

propelled Maori either to continue to resist or to side with the Crown in the hope of avoiding raupatu. It is not something therefore to be smoothed over for simplicity's sake. Mention might also have been made of the role of Waikato Maori in guiding the British force around the single gap in the Paterangi line or of their assistance in the construction of Great South Road.

Yet these criticisms should not detract from what is a visual achievement in making history public. In the mid-1980s, James Axtell, the prominent North American colonial historian, commented on the need for academic historians to take the knowledge being progressed inside institutions outside to raise general public consciousness. In the New Zealand context, this is precisely what Belich has done and this desire to reinstate the New Zealand wars into the popular memory is an overarching theme through the series. Part of this success relates to having Belich not only as the historian responsible for screenwriting, but also as the presenter. Oral histories — in many cases captivating in themselves — were skilfully threaded with the other forms of evidence, adding credence to both Maori and Pakeha forms of representing the past. Music and visual imagery similarly provided a dramatic counterpoint to written documentary sources. Historical sites were visited, though more often they were shown as colourful backdrops rather than deployed as evidence themselves. This is to say nothing of the excellent 'virtual-realism' of computer-generated models: a CD-ROM would be a welcome next project.

The challenge in representing history before the public is to ensure that the history retains a sense of its own 'genealogy' and connections to the broader subject-discipline, in spite of any necessary simplification. Nightly newsreaders might 'tell it like it is', but, as historians, we cannot operate under such illusions. Belich, despite occasional references to the 'hard facts', is cautious to imbue a sense of his own role in the creation of a revisionist thesis. But there are occasions where the series might have paused to offer perspectives from other historians. Examples include Te Kooti's attack on Matawhero and the origins and nature of the Kingitanga. The series might also have made use of excerpts from previous film and documentary footage of the wars, in order to generate a sense of its own historicity. In the end, however, we must return to the question of how to present history via the medium of television. Though not the first to do so, *The New Zealand Wars*, rising above its shortcomings, does marry good television and good history and, in so doing, has staked an important place in New Zealand historiography.

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*Imagining Nations*. Edited by Geoffrey Cubitt. Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1998. 260 pp. UK price: £48.50 hb. ISBN 0-7190-5115-0.

*IMAGINING NATIONS* is concerned with the cultural work of 'nationalism' in a broad sense, 'the system of thought that takes nations to be basic and natural units of analysis'. In his introduction, Geoffrey Cubitt comments on the constituent essays and lucidly and intelligently discusses the issues raised by theories of the nation since the 1980s. The rest of the book is organized in three parts: 'Conceptualising Nationality', 'The Nation in Time' and 'The Nation in Space'.

The sole essay in 'Conceptualising Nationality' is Nicholas Stargardt's 'Beyond the Liberal Idea of the Nation'. Its title and its position in the book might suggest that this essay is a second introduction, but it is actually a contextualist history of a tradition of theorizing the nation bounded by Max Weber and Ernest Gellner. Stargardt explores this tradition's engagement with the relationships between the nation and the state, the *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* opposition (and so on), and says much that engages with current thinking about nations. However, being more a history of a theory than a theory itself, his essay does not discuss other writing on the relationship of nationalism and modernity (and 'race', which Weber and others sought to detach from nationhood) that falls outside this tradition, such as the recent work of Liah Greenfeld and Antony D. Smith. In this respect Stargardt's essay does not constitute the reflective agenda for the rest of *Imagining Nations* that its placement in the book implies. *Imagining Nations* does not have a flagship essay with a sloganeering title (as *The Invention of Tradition* had), for which the other essays provide case studies. This is not necessarily a bad thing. Indeed, one of the strengths of the book is that the essays do not resort to clumsy oppositions between theory and practice.

The subject-matter of these other essays is 'a limited geographical area — essentially Western Europe, with the emphasis on Britain and Germany'. Only to a limited degree is 'Western Europe' problematized here. Joanna de Groot's discussion of femininity and masculinity in Rudyard Kipling's version of England and empire is the only exploration of the metropolitan-colonial cultural axis, in contrast to John M. MacKenzie's recently reprinted collection *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, also from Manchester University Press. Perhaps more surprisingly, there is little about 'international relations' and the European Union, though Marcia Pointon touches on the latter in her essay on different nations' banknotes.

An essay collection cannot cover everything, and I make these criticisms only because the standard of discussion in *Imagining Nations* is so high that I wish that other subjects could have been illuminated as much as those dealt with in the book. It would have been extremely interesting to see a meeting of cultural history and the history of international relations, along the lines of J. Adam Tooze's contribution to this volume, a fascinating combination of economic history and cultural history. Tooze destabilizes, without disregarding, the distinction between 'culture' and 'the economy'. His subject matter is the role of economic statistics in establishing 'national economies' as recognizable phenomena. Tooze's study of the first half of the twentieth century shifts the focus from Keynesianism to the construction in the years after World War I of 'the basic building blocks of Keynesian macroeconomics' (for example, the national income and the monthly rate of unemployment), which became 'reified objects which a theorist such as Keynes could take more or less for granted'. This is a project quite distinct from the study of 'national identity' or nationalist movements; here the work of *imagining* the nation is no longer sequestered in something called cultural life.

The subjects covered in *Imagining Nations* range from cartography to late eighteenth-century British writers' uses of Tacitus's comments on Germanic peoples. The essays are both sophisticated and accessible, and there are no clumsy shifts between 'history' and 'theory'. History and theory, and the conventions of different disciplines are integrated with discreet flair and practised with considerable sophistication. *Imagining Nations* would make an excellent teaching text in courses on the practice of history as well as in

upper-level courses concerned more specifically with ideas about nations.

New Zealand historians have long been concerned with how 'nation is talked and taught', and *Imagining Nations* has some significant further resonances in a New Zealand context. In the first place, its more innovative essays suggest approaches to nationality that go beyond the more compartmentalized studies of 'national identity' practised in New Zealand. Another thing pertinent to the ways we write about the 'imaginative' construction of the various things we call New Zealand is this collection's adroit relation of general and particular, and theory and practice. It is now unfashionable to reiterate Keith Sinclair's claim that what New Zealand historiography needs is a 'generation of pedants'. Yet in writing about New Zealand identity and culture, historians often take things like 'pioneer utilitarianism' and Pakeha belief in 'good race relations' as givens, simply because they crop up regularly in speechifying and other 'ceremonial' evidence. Some form of 'pedantry' is necessary to convert these assumptions into something other than shibboleths. Several New Zealand historians have stressed the need for general reinterpretations of 'the big picture' in contrast to 'unfocused empiricism'. Against those calls may be set a number of recent works of New Zealand cultural history that speak powerfully to metanarrative or theoretical concerns from a base of extensive empirical research (for instance, the doctoral theses of Peter Gibbons and Giselle Byrnes, and the biographies by K.R. Howe and Anthony Dreaver). Sinclair understood clearly the complementarity of research and generalization when he wrote *A Destiny Apart*, the book historians of New Zealand identity ritually invoke as authority or opponent in their 'historiographical' passages. *A Destiny Apart* does not cogently formulate the relationship between empirical research and sweeping interpretations, but at least, like *Imagining Nations*, it dispenses with the spurious opposition between the two. Among other things, *Imagining Nations* is a menu of thought-provoking ways in which we might rewrite *A Destiny Apart*.

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