

Note on Text

Most of the writings in this book were first published in French or German. The task of translating them back into their original language posed several problems. Were we trying to give a warts-and-all impression of how Mathews was read by his European audience or were we endeavouring to restore the 'original' Mathews as he is known through his English publications? Generally, the approach taken is biased towards the latter. Stylistically, we have tried to be faithful to Mathews' diction, and where his translators obviously blundered, we have weeded out the errors. Where the meaning or intention seems uncertain, this is indicated in a footnote.

Another factor influencing the translating process was the fact that drafts of some German articles were found in the R. H. Mathews Papers, National Library of Australia. One of these, the manuscript of 'Bemerkungen über die Eingebornen Australiens' (1906) (published as 'Remarks on the Natives of Australia'), is particularly revealing. It bears annotations that seem to have been made by the translator (see NLA MS 8006/5/8). This suggests that *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft*, Mathews' Viennese publisher, returned the manuscripts at the end, or perhaps during, the translation process. These manuscripts were consulted by Christine Winter while translating the German. Unfortunately for Mathilde de Hauteclouque, our French translator, the Parisian journals did not return authors' manuscripts.

Mathews' original footnotes have been translated, but where possible the full reference is given in lieu of his own abbreviated and often cryptic notation. In some of the German publications, explanatory footnotes were added by the original translator. These have been retained and are indicated by the words 'Note—German translator'. The original footnotes are designated by Arabic numerals, and appear as endnotes in this volume. Explanatory notes inserted by us are also denoted by numerals and are distinguished from the original notes by [Editor's note]. The exception to this way of organising the explanatory notes is Part 6, Correspondence: all the notes here are mine and they are denoted by Arabic numerals and appear as endnotes. A full bibliography of Mathews' anthropological publications appears at the end of the book. The introductory texts contain frequent references to the R. H. Mathews Papers in the National Library of Australia (NLA MS 8006). These citations contain page numbers in those cases where notebooks are paginated. However, much of the manuscript material is loose and unpaginated.

Mathews was often inconsistent in his spelling of Aboriginal words, including names of language groups and communities. Even today, there is little unanimity about the spelling of these terms. This explains the inconsistency within Mathews' body of work and the variant spellings used by other authors cited

in the book. In the translations and in all quotations, the spellings as originally published have been retained. Since many are antiquated, and thus unlikely to be recognised by contemporary readers, standard contemporary spellings, recommended by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) through its AUSTLANG database, are used in the introductory text.¹ To reconcile the various spellings, see the following Table of Aboriginal Groups and Languages. It gives the contemporary names recommended by AIATSIS, followed by the variant spellings that appear in the book and a rough guide to locality.

On occasions Mathews made use of diacritics to convey the phonetic values of Aboriginal languages. Sometimes *n* was marked with a tilde to make *ñ*. This denotes the *ny* sound, common as a word-ending in Australian languages. The placement of a macron above a vowel denotes a 'long' sound, so that *ū* is pronounced as in 'boot'. A breve above the vowel, normally a *ŭ*, indicates a 'short' sound, as in 'put'. The use of diacritics varies considerably from publication to publication. These variations have been preserved in the translations, except where Mathews refers to his own articles. In such cases the spelling (including diacritics) as it appeared on the title page of the original publication has been used.

M. T.

M. de H.

C. W.

ENDNOTES

¹ AUSTLANG was still under development at the time of publication. It will become available in late 2007 or early 2008: <http://austlang.aiatsis.gov.au>. The South Australian Museum provides a valuable on-line tool for locating Aboriginal communities and reconciling antiquated spellings, based on the work of N. B. Tindale. <http://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/orig/tindale/HDMS/tindaletribes/a.htm>