

a whole with the broader historiographical questions posed by recent work on empire. This is particularly telling with regard to the short introduction that opens the volume. Here Evans briefly notes previous work on Eyre — including the biographical treatment offered by Geoffrey Dutton and the more recent work of Catherine Hall — before quickly sketching the outlines of her ‘new perspective’. The brevity of Evans’s treatment of Hall’s work — a short two-sentence thumbnail sketch — is striking given the centrality of Eyre in Hall’s influential reassessments of the relationships between gender, race and class in British imperial culture. A fuller introduction would have allowed Evans to spell out the ways in which she has drawn upon and diverged from Hall’s treatment of Eyre, but would have also enabled her to address one other important analytical issue in greater length: the question of space. In tracing Eyre’s complex trajectory across three distinctive colonial locations, this work can be fruitfully read within new imperial history’s exploration of the empire as a spatial formation. Yet Evans does not address the significant body of recent work that has rematerialized the ‘pathways’, ‘networks’, ‘circuits’ and ‘webs’ of connection that knitted the empire together. Here again Hall’s essays on Eyre’s transnational career as well as her lengthy treatment of him in *Civilising Subjects* would have been an obvious starting point for Evans to provide the reader with a more explicit and powerful statement of the historiographical framing of her own project.

Despite its thin treatment of this recent scholarship on empire, *Edward Eyre, Race and Colonial Governance* is an important work and it will hopefully shift understandings of nineteenth-century New Zealand. The particular strength of the volume is that Evans consistently embeds Eyre within the structures and culture of imperial governance. Unlike many biographies of influential imperial figures, which tend to abstract the biographical subject, whether they are James Cook or George Grey, from the institutions and deep dynamics of empire-building to focus on questions of ‘character’ and ‘motivation’, Evans highlights both the pressures and constraints that moulded Eyre’s actions. Most importantly, this means that Evans is less concerned with how Eyre personally understood ‘race’ than with tracing the ideological power of race within the multiple cultural and political configurations of empire. As she observes at the outset of the volume, ‘race was not simply a discourse arising from Enlightenment taxonomies and imposed from abroad, but also was produced through local historical conditions, and took distinctive forms in different colonial formations’ (p.14). This is a powerful argument that challenges some of the dominant tendencies within New Zealand historiography, where historians have been at pains to trace the development of racist representation and have focused much effort on tracing how European understandings of race were applied to Maori. This study of Eyre reminds us that race was never simply a discursive import from Europe, but that it was produced out of the particular tensions and conflicts born out of the specific configurations of power in each colony.

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The Long Slow Death of White Australia. By Gwenda Tavan. Scribe, Melbourne, 2005. 298 pp. Australian price: \$32.95. ISBN 1-907-6946-3.

THE LONG SLOW DEATH OF WHITE AUSTRALIA is the first book by Gwenda Tavan, a lecturer in politics at Latrobe University. Deriving from a PhD thesis, which has already generated a number of journal articles, the book is a bold attempt to explain the demise of the White Australia policy in the decades following World War II. The work is a much-needed contribution to the history of the White Australia policy, especially

considering that this is the only substantial monograph in this area in recent decades, with the exception of Sean Brawley's *The White Peril* in 1995, which was a comparative study across Australasia and North America.

Tavan refutes the charges by conservative and nationalist critics since the 1980s that the passing of the policy represented a triumph of a conspiratorial activism by élites, or the 'new class' acting without the sanction of public support. Instead, Tavan persuasively argues that the process of ending the White Australia policy was bureaucratic, incremental and largely in line with public expectations of immigration reform at a time where racialism was becoming repudiated, its use in legislative language and practice increasingly anachronistic, offensive and, considering Australia's growing interest in Asia, diplomatically perilous.

The book starts with a somewhat thin chapter on the evolution and maintenance of the policy until 1939, before launching into the post-war period with a clear account of the support for the policy in the immediate aftermath of the war that contrasted with increasing domestic and international criticism of the racial basis of the immigration programme. The book charts the evolution of the reform, from the acceptance of non-European naturalization, to the significant issue of Japanese brides of Australian servicemen and how popular support for their inclusion into Australian citizenship, despite the initial governmental refusal, was an important endorsement, attracting media attention and emphasizing how the policy impacted upon Australians, as well as non-Europeans.

Tavan shows how the gradual repudiation of the policy was accompanied by a lingering appreciation of racial difference and how skin colour and racial characteristics of individuals were of the utmost importance during the gradual demise of the policy. Much of the book is devoted to an examination of the bureaucratic process of reform and how political leaders, cautious of attracting public hostility, reacted in an ad hoc manner to maximize the chances of public acceptance while balancing domestic criticism and international expectations.

To show that the gradual changes to the policy were in line with public support, Tavan uses opinion polls conducted since the 1940s that reflect an acceptance of non-European migration, at times in advance of the reform process. She also points out that even those hesitant about non-European migration were drawn towards change, citing the role of the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council which acted as a representative of public opinion on immigration issues to government. Tavan argues that members of this body, including members of the trade union movement and the Returned Services League, groups traditionally supportive of White Australia, accepted changes that would effectively end the policy because their membership of the CIAC afforded the opportunity to examine the issue from a 'national' rather than vested interest perspective.

Tavan successfully maintains that public approval for policy reform can be evidenced by regular opinion poll results and through the endorsement of the CIAC. Though she is persuasive in citing popular support for the ending of the policy, there is less evidence in regard to electoral endorsement. She argues that: 'There is no doubt, though, that majority support existed for the abolition of White Australia. The Whitlam government's victory at the 1974 election — despite the loss of Grassby's federal seat and a reduced majority in parliament — represented effective popular endorsement of its broad political agenda, including the changes enacted to immigration policy' (p.210). This seems an unlikely argument and somewhat unnecessary. If public approval had endorsed previous changes then the Whitlam reforms would have been considered unremarkable, despite their symbolism.

The book generally covers events from the inception of the White Australia policy in 1901 up to current debates, and the research is primarily located in the period from the beginning of World War II until the reforms of the Whitlam government in the mid-1970s, reflecting Tavan's focus in her thesis. As such the peripheral chapters covering

the pre-war period and events after the 1970s are less developed than the core of the book, which is an excellent study of the process of immigration reform and the repeal of a policy, which despite defining Australia for decades, was successfully dismantled.

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Landscape/Community: Perspectives from New Zealand History. Edited by Tony Ballantyne and Judith A. Bennett. University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2005. 190 pp. NZ price: \$39.95. ISBN 1-877372-06-4.

THE TERMS 'LANDSCAPE' AND 'COMMUNITY' offer considerable scope for definition, interpretation and application. The former, for example, once a visual concept is now largely employed as a spatial concept to denote an area distinguished by an array of specific attributes. The suffix 'scape' relates, of course, to the verb 'to shape' and hence the term is often employed to denote an area shaped or created by human agency: 'landscape' thus mediates between nature and culture. The title of the book, *Landscape/Community*, held out the promise of an exploration of the relationship between 'nature' and 'culture' of the notion that 'shapes in society' can be discerned in 'shapes on the ground'.

In the nine chapters which comprise the book, the contributors adopt a variety of approaches to 'landscape' and 'community'. Paul Star, in an account of the destruction of Seaward Bush near Invercargill, sets out to explore both the extent to which a case study can cast light on and the limitations of a 'nation-based' approach to the wider processes of environmental change. James Beattie and Star combine in an essay which traverses some familiar ground to discuss the genesis of state forest conservation in New Zealand, among other things noting the influence of overseas ideas and practices; such interaction of ideas — and personnel — between, for example, New Zealand and Australia and New Zealand and the United States was hardly confined to forestry. It is also worthwhile noting that an examination of the efforts of Maori to engage in timber milling would have suggested that the notion of a 'Maori conservation ethic' requires reconsideration. Beattie's essay on W.L. Lindsay is essentially a study of the history of ideas, specifically the influence which 'Scottish environmentalism' had on the 'improvement' of nineteenth-century New Zealand. The essay hints at the much wider theme of cultural origins and cultural transfer which is only now being explored by New Zealand's historians.

These first three essays deal with man as a modifier of natural landscapes. Those by Marjan Lousberg, Angela Wanhalla and Alison Clarke offer an alternative approach. Lousberg describes the re-emergence of Maori tribal conflict in the 'Eastern Districts' during the period from 1842 to 1845 and the character and results of the Crown's intervention on inter-tribal conflicts and politics. Wanhalla, on the other hand, offers a well-constructed account of a small Kai Tahu community in Otago, tracing the arrival of Pakeha settlers, the displacement of Maori and the entry of Pakeha into that community through intermarriage. Clarke provides an interesting account of the development of harvest home festivals and the religious harvest festivals in nineteenth-century Otago. She offers some insights into the British and Irish origins of such celebrations, their transfer to New Zealand, and the particular form and significance which they assumed in their new social context.

The essays by Eleanor Cottle, Michael Bagge and Sue Heydon explore a range of themes and issues. Cottle offers a useful overview of the sources available to the historian and the strengths and weaknesses of record-linkage as applied in the New Zealand context; she suggests that the sources employed have produced 'biased results', and comments at length on the potential value of the Registers of Deaths. A more comprehensive survey of the relevant literature would have indicated that systematic and comprehensive use has