

primarily as businesses by proprietors intending to be in for the long haul. Rather than being overtly partisan, newspapers manifested 'an aura of neutrality' – an approach, Day argued, driven by commercial imperatives.

Hastings challenges analyses shaped by political economy-based theories by focusing on the four most significant Auckland newspapers in the late nineteenth century – the *New Zealander*, the *Southern Cross*, the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Auckland Evening Star*. The thrust of his argument is that 'contrary to the notion that news was invented by commercialism, the reality was more of a discovery that certain topics had always been interesting to people and had commercial value when packaged, printed and sold'. He also argues that the commercial motive and need to attract readers were just as strong in the 1840s and 1850s.

Hastings the historian demonstrates convincingly that the rise or demise of these newspapers rested ultimately on their ability to deliver news that readers found interesting, relevant, entertaining and timely, rather than table-thumping editorials in the pursuit of political objectives. This was personified in Henry Brett of the successful *Evening Star* (later *Auckland Star*), for whom being first with the news was the key to a paper's success – together with prudent financial management.

Hastings the journalist spins a rollicking yarn, fleshing out the colourful and frequently flawed characters at the centre of Auckland journalism by drawing on letters, diaries, memoirs and other records. My first reporting job was at the *Auckland Star* and my arrival coincided with the paper's centenary celebrations. I heard stories of how Henry Brett as a shipping reporter would row out to sailing ships, doing whatever was needed to be first to 'garner and glean' the London newspapers passengers had brought with them. I now know the lengths he and others would go to in pursuit of a scoop or to obstruct rivals. Hastings evokes the urgency and intensity of the race for news with well-chosen anecdotes.

Where Hastings is less convincing is in addressing media theory in his introduction. It is too superficial and the range of ideas addressed too limited to satisfy the expectations of an academic work and I doubt that the general reader would find it particularly helpful. If media theory was to be an important part of the context-setting then, for example, notions of agenda-setting and what constitutes news would have been highly pertinent.

That said, *Extra! Extra!* is an important contribution to New Zealand newspaper history and a damned good read.

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National Day and the Politics of Indigenous and Local Identities in Australia and New Zealand. By Patrick A. McAllister. Carolina University Press, Durham, 2013. 230pp. NZ price: \$80.50. ISBN 9781594608148.

The book provides a detailed comparative study of national days in Australia and New Zealand. The research covers both national and local variants of the events, conducted through historical research and ethnographic field studies. The major strength of the book is in its comparative analysis, which clearly sets out the different historical contexts in which settler colonialism has developed and the different contexts in which the national days are celebrated or resisted. The movement between national and local variants and their political contexts is generally well researched and supported by the historical and ethnographic research. By way of comparison, however, it is the differences rather than the broad similarities that are the most revealing and

demonstrate the less favourable context in which Indigenous Australians seek to regain political rights.

The chapter on national days and the Treaty of Waitangi sets out the liminal space of possibility and dissent that opens up on that day. Here wider social processes are linked to the political discourses and changes in the forms of governance, such as the introduction of the government's 'fiscal envelope', that permeate the performance of this event and function as a lightning rod. It is clear that the Treaty provides the foundational document that orchestrates and shapes much of the dissent and performance of the day. McAllister shows that the divisions are much less evident in the celebrations observed at Okains Bay on Banks Peninsula. The contrast is well considered and reflects the consistencies and contingencies that prevail in local contexts. The colonial context can never be fully exhumed from these post-settler-colonial political appeasements.

The chapters on New Zealand present a much more complex and ambiguous set of social relations when compared with the history of the Australian concept of *terra nullius* (an empty land), and the differences could not be starker. The consequences were disastrous for the Indigenous population across the Tasman Sea, whose own institutions received no government acknowledgement. Their lack of recognition and legitimacy removed any capacity for Aborigines to negotiate legally the terms of their own existence with the colonial state. The situation reveals the totalizing character of the colonial state in Australia, which was able to determine, effectively unchallenged, the social and political conditions of Indigenous existence. Much of the Australian material set out in the book reaffirms the tenuous connection and marginal status of Australia's Indigenous population in National Day events. This is especially so in the areas of McAllister's research in south-eastern Australia (Lismore). Even when appeasement efforts are sought, the conviction attached to recognition seems fragile and limited.

The author highlights tensions over rights associated with Indigenous ownership and possession in New Zealand, with particular emphasis on the agency attached to such rights in terms of the ability to constrain or enable, authorize or prohibit. For example, the movement of politicians to Waitangi rather than Māori to Parliament House may well be a powerful symbol of Treaty partnership, but it is also an inversion of existing power relations. The capacity to ban most media from Te Tii marae asserts not only ownership, but also possession. This is an aspect missing from the other celebratory situations, where the relationship between ownership and possession is far more precarious. Such a distinction is seemingly vital when dealing with the 'raw materials' of the social dramas of post-settler-colonial states. In the celebrations of Australia Day and its local variants, ownership and possession exist outside the official ceremonies and as alternatives to Australia Day. Indigenous involvement is sustained or restricted in terms of the sensitivities and sensibility of dominant Anglo-Australian values and history. As McAllister's analysis reveals, a change in the political complexion of the local council is enough to render Indigenous participation problematic.

This echoes one of the principal themes of McAllister's book, which is to analyze the changes in politics at a national level during the time in power of the Howard government. The point of his analysis is to show the changing nature of the ritual performances of national day ceremonies over time. In this respect, McAllister places a great deal of emphasis on the political contexts in which national ceremonies are played out. Indeed, the historical contextualization represents a significant and necessary part of the book's research. It is here, though, that I have some issues. The use of Turner's 'social dramas' could have been drawn out more effectively to complement the historical and political detail. For Turner, social drama is 'a sequence of social interactions of a conflictive, or agonistic type'.¹ A clearer application of the 'breaches', 'crisis' and/or the 'redressive or remedial procedures' would have provided a more detailed and nuanced analysis whose focus moves between the varied ceremonial practices. I would also question the comparative value of Australia Day as an expression of nationalist identity. Australia Day is the

national holiday that marks the arrival of the convict ships of the First Fleet, on the east coast of Australia, and is commemorated with little nationalist fervour. This is the day designated by the State to celebrate Australian nationalism. For most, Australia Day takes the form of an extended holiday, a long weekend, and until recently, the day and date were actually moved to maximize holiday agendas. Although it is an official holiday, Australia Day is not accompanied by any suspension of everyday activities, in the way that ANZAC Day is commemorated, and people mostly pursue their own leisure activities in high summer. In this way, there is clearly a separation between the analysis of the formal ceremonies and that of the public response, in which the aspect of conflictual social interactions for the most part does not occur – or has been increasingly directed towards the ‘Muslim Other’: ‘we grew here, you flew here’. The other major faultline that has emerged from Australia Day celebrations has been the ‘crisis’ over the excessive public consumption of alcohol that occurs on the day, which has led to widespread local council bans and curfews on consuming alcohol in public places.

As a comparative study, McAllister’s work achieves much. His research ventures into terrain that has been largely neglected in historical and anthropological research. The study is also welcome as for McAllister, the Indigenous people are never the exclusive subjects of ethnographic analysis, but considered in terms of their interactions with and responses to a non-Indigenous world that encapsulates them. In his coverage of national day celebrations and local variants, he adds an important and somewhat unique perspective to the existing literature. Perhaps a glossary of terms would be a welcome feature to such comparative studies. McAllister’s provides us with a complex field of study and his book is to be commended for its breadth and scope. The internal as well as external comparisons add significantly to the depth of this research field.

NOTES

1. Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, New York, 1988, pp.33–4.

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A Second Life: Aprica to Salvation in Switzerland 1943. By Alan Poletti. Tole Press, Auckland, 2012. 149pp. NZ price: \$38. ISBN 978-0-473-19438-3.

There have been numerous histories written and stories told about the Holocaust, from harrowing accounts of Auschwitz and Belsen to dramatic round-ups and many escapes by Jews fleeing certain death. So what would make a respected and retired New Zealand scientist write about Jews fleeing from Italy to Switzerland in 1943? Family history is not an immediate answer that would spring to most reader’s minds, yet that is exactly how this book gained its impetus.

Alan Poletti worked in the area of nuclear physics until his 1999 retirement from the University of Auckland. What starts as a family history investigation into the background of Poletti’s Italian grandfather’s friend ends up being a search for archives, documents and, more importantly, the survivors. Poletti began by tracking whether his grandfather’s friend was ever actually from the village of Villa di Tirano. It was in this same village that Poletti uncovered the story of a priest who smuggled Jews, and also contraband when the parish funds were low. This is what got Poletti started on his research and he essentially recounts everything he found in the process.