

Oceania under Steam: Sea Transport and the Cultures of Colonialism, c.1870–1914. By Frances Steel. Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 2011. 272pp. UK price: £65. ISBN: 9780719082900.

IN RECENT DECADES TRANSPORT HISTORY, in common with other areas of the discipline, has been enormously enriched by a shift to examining the ways that cultures have shaped and simultaneously been shaped by technological developments. In *Oceania under Steam*, Frances Steel uses the history of the Union Steamship Company as a window into the effect the advent of the steamship had on the farthest reaches of the British political and economic empire in the South Pacific. She starts at the centre, but that centre is effectively the city of Dunedin rather than London, and New Zealand rather than the United Kingdom, though the imperial (as opposed to the sub-imperial) centre was eventually to absorb the line and to become the home of its creator. The history of the Union Steamship Company is certainly not wholly uncharted waters. Besides a number of books that focus largely on the line's ships themselves, we have Gavin McLean's ground-breaking work on 'the southern octopus', as the sprawling and not infrequently predatory enterprise developed by James Mills was appropriately nicknamed. In common with that book, this one draws in the first instance on the voluminous records of the company held in Dunedin, supplemented by a wide range of other primary and secondary sources. However, whereas the main emphasis of the earlier book was on examining how the company achieved its remarkable dominance, the focus here is much more on the experiences of the people on the ships and on one of the shores they visited.

Steel has provided the main part of her book with a simple structure of three parts that works on the whole exceedingly well. In the first part ('Afloat') she examines the emergence of the company and some aspects of its relationship with the authorities in New Zealand and to a lesser extent the United Kingdom. The point is made that while the company benefited, not least in the form of mail subsidies, from Wellington's drive to develop the country's international connections and to control its neighbourhood to the north, the interests of the two did not always coincide. This section also contains a chapter that looks specifically at the company's passenger liners and the culture that emerged amongst them. Given that we are now on the ships themselves, there could be some justification for placing that chapter in the second part ('Aboard'), which turns to the cultures that developed amongst various functional sectors of the steamship's crew — in the stokehold, on deck, in the passenger accommodation and in positions of authority, whether on the bridge or in the engine-room. In this part issues of race and gender come strongly into play. The employment of Indian seamen (lascars) on ships operating in Australasian waters was strongly deplored by local white workers, their unions and politicians that sought to represent them. The Union Steamship Company positioned itself as sharing this sentiment — an approach that one suspects may not have been entirely uninfluenced by an interest in keeping international lines, which often employed lascars, from competing in the coastal and trans-Tasman trades it dominated. The regular presence of female passengers on the company's ships, encouraged by the greater comfort steam travel offered, led to the employment of stewardesses, which as the author ably demonstrates, unsettled a strongly male shipboard culture.

The third part of the book ('Abroad') journeys up into the Pacific, specifically to Fiji, to explore the lives of the largely expatriate local agents of the company and the impact steamship services had on indigenous culture there. It becomes clear that

just as managements of enterprises headquartered in London or Glasgow struggled to assess what was really happening to their operations in Africa, that of the Union Steamship Company in Dunedin frequently felt frustrated in trying to work out how well agents were running their business in Fiji. Drawing in part on the researches of a generation and more of Pacific historians, Steel notes how opportunities for employment as stevedores led some indigenous people to neglect their traditional responsibilities to perform communal work and to resist chiefly authority, particularly in the region around Suva. The final substantive chapter looks at the way indigenous people in Tonga, Samoa and the outer islands of what was officially defined as Fiji travelled and worked on steamships both to facilitate customary traditions and to pursue new opportunities, often getting around official attempts to restrict them.

There is a danger that works that focus on culture will become enmeshed in rather convoluted discussion of theoretical constructs appreciated by only a small subset of the academic, let alone general, audience. While certainly locating her work in a wider intellectual context in her introduction and conclusion, in the main part of this book Steel develops her arguments through accounts of incidents and the words of those involved. She constantly analyses the implied and often unconscious messages embodied in contemporary actions and discourse, but does so plainly and succinctly. Consequently we never lose sight of the fact that this is a history about the lives of real human beings.

This work is part of the long-running Studies in Imperialism Series, published by Manchester University Press under the general editorship of John M. McKenzie. The series has rightly gained a reputation for a high standard of accessible scholarship, and *Oceania under Steam* certainly lives up to that reputation.

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Beyond Gallipoli: New Perspectives on Anzac. Edited by Raelene Frances and Bruce Scates. Monash University Publishing, Melbourne, 2016. 259pp. Australian price: \$34.95. ISBN: 9781925495102.

GALLIPOLI HAS BEEN DESCRIBED by one of Australia's leading war historians as 'surely the most overworked subject in Australian military history'. Another of similar stature, who has a chapter in this book under review, once remarked at a conference at the Australian War Memorial that future research grants should be given only to historians *not* writing books on Gallipoli.¹ Yet here is another book from across the Tasman that treads this well-worn path. There is a difference, though. *Beyond Gallipoli* takes a transnational approach to a campaign that Australians and New Zealanders have tended to claim as their own turf to the exclusion of others. And its subtitle implies some new assessments on this hundred-year-old military campaign will be made. As the editors state in their introduction, their book 'approaches old questions in a new way, offering fresh perspectives on the Gallipoli landing and their legacy, and showcasing the work of leading and emerging scholars from the UK, USA, Canada, France, Aotearoa/New Zealand and Turkey' (p.1). These are ambitious goals.