

ethnography, this one inviting comparison with several such monographs from neighbouring Papua New Guinea (e.g. Gilbert Lewis, Verena Keck). The strength of the case study approach is that it makes a good read, an engaging narrative with all the tension of a novel, while allowing readers to absorb a good deal of cultural and geographical information. Fieldwork methods are worked in along the way. A particular fieldwork challenge was the requirement of secrecy imposed by the women who taught Courtens the names and uses of 60 or 70 medicinal plants, few of which were botanically identified or could be named in the text.

The weakness of the dominant case study is that by definition it is an atypical case, however repeatedly its generalizability might be asserted. Also, a reader unfamiliar with West Papua is left with a myriad of questions that would not flow in a narrative but might have been answered in a differently organized presentation. This reader had at least one pesky question per page: What were the injections given for malaria? Where did the local priest get a seminary education that helped him confidently develop a contextual theology? What is “malaria tropica”? (For that one, at least, finding an answer was easy: it is better known as *falciparum malaria*.)

The volume is attractively presented, with numerous photographs, map, glossary and index. The monograph can be recommended for university libraries and anthropology students at any level.

*University at Buffalo,
The State University of New York, USA*

PATRICIA K. TOWNSEND

EVOLUTION IN THE ANTIPODES: Charles Darwin and Australia. By **Tom Frame.** Sydney (Australia): University of New South Wales Press, 2009. viii, 307 pp. AUD\$36.32, paper. ISBN 978-1-921410-76-5.

Evolution in the Antipodes: Charles Darwin and Australia is the most recent work by theologian and historian Tom Frame. Ostensibly, *Evolution in the Antipodes* investigates the trajectory of evolutionary thought within Australia, extending from Charles Darwin’s 1836 visit to the continent, up to the present day. Frame provides his reader with the social and academic context for Darwin’s work, without which it is impossible to understand the man, his thoughts and the manner in which he developed his theory of evolution. Having provided this grounding in Darwin’s personal history, Frame guides his reader through the history of Darwinism in Australia: the early adoption of evolutionary thought in the secular community that was developing in the colonies; the influence of the Modern Synthesis on Australian Darwinism; and the growth of the creationist movement in Australia. This investigation of Australian academic history arguably constitutes the chief contribution of *Evolution in the Antipodes* to the Darwinian canon, examining the unique

position held by Australia as a First-World, Westernized country in which a significant European population was establishing itself at the same time that evolutionary thought was attaining prominence.

Darwin in the Antipodes is not a simple history: from investigating the trajectory of evolutionary thought in Australia, Frame turns his attention to the parallel history of religion and the church's attitude to evolution. From this point on, *Darwin in the Antipodes* is less concerned with Darwinism, and more concerned with the intercept between religion and evolution. Of real significance is Frame's investigation of the evolution vs. creationism debate as it has developed in Australia, which has run in parallel to its counterpart in the United States of America. It is particularly commendable that Frame, a noted theologian, is transparent in his personal religious beliefs. The author's honesty as to his personal views on evolutionary theory is to be commended, and provides valuable context for the remainder of the text. However, the addition of a personal epilogue that presents the author's own interpretation of evolutionary theory is, at best, indulgent and, at worst, presumptuous. As such, *Evolution in the Antipodes* contains evidence of bias, which, especially in a text that aims to navigate the sometimes-dangerous path between evolution and religion, is somewhat disingenuous. Of particular concern are incidences where the text lacks transparency. For example, when Frame contradicts the chief thesis of historian Randal Keynes, that Darwin was an atheist, he neglects to mention that Keynes is the great-great grandson of Charles Darwin, and is the family biographer (146). Furthermore, Frame's history is not without inaccuracies; for example, he states that Darwin was no theologian (150), despite the fact that Charles Darwin studied theology at Cambridge University, and was ranked 10th in his class. These omissions and inaccuracies do Frame's main thesis no favours.

"Evolution in the Antipodes" this is not: "Debates on Darwinism" would be a more accurate representation of the text. Frame himself admits that the text is an "extended treatment of the interactions between Darwinian theory and theistic religion" (13). It is difficult to believe that the title given to this book, as well as its marketing, have not been influenced by the fact that 2009 was the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin*. *Evolution in the Antipodes* is not a biography of Darwin, nor is it a historical text aimed at investigating the direct link between Darwin's work and his time in Australia. Rather, it is a treatise of sorts, a series of essays that skim just over the meat of the material, making it a tantalizing read, but ultimately unsatisfying.

University of California, Berkeley, USA

AMBER S. BEAVIS