed at achieving a multicultural society is to be effective, the significance of the history of race relations in New Zealand must be recognized, and Ballara's work contributes to achieving that end. Ballara intended her work for a general, nonacademic readership. In other words, the book is intended as an educational text for the general population of New Zealand. This purpose is reflected in the educational stance taken throughout, as Ballara supplements analysis of documentation with explanations of Maori perspectives that provide Pakeha readers with a better understanding of Maori viewpoints.

Because the book is intended for a general readership rather than for an academic one, it contains only an overview of the methods used in the survey, and academic readers may wish that greater detail had been included on the method of content analysis and on the means used to select supplemental documentation. It is difficult to determine from the description of the method, for example, how the quotations from supplemental documents were selected.

Newspaper editorials and articles, of course, are not necessarily representative of the attitudes of a society as a whole. They are likely to

represent the interests of money and power. One can only conclude from Ballara's study that prejudice has existed in at least part of the European population ever since the arrival of Europeans. Nevertheless, the substantial documentation provided by the author leaves little doubt as to the historical significance of that prejudice.

The title is apparently a modification of a spray-painted graffiti wall that reads "Proud To Be White!!" pictured on the title page of the book. Although apparently used to draw attention to the book's major point, the title's strident tone may well turn some potential readers away. Because the book's major theme is an important one for New Zealanders to be aware of, a less intimidating title would have been useful in drawing readers to the book rather than turning them away.

In the appendix, Ballara provides a brief discussion of the history of racial prejudice in Europe as far back as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Racial prejudice among Europeans is not, of course, unique to New Zealand. European colonialists around the world have used racial explanations to justify colonialism from the fifteenth century to the present time, and their descendants are often unaware of that history. In other settings, too, descendants of Europeans believe the myth that "there is no prejudice," and historical studies of the history of prejudice are needed to dispel that myth and to bring about better understanding of contemporary conflicts.

Ballara's work will be useful primarily in New Zealand. It is a text that can be incorporated into university courses in New Zealand history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and Maori studies. In other countries, it will be most useful to those who bring some knowledge of New Zealand history and of Maori culture to the reading. Because it is not a complete history, it would be difficult reading for anyone who is totally unfamiliar with the setting.

On the other hand, Ballara's work provides an international model for the historical study of prejudice. Other studies of the same kind are needed in former European colonies where the European prejudice of the colonial period has been forgotten or buried. In the United States especially, descendants of Europeans need to be educated about the role of prejudice in the conquest of North America and the Pacific as well as about the role prejudice plays in contemporary American life.