

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as an ‘empire of variations’ and not an ‘empire of uniformity’ (to use James Tully’s phraseology).

Beyond his argument for a textually focussed and multi-layered intellectual history of Britain’s New Zealand ‘empire’, Hickford’s enthusiasm for his subject-matter shines through. The density of the analysis will not appeal to some readers, but arguably reflects the subject-matter that Hickford is seeking to explicate — to the extent that it sometimes feels the book itself is written in a nineteenth-century literary style! Some curious little metaphors seem to be of Hickford’s authorship — as when he compares Māori to so many Alfreds looking askance at the rapidly increasing Danish settlements! But what looks like a flight of imagination in fact mimics historical tropes or analogies employed by his nineteenth-century ‘public moralists’ (to borrow a phrase from Stefan Collini).

*Lords of the Land* is an ambitious attempt to analyse most of the key legal-constitutional debates of New Zealand’s first 25–30 years. From waste lands to Waitara, to the electoral franchise contortions — Hickford’s fine-grained analysis adds richness, depth and nuance to these debates by showing how the Anglo protagonists drew on distinct intellectual sources and vocabularies. Worthy of note, although in a somewhat circumstantial and peripheral fashion, is the fact that the author is both an academic legal historian (as this book attests!) and a practising lawyer, who has advised the New Zealand government on twenty-first-century ‘native title’ policy debates. Dr Hickford is acutely aware of the continuity between the past and present life of native title. As he says in commencing his conclusion: ‘Indigenous property rights in empire were made and are in the making still.’ It seems Aotearoa New Zealand’s ‘political constitution’ is still very much alive.

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*Piano Forte: Stories and Soundscapes from Colonial New Zealand.* By Kirstine Moffat. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2012. 275pp. NZ price: \$45.00. ISBN: 978 1 877372 79 7.

AS KIRSTINE MOFFAT POINTS OUT in her preface, Jane Campion’s well-known film *The Piano* (1993) haunts her historical study. The film’s image of a grand piano deserted on a beach is ‘both a powerful symbol of the incongruity of the piano in this context, its status as an “alien” intruder, and a moving testimony to the personal and cultural value of the instrument that accompanied the owner to the far side of the world’ (p.9). These words not only sent me off to re-view the film, but wonderfully frame Moffat’s detailed exploration of the piano within colonial New Zealand, and how its presence contributed to the development of a distinctive aural culture that was linked to but differed from the ‘old world’ of Britain.

This history begins in 1827, with the arrival of the first piano — a Broadwood grand square — in New Zealand. This instrument had been made in England and imported to Sydney, where it was purchased by the parents of bride Elizabeth Mair, who took it to Paihia when she commenced married life. Over the next century, countless pianos became central to the leisure of settler New Zealanders. By the 1930s, however, the growing popularity of the new technologies of phonograph records, the radio and the ‘talking’ movies had displaced its cultural pre-eminence.

Moffat examines this golden age of the piano through a comprehensive reading of memoirs and personal papers, novels, musical compositions, visual depictions and instruments — for there are many older pianos still in existence. Such extensive archival research establishes, without question, the significance of the piano, and the book’s eight thematic chapters draw this out. This is a history that builds up its evidence and punch

through the accretion of examples and vignettes to support its main points, rather than through extended analysis. This technique, while occasionally resembling a list, works effectively because of Moffat's skilful writing and her careful selection of illuminating snapshots of people, events and pianos.

European settlers in New Zealand went to extraordinary lengths to transport pianos to their new settlement. The inevitable ship voyage was followed by the conveyance of the heavy and unwieldy instruments by manpower, bullocks, horses, and later by rail, often in harsh climatic conditions and across difficult terrain. Once ensconced within a domestic setting, the piano was symbolic of respectability and particularly associated with the social refinement of women. Moffat examines nineteenth-century photographs and illustrations (some included in the book) of home interiors to reflect on the prominent position of the piano as a piece of furniture, central to the social interactions of the household. Pianos were to be found in elaborately decorated parlours, in modest cottages and even in tents.

While women were more frequently instructed in the keyboard, Moffat argues that men were also enthusiastic about playing in home sing-a-longs, concerts and dances. Memoirs and oral histories recall the importance of the piano as an instrument of sociability, but also as one that gave great joy to the player in intimate, private moments. For instance, Moffat quotes the reflections of Elsie Milne, who grew up in Masterton in the early 1900s: 'A piano is so wonderful if ya [sic] just feeling down in the dumps and want to fly. Ya just lift the lid, sit down and play, and ten minutes, look, you're a different woman' (p.82).

Outside the home, pianos were installed in public venues. *Piano Forte* documents how the sounds of the piano were present at educational, religious, political and military events. Piano music was heard in schools, hotels, banks, department stores, dance halls and cinemas. Many fascinating examples of the public place of the piano are provided. During World War I, for example, pianos played on troop ships sailing to Europe, to entertain New Zealand soldiers in military camps, and at musical concerts and parades when the soldiers returned.

One of the most interesting facets of this history is its examination of piano repertoire. Most of the music for the piano arrived with the settlers, and included traditional folksongs, hymns and works by the canon of European composers. But soon there were local piano compositions, made available through the sale of sheet music. Sport, for instance, inspired songs with distinctive lyrics, with tunes like *On the Ball, A Football Song* written in the 1880s, and *The All Blacks, A Song with a Kick in It*, from 1924. Military action led to a spate of patriotic compositions, such as the *Birth of a Nation* march for the pianoforte, which jauntily highlighted the bravery of the Anzacs at Gallipoli.

Despite these New Zealand compositions, piano music, whether played by the amateurs at home or at a public performance, remained overwhelmingly Eurocentric. As music came to complement public and commercial activities, the employment opportunities for professional musicians multiplied. Those pianists who aspired to be at the top of their profession looked abroad, particularly to Europe, for further training.

Further impacts of the piano are also explored. These encompass the jobs created for piano tuners; the manufacture of instruments within New Zealand, including the use of local timbers; and musical education, with piano lessons endured or embraced by generations of New Zealand schoolchildren.

The historical narrative in *Piano Forte* is predominantly about the piano within the lives of European settlers. Moffat does devote one chapter to Māori responses, and the incorporation of piano music into Māori culture and musical traditions. On the New Zealand frontier, some Māori were initially bewildered by the piano, with war parties destroying instruments. But piano music was also quickly appreciated by many Māori, and missionaries and teachers provided keyboard instruction. Pianos found a place within Māori homes and musical performances, and by the early twentieth century a hybrid music of indigenous and Western influences had developed.

*Piano Forte* is a charming book, offering a glimpse into a world now lost where the piano was the soul of the community. The book is generously illustrated, with the visual material well discussed. However, there are some opportunities that have been missed in this cultural history. While the strength of the book's narrative lies in its dedicated focus on the place of the piano within New Zealand experience, this approach has some limitations. There is little consideration of the role of the piano more widely within British imperial culture — not just in the metropolitan heart, but in other white settler colonies, such as Australia, Canada or South Africa. The teasing out of transnational connections across the British Empire and the United States in relation to the cultural place of the piano, and the imperial networks of commerce, employment, professional training and examination that surrounded its use and function, would have broadened Moffat's study.

Nonetheless, Moffat's achievements in historicising the piano and its soundscapes within colonial New Zealand are to be applauded. The text is a labour of love, written by a sympathetic author who cares about her topic, and adds considerably to our understandings of the aural dimensions of the past.

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*Scottish Ethnicity and the Making of New Zealand Society, 1850 to 1930.* By Tanja Bueltmann. Scottish Historical Review Monograph Series, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2011. ix + 246pp. NZ price: \$135.90. ISBN: 9780748641550.

THIS BOOK is a splendid addition to a splendid series on Scottish history. It is the first in that series to feature the Scots abroad. This is a sign of the growing significance of the Scottish diaspora in Scottish historiography, thanks to historians like Tom Devine, John MacKenzie and Marjorie Harper. That the book is about New Zealand could be seen as a sign of the country's recognition as the most Scottish dominion. It is also a tribute to the seminal work of the former Irish-Scottish Studies Programme at Victoria University led by Brad Patterson (one of the supervisors of the thesis out of which this book grew). Some remarkable research on New Zealand Scots has appeared in the last decade or so from Tom Brooking, Rosalind McClean, Rebecca Lenihan, Ali Clarke and others, with more to come, including the multi-authored *Unpacking the Kist: Scots in New Zealand* to be published shortly by McGill-Queen's University Press. Across the ditch, we are well jealous.

As Bueltmann notes in her introduction, 'the dominant fixation on tartanry and highland culture tends to obscure the migrants' lives in the new worlds in which they settled' (p.2). To avoid falling into this same trap, serious historians of the Scottish diaspora have often tended to play down the real significance of 'balmorality' abroad, seeing it as superficial. In a sense it was but it did, after all, stand for something deeper or less obvious. Therefore, there has been a comeback of the study of Scottish 'associational culture' abroad but in a much more probing and analytical way, as with this book. But when the author adds that 'it is the aim of this book to uncover Scottish ethnicity in New Zealand from the verges of nostalgia', we are confused.

An old tradition in the writing on ethnic groups abroad was to focus on celebrating achievements and influence, to say about the new societies, 'we were here, too'. This book is not primarily about the Scots high achievers and the impact of Scottish skills, ideas and characteristics on New Zealand, though these issues arise along the way. The author takes a deeper view, exploring theory concerning ethnic identity, before explaining her approach which places the individual migrant in the middle of widening circles of