

out into the Pacific at the beginning of the Christian era and had reached Samoa by the end of the fifth century". Buck tentatively accepted the fifth century as the commencement of the Early Polynesian period, although "it may have been some centuries earlier". In the light of Golson's 100 A.D. C. 14 date for Samoa and Suggs' C. 14 dates from 100 B.C. to 100 A.D. in the Marquesas the time scale of Buck's Early Polynesian may be shifted backwards to cover the first to the tenth centuries A.D. Before the terminal of this period, New Zealand was settled.

Believing that the Early Polynesians entered through Micronesia, Buck postulated that in the eastern atolls of Micronesia they lost domesticated animals, cultivated plants and stone adzes. Although these details of the thesis may not be sustained, we may grant that the Early Polynesians were restricted to plants of South-east Asian origin, whether a full complement if brought through Melanesia or an attenuated list if brought through Micronesia. The conclusion, of chief importance to the early settlement of New Zealand, is the unlikelihood that the *kumara* as a plant of South American origin would be available in the central East Polynesian area in the Early Polynesian period. The first Polynesian settlers of New Zealand were probably restricted to plants of limited climatic tolerance, notably the *taro*, yam, paper mulberry and *Lagenaria* gourd. This would minimise the importance of agriculture in the first settlement period and help to explain the indications that the first centre of population gravity was the east coast of the South Island with its mosaic of forest and grasslands favouring the surviving *moa* flocks.

Buck's later Polynesian settlement period of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was distinguished from the first by the exclusion of Western Polynesia from the series of migrations, based on the Society Islands, which resettled Hawaii, Mangareva, Marquesas, Easter Island, the Australs, Cooks and New Zealand. It is in this period that we may consider the significance of the Maori traditions of a Fleet, although the questions raised by Sharp (1956) render the notion of a convoy quite unacceptable. Despite Sharp's further speculation that the Fleet canoes may have been fictitious, I personally accept the probability of the arrival during the period 1250-1450 of a canoe or canoes, importing some element sufficiently dynamic to spark off in the North Island among the already numerous *tangata whenua* the cultural effervescence which hastened, if it did not inspire, the local evolution of the Classic Maori phase. The most plausible imported element which we may accept from the traditions is the *kumara*, whose introduction at this time is a recurring theme in the canoe traditions. By contrast with the Early Polynesian plants the *kumara* had considerable climatic tolerance. As in Polynesia as a whole the New Zealand story was thenceforth of progressive isolation, three to four centuries of independent evolution, broken by the European voyagers of the late eighteenth century.

The demonstration that the ancestral N.Z. culture was East Polynesian has been formalized by Jack Golson (1959) in the proposal that the total N.Z. manifestation of Polynesian should rank as a culture which might be designated New Zealand Eastern Polynesian. In view of the confirmation from Sinoto's Maupiti burial that the earliest phase of the N.Z. culture derives, as previously suggested by Buck and myself, from Buck's Early Polynesian period, the early N.Z. phase might be provisionally distinguished, as suggested by Golson, as New Zealand Eastern Polynesian I. This depends on the assumption, as yet unproven, that the Classic succeeded or was precipitated by a later migration from East Polynesia.

The succession in the Marlborough-Canterbury area demonstrates a two-stage development generally agreeing with Buck's Polynesian reconstruction. The earliest phase reveals a distinctive East Polynesian artifact assemblage of Early