

perceptively noted in this book, while the Gallipoli campaign holds a special place in the collective memory of Turkey, Australia and New Zealand, 'this history is neither a single nor a simple one' (p.34).

NOTES

1 Peter Stanley, *Quinn's Post, Anzac, Gallipoli*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2005, p.xix. The historian who made the comment about the research grants was Robin Prior.

2 For a detailed report on the May 2015 conference see Peter Stanley, 'Headphones, genocide and Fanta: Reflections on the Canakkale Gallipoli conference', *Honest History*, 4 August 2015, <http://honesthistory.net.au/wp/canakkale-gallipoli-conference-reflections-2015/>

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The Broken Decade: Prosperity, Depression and Recovery in New Zealand 1928–39. By Malcolm McKinnon. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2016. 556pp. NZ price: \$49.95. ISBN: 9781927322260.

THE BROKEN DECADE is a comprehensive history of the period between 1928 and 1939 and will likely become the standard account of the era. Whereas popular (as distinct from scholarly) memories of the era tend to see it as a 'slump' beginning in 1929 which was only rectified when Labour rescued and rebuilt New Zealand after being elected in 1935 (echoing, in popular memory at least, the Liberals who revived New Zealand after the 'Long Depression'), McKinnon is much more nuanced in his analysis. His book is structured around four key phases: an 'Indian Summer' between 1928 and 1930 when high export prices and public works spending made for a relatively buoyant economy; a slump in export earnings and a crisis of rising unemployment between 1930 and 1933, accompanied by cuts to wages, public works and, perhaps most controversially, a devaluation of the currency; a partial recovery between 1933 and 1935; and, finally, a fuller recovery under the Labour government, albeit one followed by a financial crisis in 1938 which was only averted by the outbreak of World War Two.

In some respects, *The Broken Decade* affirms and extends, more than it challenges, the scholarly consensus around the Depression. McKinnon observes that, unpopular though they were in retrospect, the policies of retrenchment and strict limitations on relief payments reflected orthodox practice. Indeed, he demonstrates, they were widely supported by most of the major newspapers and New Zealand economists at the time. On George Forbes, Prime Minister and leader of the United-Reform coalition government, about whom Keith Sinclair famously prophesized that 'some dogged researcher' would uncover his 'political merits', McKinnon is less critical than most, acknowledging his tenacity and the tendency of opponents to underestimate him. His treatment of Gordon Coates (and indeed William Downie Stewart) is also largely sympathetic, although he is critical of the inaction of the coalition government

in dealing with the rapidly worsening unemployment rates between 1930 and 1932 and of Coates's enduring, but misplaced, faith in rural resettlement as a cure for the Depression. On the first Labour government, McKinnon provides a corrective to the popular memory that credits Labour with rescuing New Zealand. He acknowledges the positive impact of Labour restoring pensions and wages to pre-Depression levels and resuming public works, but plausibly argues that this was a restoration of the 1920s policies of state-sponsored economic development rather than a revolutionary development. He joins Sinclair in highlighting the dominant role of Walter Nash in the Labour government, Michael Joseph Savage being principally presented as a highly effective political salesman. McKinnon sensibly avoids the temptation to posit counterfactual speculation, but for this reader at least, the book could usefully have included a more explicit discussion on whether the coalition government could have better alleviated the suffering the Depression undeniably caused had it adopted different policies.

While the substance of McKinnon's arguments may be familiar to those well versed in the economic and political history of the Depression, there are several areas in which the book provides interesting perspectives. A central premise of *The Broken Decade* is that political responses to the Depression reflected an urban/rural divide in New Zealand politics and society. As noted, Coates believed economic recovery would come from the rural sector; hence the relatively generous mortgage relief accorded farmers and, more controversially, the placement of many relief camps in remote areas. It was the practice of compelling urban dwellers, including married men, to go to these camps that aroused particular resentment in the cities. McKinnon also usefully draws on comparisons with Australian politics at both state and federal levels, noting that these were extensively discussed by New Zealand politicians and newspapers from across the political spectrum. The concluding chapter, on 'the depression as history and memory', is particularly perceptive. Here the focus is less on economic and political history as on the ways in which the Depression was experienced and remembered. McKinnon provides glimpses into the lives of those who maintained their jobs during the Depression — the majority of the population — whose social lifestyles, although constrained, nevertheless continued. He also makes a persuasive argument that memories of the Depression discouraged later governments from retrenchment in tough economic times, noting that the National-led government under John Key and Bill English largely maintained government expenditure and borrowed heavily to avert a potential economic downturn during and after the recession of 2008–2009.

The book is impressively researched. As noted, McKinnon's preference is to explain what happened rather than excoriate particular individuals or parties. Nevertheless, the strength of the book lies in the telling use of detail to illustrate key arguments. It was surprising to learn, for example, that the unemployment fund, collected for the express purpose of paying those out of work, remained in surplus throughout the Depression. It was also interesting to discover that, despite the hardship occasioned by the Depression, social welfare did not feature significantly as a campaign issue during the 1935 election campaign.

The Broken Decade is well written and attractively presented. Although much of the text is devoted to analysis of policies and their impact, the extensive illustrations, including beer advertisements and contemporary art, newspapers and cartoons, provide an informative and occasionally quirky insight into the social history of the

period. Commendably, the author makes good use of graphs and tables, although a list of these in the table of contents would have been a useful addition. Overall, however, *The Broken Decade* makes a valuable and timely contribution to our understanding of a seminal period in New Zealand's history.

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Mothers' Darlings of the South Pacific: The Children of Indigenous Women and US Servicemen, World War II. Edited by Judith A. Bennett and Angela Wanhalla. Otago University Press, Dunedin, 2016. 424pp. NZ price: \$45. ISBN: 9781927322635.

INTIMATE HISTORIES are often affecting, but there is something about this collection that is powerfully more than the sum of its parts. The threads of researchers' journeys, families' quests and searches, and the mobilities of wartime are woven together to draw the reader across the Pacific in the wake of the US forces of the early 1940s. The product of a Marsden Fund project, the book exemplifies what discovery-driven research grants in the humanities can achieve. The research team could never have known at the outset the ways their project would grow and change, the people it would draw in, or the benefits — tangible and intangible — to the communities and individuals with whom they worked.

The book is geographically structured, following the US Navy's path across the Pacific. Some places had been visited for centuries by American whalers and other seafarers, while for others, the war represented mass invasion from the outside. In some Pacific communities, such as those on Tutuila and Manu'a, the numbers of Americans overwhelmed local populations and the military constructed virtually entire towns complete with cinemas and dance-halls, along with airstrips and fuel dumps. The US forces encountered a wide range of cultures starkly and subtly different from each other. One of the strengths of the book is the visibility of the variety of approaches to courtship, sex, marriage, childbirth and family formation across the cultures we speak of as 'the' Pacific. Nuance and dynamism are also clear in the various responses by local authorities to the US occupation, as well as in the massive cultural changes to clothing, diet and health brought by the Americans. By World War II all parts of the Pacific were or had been under some form of colonial control, yet administrative arrangements were by no means uniform. In some places, such as the New Hebrides (Vanuatu), the Americans were very welcome as wealthy and generous occupiers compared to other colonial masters. Some islands benefited materially, with Tonga being especially mentioned in the US naval history. These benefits were integrally tied to social relations with locals and were one of the many ways that intimate and military relationships were intertwined.

The Americans, too, were a surprisingly diverse group, with men of Filipino, African American and Hawaiian ancestry arriving on the islands. The two commonalities of the American experience that stand out in this book, however, are the importance of Hollywood images of the 'South Seas' and its women in shaping responses to locals and, second, what Bennett calls 'the harsh arithmetic of race'