I opened this book with mixed feelings. I closed it with sadness.

My initial misgivings were reinforced by the book's title, adorned with a band of what appear to be tjurunga and thread-crosses, the dedication (which bears no relationship to Ted), the self-righteous appendage to Strehlow's letter in the Preface, and the pre-publication blurbs on the back cover. I was saddened because Ted is judged and found wanting, not only by McNally but also by one of his own sons (pp. 73, 97-100, 198-199). If the evidence supplied by McNally is taken alone, posterity will have little opportunity to make its own assessment. Ted Strehlow himself is, unfortunately, not in a position to reply!

Two interrelated issues are involved here. One has to do with biographies in general: with such considerations as motive and intent, range and choice and handling of material—and what is omitted. The other is specific: this particular account, of a particular person. One question is: does this biography portray the whole man who was Strehlow—or, at least, provide a reasonably rounded picture? To the best of my knowledge, it does not. This is not merely a matter of sympathetic treatment, or otherwise, or whether or not the subject would have liked the result. It concerns also how the book is written, the emphases which receive more attention than others, and the selection of available material written by or about or otherwise referring to Strehlow. Even more crucial is the ability of a biographer to interpret both the person, and the changing contexts within which the events are relevant. The overall treatment in this biography would, in my view, make any potential subject think twice (or more) before placing himself (herself) in the hands of a biographer.

In the Strehlow biography so much is left out. McNally's access to pertinent documents was not complete. For instance, I have large files of correspondence between Ted and myself over a twenty-five-year period. These reveal facets of his thinking which do not appear in the biography, and suggest at least partial answers to some of the problems of Ted as a scholar of Aranda traditional life and as a person—if these were strictly separable. Those files, of course, could not be made available. I have only three letters from Ward McNally (for February, March and April 1980), and copies of my three replies, one with attached comments on nine questions he asked me. We had no discussions except through that correspondence.

What is particularly frustrating is that no sources are mentioned at all. I should have thought this a sine qua non for all good biographical writing; and in this case, the Literature Board of the Australia Council provided funds for McNally to carry out research to enable him to compile the book. Without readily accessible sources and references, readers have no opportunity of checking quotations or written documentation in order to see them in their original context. They are completely at the mercy of the biographer, with no alternative but to accept his interpretation of the person and of the events. This comes out clearly at the end of Chapter 1 and in Chapter 2, which leads up to Carl Strehlow's death. Ted's Journey to Horseshoe Bend (1969) is referred to only briefly, and not in that connection; on page 139 it is mentioned as 'a near-classic'. Yet where else except from that book could a summary of this kind be obtained? Compare, for instance, the death scene of Carl Strehlow in both these works. Ted's eye-witness account is a masterful rendering by a person intimately and emotionally involved. It is not only with that death scene that liberties appear to have been taken, but also with Ted's own (p. 200). This appears to be common practice throughout the biography. In Chapter 9, for example, the Stuart case is discussed, with no reference to K.S. Inglis's book on that subject.

Difficulties of interpretation are most apparent in what purport to be quotations from my own remarks. I note only two examples. With regard to his early article Ankotarinja (1933), I said: 'That made a deep impression on me. There was nothing comparable which encapsulated in quite this way the mythic quality and deep attachment of Aborigines to their land'. In McNally's rephrasing, the article 'made such an impression on me... that the work inspired me to apply new vigour to my own
studies of Aboriginal culture' (p. 78)! Much of Strehlow's work I thought outstandingly good; but I did not say that his 'contributions had far wider implications than anyone else's work on the subject' (p. 101). And so on. Whether or not this is deliberate I do not know: it is at least careless, with insufficient concern for veracity. If such changes have occurred in my case, it seems likely that they have happened in regard to others as well.

A great deal could be said about the various incidents and events discussed in this book — actual statements as well as interpretation, including even more apparent inaccuracies. As in the case of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies' air-conditioners (p. 130), certain aspects are either overdrawn or incomplete, or are given an undue emphasis. For instance (see p. 135), I did not know Donald Stuart in 1964; nor did I write a letter introducing him and his wife to Ted. As to pp. 137-138: Don Stuart submitted an application to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies in November 1965 (Doc. 65/811) for fieldwork in the Pilbara of Western Australia — not in Central Australia, and gave as his referees both Strehlow and W.E.H. Stanner. The Institute's Council did not approve the application. It is not clear, therefore, how Ted could have sent Stuart to Central Australia, or whether he had funds from elsewhere. McCarthy (e.g. p. 136) was not a 'professor'; and McNally's account of the Strehlow Aranda map 'controversy', in which Scherer was involved, is far from complete (pp.137 et seq.). Good biographical writing depends on getting one's facts right. For instance, McNally speaks of H.C. Coombs (whose name is misspelt) resigning from the chairmanship of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (pp.146 and 147). Coombs was not elected a member of that Institute until 1978-79 and was not its chairman. The resignation refers to Coombs' chairmanship of the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council.

With regard to Mountford's volumes *Ayers Rock* (1965) and *Winbaraku...* (1968). I do not believe that Ted was motivated by spite or jealousy when he made his critical review entitled ' "Ayers Rock" and "Winbaraku" by C.P. Mountford: a critical examination'. Strehlow was concerned with accuracy, and the facts presented by Mountford did not necessarily tally with his own. The review (55 pages, plus appendices) was sent first to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, but was not well received there because of its outspoken statements about Mountford and the University of Adelaide. There is no doubt that this episode had a negative effect on relations between the Institute as such, and Strehlow. The way the whole business was handled was most unfortunate. I offered (in March 1969) to publish the review in *Anthropological Forum* provided Strehlow removed the *ad hominem* discussion, because it included a wealth of interesting and valuable ethnographic material. I repeated the offer on two other occasions (in May and September 1969), but Ted could not make up his mind. He was smarting under the strictures of the Institute, and considered all his criticisms to be justified. It was not until January 1970 that he wrote to me to say that the matter 'will keep for the present'. This was not, as McNally would have it (p. 145), a curt reply, since that letter brought up other topics not related to Mountford. Moreover, we were corresponding quite regularly over that particular period. In fact, I remember that on one occasion during that time, the Strehlows drove me over to see Mountford, who was then living in Rose Park.

McNally suggests, both here and on page 192, that a rift had grown up between Ted and myself. The last page number refers to the publication of Aranda religious photographs in *Stern and People*. I won't go into this, except to say that I telephoned Strehlow immediately it was drawn to my attention (by an interstate Aboriginal phone call) and advised him to make a public statement. The essence of my discussion with him was not framed in the way McNally has it (pp. 189-90). Certainly, I was disturbed about the whole business; but it is not true that 'angry letters' were sent to me by both Ted and his wife. I made this clear to McNally in my letter to him of March 3rd 1980. I remained Ted's friend up to the time he died. Inevitably, there were differences of opinion between us: it would have been astonishing if there had not been, because of our differing backgrounds and experiences and commitments. But I did not resign from the chairmanship of the Strehlow Foundation because of any of these matters.

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I think I have said enough, at this juncture. I have demonstrated (although rather briefly) that there are defects in this biography. We are presented with one face of Ted Strehlow, seemingly darkened, his foibles too heavily drawn. His full portrait, his full stature, are yet to be delineated. In fact, this particular exercise of McNally's should provide a lesson to us, to anthropologists and to social historians, when it comes to assembling a biography.

Ted Strehlow was without doubt a difficult and complex personality. In some respects he was unpredictable and unsure of himself, and he took too much notice of what others said and did vis-à-vis himself. He collected more enemies than most of us seem to do, or think we do — but they were not always of his own making. In short, it is not the man Strehlow who was, who counts in the long run, but the scholar who remains. In this last respect, his reputation continues unblemished.

RONALD M. BERNDT UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA


My interest in Aboriginal literature dates from 1976 when I lived in the Northern Territory on an Aboriginal settlement. I am now fifteen and live in the A.C.T. but have continued to read many books containing both Aboriginal tales and myths, most of which have been aimed at children. I found Milbi difficult to criticise because it rates with the best of them.

This anthology of Aboriginal tales from the Queensland Endeavour River region is told and beautifully illustrated by Tulo Gordon and translated by John Haviland. It should appeal to everyone. Although each story is complete in itself, characters introduced in one chapter are often found in the next and the overall effect is one of a rich tradition. The stories are easy to read and understand and the pictures add to the myths to create a beautiful image.

These stories may sound like fairy-tales to many of us but we must remember that the people to whom the stories belong have a very different society and culture from us. Most of these stories are told by adults to their children to explain and show something about their values and society but not all these tales are just for children. Some are for adults to exchange with other adults, but again the purpose is to explain the society by recounting things that have happened.

My favourite tale in the collection is the story of how the Nhinhinhi fish changed the languages. It tells of long ago when all men had a single language and of how the Nhinhinhi fish, a groper, swallowed all the people who had gathered for a ceremony. Some time later when the fish vomited all the people out, they found that they spoke different languages. This explanation tells us why people are all the same but different, and that is an important lesson for all of us to understand.

The explanatory notes at the end of the book complement the tales well. They add important footnotes which expand the book and its contents. Overall, Milbi is an enjoyable collection of tales that should give many people an insight into Aboriginal culture.

GENEVIEVE BELL CANBERRA


This unusually interesting book records the author's experience and knowledge
derived from living for twenty-five years with the Aboriginal inhabitants of Groote Eylandt, fifteen years before any major outside influence disturbed their lives and ten years after the establishment of manganese mining on the island.

The date of the original occupation of the island by their ancestors, probably from nearby Arnhem Land, is not known. It was in the Dream Time. Abel Tasman (1644) and Mathew Flinders (1803) both passed by. Years later, in 1921, a Church of England mission was established, and in 1938 a flying boat base and subsequently landing slips were built. Probably the first regular contact with the outside world began with the annual visits of the Macassan trepangers, possibly two hundred years ago. They introduced steel axes and with these the islanders built dug out canoes which replaced their bark canoes and enabled them to venture further out to sea.

A major change in the life style and economy of the islanders came in 1963 with the development of the known manganese deposits. Mining brought money and goods to be bought especially for the younger men. The change in the economy and values disturbed the older Aborigines and this book was written ‘with their co-operation to preserve some, at least, of the basic bushcraft before it is lost for ever’.

Part 1 of the book consists of chapters on their language, everyday activities, the many and diverse uses of plants and plant products, methods of preparation of food and other resources. The Aboriginal’s accurate knowledge of the environment from which he, as a hunter-gatherer, must obtain his resources is reflected in the ‘Bush Calendar’ of the Groote Eylanders, e.g. ‘Flowering of Cocky apple... shows it is time to catch turtles. When Pandanus nuts are orange and dropping, turtles are laying their eggs’.

‘Sickness: causes and treatments’ is a wide ranging and interesting chapter; it includes a variety of treatments — not all are designed to cure. While it was recognised that there was no cure for leprosy and cases were not isolated because that would be unloving, yet a mentally ill person who became dangerous might be speared.

Part 2 deals more fully with the flora of the island and since it is a continental island the flora is dominated by mainland species, but it also includes a number of variants. Some 385 plants are listed, each with its botanical name and family, its native name, and notes on its habitat, size and form, characteristics and any other feature including its use. Full page illustrations of one hundred of these plants are included to aid in their identification. Unfortunately, these sketches show the disadvantages the illustrator has experienced in drawing from herbarium specimens rather than from the living plant.

The broad scope of the author’s experience and interests and her sympathetic understanding of the Aborigines of Groote Eylandt had combined to produce a rare and valuable story of the pre-contact life and the contact history of Groote Eylandt.

PHYL LIS NICHOLSON CANBERRA


When the first European explorers made contact with Kangaroo Island in 1802 they found the island to be totally uninhabited. Despite its large size (over 4,000 square kilometres) and relative proximity to the South Australian mainland (only 14.5 kilometres at the nearest point) there was no indication of either permanent occupation by the Aborigines or even of sporadic contacts by visiting groups. The ‘mystery’ surrounding the island deepened further when an initial archaeological exploration in the early years of the present century revealed a comparative wealth of archaeological sites, clearly indicating relatively intensive occupation of the island at some point in the past. The challenge to the archaeological community could hardly have been clearer: what was the age of this early human occupation of Kangaroo Island, and why did this occupation come to an end?

Ronald Lampert devoted his doctoral research to attempting to resolve these and other problems posed by the Kangaroo Island material and has now presented his results as
volume 5 of the *Terra Australis* series. The most obvious and immediate objective was to secure some hard archaeological data relating to the human occupation, largely free from the biases and ambiguities inherent in the earlier phases of surface collecting. In addition to a careful survey of existing material, therefore, Lampert conducted a series of controlled excavations on a total of six sites, chosen so as to represent a variety of settlement locations and — hopefully — a wide chronological range. Any selection of this kind must of course inevitably involve a large element of chance (not to mention good luck) but in general the author seems to have been successful in squeezing an impressive amount of evidence from the sites on which he chose to work.

Viewing the results as a whole, the evidence has been least forthcoming on the chronology of the so-called ‘Kartan’ industries — the rather distinctive industries (named by Tindale after the Aboriginal name for Kangaroo Island) which initially drew the attention of archaeologists to the island. As yet, there are no radiocarbon dates for these industries, and no recorded occurrences in well stratified geological contexts. While a broadly Pleistocene date for the Kartan industries seems beyond dispute, there will no doubt be mixed reactions to Lampert’s suggestion that at least some of these industries may go back as far as 50,000 B.P. Basically, Lampert’s argument here is that on general typological and technological grounds the Kartan tools find their closest parallels in some of the earliest dated industries on the Australian mainland, and that on more theoretical grounds this is precisely the kind of favourable ecological habitat (offering a combination of terrestrial, marine and estuarine resources) in which one might expect to find some of the earliest traces of colonization in Australia. Aside from these chronological questions, the author is generally successful in showing that the very heavy, steeply-flaked pebble and core tools (including the ‘horse-hoof cores’) which have always been used to define the Kartan do seem to represent a distinctive industrial variant which can be identified not only on Kangaroo Island itself but also on several adjacent parts of the South Australian mainland. Now that the character of the Kartan phenomenon has been more sharply defined, future research on Kangaroo Island will no doubt aim at putting the chronology of the sites on a more secure footing.

The best-documented sites included in Lampert’s survey belong to the so called ‘small tool tradition’. Substantial excavations were carried out at four of these sites and yielded a range of apparently reliable radiocarbon dates extending from 4,810 ± 90 B.P. (for the Sand Quarry site) to 10,940 ± 60 B.P. (for the upper occupation level at Seton Cave); the much earlier date of 16,110 ± 100 B.P. recorded for the lower occupation level at Seton Cave has been tentatively attributed to the same industrial tradition, although on the evidence of a single retouched tool this attribution inevitably remains tenuous. The excavation at Seton Cave also yielded the only substantial evidence at present available for the character of prehistoric economic activities on Kangaroo Island; faunal remains from the upper occupation level suggest a primary emphasis on the exploitation of the grey kangaroo, accompanied by the collection of emu eggs and at least six species of marine molluscs. The only other hints of economic activities from the island are provided by a few seal bones from the Cape du Couedic, and by a number of sparse shell scatters at various points around the coast.

Seen from the standpoint of a European prehistorian there is a good deal in Dr. Lampert’s monograph which is of more general methodological and theoretical interest. The methods he adopts for analysing the lithic industries are by no means entirely new, but provide excellent illustrations of how a wide range of approaches can be brought to bear on specific, clearly defined problems. In this context I found myself in warm agreement with his comment that ‘the selection of data sensitive to some specific hypothesis seems preferable to a broad empirical net, making it desirable for an archaeologist to have some idea of the questions to be asked and the range of attributes most likely to answer these before choosing and measuring attributes’ (p.52). By pursuing this policy he is able to extract a good deal of useful information from classes of artefacts which have sometimes been regarded as too simple or basic to yield any worthwhile cultural or technological information. His demonstration that various forms of pebble tools can be used to provide valuable data of this kind is one which might well be pursued, for example, by some African prehistorians.
In discussing the possible relationships between the Kartan industries and those belonging to the small tool tradition, Lampert raises a further theoretical issue which will have a familiar ring to European prehistorians. So long as doubts remain over the chronology of the Kartan industries, the possibility must of course be allowed for that these could represent merely some kind of 'functional' variant of the small tool tradition. Issues of this kind are notoriously difficult to resolve from the archaeological data, but the approach adopted by Lampert seems to me as sensible and rigorous as any that can be adopted in this situation. The most positive approach, as he demonstrates, is to set up an explicit model of exactly what patterns of variation can be predicted from specific functional interpretations, and then to test these predictions systematically against the archaeological record. Ethnoarchaeology clearly provides one of the most valuable sources of predictive modelling in this context, and it is interesting to see how the Australian ethnoarchaeological data collected by Hayden, Gould and others can be brought to bear on the particular problems posed by the Kartan material. By reasoning along these lines Lampert has little difficulty in showing that the hypothesis of functional variation does not provide a very convincing explanation for the Kartan/small tool dichotomy.

There is hardly space in a brief review to comment on the intriguing problems posed by the final stages of human occupation on Kangaroo Island. No doubt the debate will continue between Lampert and Jones on the question of whether the archaeological record for the Holocene period represents continuous occupation by a 'relict' population, or whether the permanent occupation of the island effectively came to an end with the dramatic rise in sea level which eventually led to its isolation from the mainland sometime around 10,000 B.P. To an outside observer there are valid arguments on both sides, although my impression is that Lampert has built up a reasonable case in favour of the 'relict population' view. Whichever view one adopts there remains the central problem of why the human use of the island — whether permanent or intermittent — eventually came to an end. Lampert's suggestion that this was related in some way to the increasing aridity of the climate between the fifth and third millennia B.P. is interesting, but is hardly developed in sufficient detail to provide more than a hint to the critical ecological factors that may have been involved. Despite the impressive contributions of this monograph, at least one aspect of the Great Kartan Mystery remains, perhaps, as mysterious as ever?

PAUL MELLARS

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.


First, it has to be said, this is the chronicle of a wide-ranging enterprise, carried out with enormous energy and efficiency, deploying a wide variety of people and resources, and brought to completion inside three years. Isabel McBryde's New England survey is the only published Australian regional survey showing comparable range in time and space and across the disciplines. Are only women sufficiently tough, conscientious and foolhardy to collect and analyse such a mass of trivia, and hammer it into meaning and shape?

Dr Flood is tough indeed. She employed a great variety of skills — herself a climber, bushwalker, surveyor, photographer, field archaeologist, excavator, artefact assemblage analyst, statistician, and historian; and she marshalled and drew on the skills of others — amateur, student and professional archaeologists; geographers, zoologists, botanists; bushmen, climbers, landowners. Her data range from field monuments, artefact scatters and excavated stratified sites; through stone tool assemblages, distributions and environmental resources; to early European descriptive accounts of Aborigines in a landscape.
Second, despite, or because of, its wide range, this is not a scrapbook, a hotch-potch. Dr Flood essays a total picture of Aboriginal communities and their use of and impact on terrain through time. 'Pure' archaeology is not enough. Archaeology plus the environmental sciences is not enough. Ethnohistory is not enough — for it is a view from the wrong side of the frontier. Only from an amalgam of archaeology, landscape sciences and documentary studies can a living portrait be moulded of any part of Australia and its people. Daunting though the task may be, this is the only way it can be done.

Josephine Flood has chosen as her study area the Southern Uplands, comprising the Australian Alps and the surrounding tablelands and montane valleys, used by groups centred on a variety of differing areas either side of the ranges, but drawn together by their seasonal preoccupation with moths. The high point of the book, as of the Upland economy, was millions of walnut-flavoured moths, congregating in the summer months about masses of granite in the high ranges of the Dividing Range, sought as a 'lushous fattening food' which inaugurated a season of festivity, when people grew fat and sleek, and indulged themselves in love-making, marriage, barter, initiation, ceremonies and battle.

Some lack of clarity results from recurrent uncertainty about the limits of the region under discussion in various sections of the text. The study area is set within a wider frame, variously shown on figures 2 (relief), 5 (exploration of northern half of the area, and further west), 8 (tribal movements), 10 (moth movements), 12 and 13 (tribes and drainage basins), depicting differing overlapping areas on differing scales. The rectangular 'study area' indicated on figure 2 is never mapped again. Those who do not live in Canberra (and the book surely addressed a wider audience) would appreciate a key map of this whole study area, showing the relationship within it of the sub-areas mapped, with a variety of scales and conventions, in figures 21, 22, 24, 25, 26. How, for instance, do the Lower Snowy locations on figure 25 relate to those on figure 26? Where is Cogg's Cave in relation to everything else? Does the word 'Gippsland' appear on any map?

Ambiguities in the text also stem from the assumption that the reader knows the area, and therefore it is not necessary for the maps to be sufficient to explain the text. For instance, on p.19 Dr Flood states that there is no evidence of burning in sub-alpine or alpine tracts. On p.12 the alpine/subalpine regions are defined as those above 1500m; and from figure 2, at a very small scale, one can deduce that these comprise only a very small part (perhaps less than a tenth) of the study area. The 'symbiotic inter-relationship of man, grasslands and game' so beautifully described by Cunningham for the Tablelands affected an area many times as extensive. But how extensive are the Tablelands? How much is now 'forest, woodland and savannah' and how much 'treeless plains'? Is the labelled portion of figure 25 the total extent of treeless plains? A large map of the rectangular study area from figure 2 would solve these problems, if it showed contours, ecological zones, and preferably sites, and provided a key to the more detailed maps of small areas, at a larger (standard) scale.

A good ecological map is essential to understanding resource distribution, site distribution, group movements, and the variety of impact made by Aboriginal groups each using a variety of fire regimes, in a variety of environments. Howitt's 1890s accounts of 'the influence of (European) settlement on Eucalyptus forests' cannot be fully understood unless the reader can relate them to a better map than figure 2. Howitt makes masterly use of a combination of botanical observation (e.g. in the mountain forests of Gippsland a few very large scattered trees stood out from the dense forests of young trees predominantly of different species, which had grown up since the 1860s); European oral tradition (in the Snowy valley it was 'difficult to ride' through forests of young saplings where the few scattered old giants indicated earlier open grassy alluvial flats); Aboriginal oral tradition (the ranges of the Omeo district, grown dense with Eucalypt saplings and Acacia scrub, which were, as a whole, according to accounts given me by surviving aborigines, much more open than they are now); and archaeological evidence ('constant discoveries during the process of clearing of blackfellows' stone tomahawks' in dense thickets of gum saplings and shrubs among the 'few very large old trees' of the great forest of South Gippsland). Flood does not
put sufficiently clearly Wakefield's point that it is not burning, but frequency of burning, which is crucial. Infrequent burning by European pastoralists would actually open the canopy and increase scrub growth, and increase coppicing from burnt stumps. It would follow that where Aboriginal groups moved annually to and fro along valley bottoms, e.g. the Suggan Buggan, burning as they went, open parklike zones would result; while along the margins of such zones of movement patchy firing would produce a mosaic of thickets at various stages of regrowth. It works both ways — zones which were most frequented would be most fired; and zones kept open by being most fired were easiest to move through, and so most frequented.

There are some signs of 'splicing' to adapt a 1973 thesis to 1980 publication. Although Singh's work on evidence for firing in the Lake George deposits is cited (as 'pers. comm.', and by publication reference) it is not really incorporated into the argument (p. 18). Flood does not seriously consider the very real probability that the initial human use of the Southern Uplands may be as early as the last interglacial and may from the first have involved a very substantial impact on the environment. This is supported not merely by high values for charcoal particles, indicating increases in fire frequency, but by the decline of fire-sensitive *Casuarina* woodland, and the first dominance of open eucalypt woodland, a very different landscape from that of previous interglacials. The consequences for understanding settlement history are spelt out on p. 280, ignored on p. 281.

Purists may object to the survey methods — 'In view of the low archaeological visibility of upland Aboriginal sites, various techniques of site prediction, based on the distribution of food and stone resources in the local topography, were employed, and these proved surprisingly successful, revealing over fifty campsites'. Predictive rather than representative sampling? Not quite, for having predicted a site, Dr Flood then took 'a narrow [!] transect' and examined this on foot, showing not only that there was archaeological material in the area where she has predicted it, but also that there was no archaeological material visible elsewhere in a 1 km wide swathe from valley floor to peaks. However, despite triumphs in the prediction and discovery of sites, Dr Flood must admit for parts of her enormous area that 'little reconnaissance has been done in this area as yet'. Those areas which have been more closely sampled (predictively, or however) should be shown on the site distribution maps, e.g. figures 25 and 26 are meaningless unless they show the sample areas examined by Margus, Lewis, Gallard and Chapman. A statement that no sites have been found on the treeless Monaro Plains means nothing until a sample area has been examined with thoroughness comparable to their work.

Much of the value of this study lies in the use of ethnographic evidence providing a detailed picture of Aboriginal social, economic and ceremonial life in that thin slice of time where European observation intersects the continuous flow of life — a 'still' as the endpoint of the somewhat blurred 'movie' shots which comprise the archaeological record. Dr Flood does not now need to defend the validity of using ethnographic material. But she confuses the issue by calling it 'ethnographic analogy'. Ethnography provides for the archaeologist not analogy to plug gaps, but a base line from which to measure differences. The archaeological imprint of each phase in the use of a region shows a pattern of intensities of use differing from previous and succeeding patterns, and the totality of phase patterns traces a multi-dimensional graph of change, through to a known contact baseline, from which every other point can be triangulated and calibrated. Gould was not the first practitioner of ethno-archaeology in Australia, just the first to use the label. Flood's use of documentary material owes more to Betty Hiatt (Meehan) and McBryde than to Gould.

The value of ethnographic material for understanding the archaeological record is clear in the sections on movement and site distribution and type; in the argument that death spears, and the quartz fragments which arm them, imply hunting big game; or that shell scrapers and bone awls are indices of skin garments (cf. Bird and Beeck in *Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania* for 1980); but particularly in the section on demography. Population densities in the range 5-20 people per 100 m², centering around 10 per 100 m², accord well with order of magnitude for other areas of Australia (e.g. the western wheat belt)
which lie neither at the sparsest (desert) nor at the densest (coastal and major riverine) extreme of the population spectrum. It is essential to realise that more than 60 per cent of groups encountered comprised 10 or fewer people before one can begin to hope to understand processes of site formation and site variety, distribution, and visibility (but this phenomenon is not confined to areas of low population density or small sites).

To me the most fascinating section is Chapter 13 on ‘Stone assemblages of open campsites’ because this, with the work of Isabel McBrvde and Richard Gould, is among the first attempts in Australia to draw up a series of equations between surface archaeological material on the one hand and the behaviour and changing grouping of Aboriginal communities on the other.

Full tabulations of assemblage data from surface sites are sadly lacking in Australian archaeological publication. It is good to have so much detail of stone assemblage data; but annoying that different tables (e.g. 12, 13, 14) treat different selections of sites differently; and difficult to collate tables of assemblage characteristics with distribution analyses for the same sites. Try comparing Table 14 with Table 11. Currawong is listed as Central Snowy in one, Lower Snowy in the other. Tombong and Jindabyne are Tableland sites in 11, Central Snowy in 14. Sawpit Creek, Bulls Flat and several Victorian Border sites are given assemblage analyses, but not distributional analyses; Lake Maffra and Cathcart have distributional but not stone assemblage statistics. It is similarly difficult to move between Table 10 and Table 13. Such data are so rare and valuable that it is disappointing to find that the Tables, like the maps, are not standardised, and it would thus be difficult to test distinctions (camps, special purpose camps, ceremonial camps, manufacturing sites) which are by no means as self-evident as Flood would have us believe. How, for instance, does a ‘factory site’, when it is not the immediate adjunct of a quarry, differ from a multipurpose camp, in which stoneworking was one among a wide range of activities? Are there any scatters of stone which do not document artefact manufacture? Even a much worn adze slug is not usually discarded until a new adze flake can be substituted. What are the characteristics of ‘manufacturing sites’ which are also ‘in the nature of transit camps’ (p.181)?

With her data Flood could have moved towards a standard scheme by which she set out site and assemblage characteristics, and then discussed explicitly their equation with the behaviour of Aboriginal groups and processes of site formation. Site ‘size’ (i.e. artefact quantity) is given a 1-5 rating (are all collections total?). Similarly density could be allocated to defined ranges in a continuum, on the basis of maximum number of artefacts (collected and estimated) per square 10m by 10m; thus —

<table>
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<th>Rating</th>
<th>Number of artefacts per (10m)²</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10⁴ (i.e. c. 100/m²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>c. 10² (i.e. c. 1/m²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>c. 10⁰ (i.e. c. 1/(10m)²)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>c. 10⁻² (i.e. c. 1/(100m)²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>c. 10⁻⁴ (i.e. c. 1/(km)²)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The combination of quantity and density would give a matrix within which sites could be set and clusters defined; and correlations tested between those clusters and assemblage and locational characteristics. Total date range must affect the interpretation of every one of the other factors. Quantity must be estimated within a definable entity, and in less sparsely used regions, with greater archaeological visibility, there is a real problem in defining the entities.

The general aim of ethnoarchaeology must eventually be to devise equations between clusters of archaeological characteristics (density, quantity, assemblage characteristics, date range) and the behaviour of Aboriginal groups in the past — group composition (families or young men or whatever), numbers, length of stay (hours? days? weeks? months?), frequency of stay (once, occasional, yearly, frequent, continual) and activities (e.g. domestic, ceremonial, quarrying, hunting). Flood’s combination of ethnohistorical and archaeological data gives
us at least one such equation — the archaeological imprint of moth-hunting groups among the high peaks.

Josephine Flood's excavations, like Bob Pearce's, demonstrate that the ratio between backed blade use and the predominance of chips and bipolar pieces is not exclusively a matter of date, but also demonstrably linked to predominant tool material. Lampert had already suggested that apparent 'degeneration' in stone tool typology followed because the bipolar method is the most suitable for quartz flaking. But Flood's graphs and statistical tests demonstrate clearly the see-saw between silcrete/backed blade dominance and quartz/bipolar pieces/chips (what are the measurements of her 'flakes'? ) Artefacts like the dimpled anvil in figure 28 may have more to do with flaking quartz than crushing seeds. What does increased quartz use mean? Flood suggests bipolar flaking saves time — but this imputes a most unlikely Protestant time ethic to Aboriginal life. The ubiquity of quartz is surely the key. Pressure of population on land, decreasing group range, perhaps increasing intergroup conflict, may have militated against total reliance on stone which must be obtained from outside the local area (p.253) — and compare Hallam in the 1978 FEPA conference at Poona (Peter Bellwood and V.N. Misra eds. New advances in Indo-Pacific prehistory, in press).

Furthermore, such pressures would not necessarily be even or synchronous. Flood shows them operating on the east coast earlier than on the upland behind. Did coastal populations rise more rapidly? Where were the silcrete sources? Does site function (domestic or ritual) affect stone used?

One small point. Flood implies that similar small flakes (chips) were used to arm both quartz-barbed spears and taap knives. However the King George Sound knife described by Hayden was clearly not armed with small chips, but with larger, rectangular bipolar pieces, with crushing and battering on the ends, and a cortically backed side, which is hafted in gum. 'Each is a flake from a scalar core, or the core itself (assuming the distinction is meaningful or possible)' (see Brian Hayden, 'Analysis of a “taap” composite knife', Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania, 1973:116-126.).

In moving southward, coastward and downhill (to 76m above sea level) to Clogg's Cave Dr Flood clearly goes beyond her brief (and beyond her maps. Nowhere is its location shown relative to the other areas discussed.) This important investigation does not really integrate with the rest of her work, or add to our understanding of the Southern Uplands. Nor does its discussion here add to what had already been published, or put it in a wider or more up-to-date frame. The unity of 'the Australian core tool and scraper tradition' is difficult to maintain in the light of Lampert's heavy Kangaroo Island material. The Pleistocene use of bone points is now widely documented, and it is necessary to distinguish 'needles' (concave spatulae, which when twisted leave a gap through which a sinew may be threaded) from pins, circular in cross-section, for fastening a cloak. Bone points need not necessarily imply possum skin cloaks, for southwest cloaks were stitched from up to seven kangaroo skins, and even one-skin cloaks were pinned. Geographically the closest parallel is with the sparse early material in Cave Bay Cave, published in 1974, but Bowdler's excavation is not mentioned.

There are a few printer's errors — Plate 39a is upside down; leannest (p.99); a stray line on p.802; some editorial slips — 'Plates 40 & 41' (p.101) should be 33a & b; a few details one might query — why a variety of scales for artefact drawings? Are there too many Appendices?

These are quibbles. This is a most impressive and important piece of work. Between the completion of the study in 1973 and its publication in 1980 it had already provided fuel for a number of controversies. Was there a recurring overall pattern of resource usage among Australian societies — a combination of spreading one's bets over a broad range of resources and concentrating on those abundant storable staples which made possible la dolce vita, at least seasonally? Other authors have used Flood's work when it suits their argument (as on ceremonial staples, or the late penetration of alpine areas) or ignored it. The coastal a colonisation versus savannah spread controversy, or the consequential notion that montane (as distinct from alpine) areas were penetrated only late, both ignore Dr Flood's work in
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Clogg’s Cave, and the Lake George evidence. Dr Flood is perhaps wise not to enter here upon these later controversies. Did Pleistocene Australians pass a self-denying ordinance, to use as staples only the resources of marine and fresh waters, and ignore the plant and game resources of the same areas? The answers are clear. There is no need for overkill.

SYLVIA J. HALLAM UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA


This is an unusual book on Aboriginal art. It is not a specialist treatise on some selected theme or category of Aboriginal art, nor does it attempt the generalised overview of the Aboriginal visual arts of the more general literature. In her introduction to Rock paintings of Aboriginal Australia, Elaine Godden emphasises that rock painting is merely one small part of the very varied and rich tradition of Aboriginal art, and further, that it is merely one part of the more usually treated category of rock art, which also comprises engravings on rock. She is also very conscious of the dangers of applying western ideas of aesthetics in our evaluation of this art.

In electing to treat painting on rock as a distinct category of rock art, Elaine Godden is re-emphasising an entrenched technological division of Aboriginal pictorial art, rather than selecting say, regional, stylistic, temporal or thematic boundaries. She is not explicit in her reasons for doing this. Admittedly, the vast scope of Aboriginal rock art may have imposed the need to define limits for adequate treatment in a relatively short text (45 pages of 3 column). Possibly her personal experience with Aboriginal people in the Kimberleys prompted her choice and original approach to the subject. The main theme throughout the book is to present Aboriginal rock paintings within their wider contemporary Aboriginal cultural context.

Painting on rocks is known to have been practised until very recently, into post-European contact times. It may still be practised in certain circumstances. Many rock paintings of some areas, notably in the Kimberleys, are totally meaningful and relevant to Aboriginal people of the region. No such immediacy of tradition has been identified for engravings on rock. Images of contact items in rock engravings are rare (but not unknown). There is a widespread implicit assumption that, by and large, most rock engravings are older than most paintings, and hence further removed from current traditional Aboriginal knowledge and concern. The dichotomy between a recent (living?) painting tradition and a prehistoric (extinct) engraving tradition, is however far from sharp. Many rock paintings, notably throughout the southeast of the continent are, as indicated by Godden, fully prehistoric. It is perhaps less widely recognised that in some areas rock engravings also have great relevance to contemporary Aboriginal people, even though they no longer practise, or claim to have practised the art. Pragmatic considerations must necessitate delimiting the scope of any work, but it might be questioned whether a technological criterion was the most apt for a book in which technical considerations of materials, technique and durability are of very subsidiary importance.

Elaine Godden begins by placing Aboriginal rock art in its archaeological context. In this she avoids the false security of a ‘potted’ outline of Aboriginal prehistory by attempting to introduce the lay reader to some of the methods and principles of archaeological reconstruction and rock art studies, with their inherent lack of precision. To reduce the complexities of the discipline to a few pages in simple language is difficult. Godden’s obvious attempt to avoid technical terms and jargon leads to a style at times reminiscent of a school textbook. She is, however, clearly up to date with the major recent developments in Australian rock art studies. Her outline gives a clear, though uncritical précis of much current thinking in this field.
The following chapters demonstrate the contrast between this 'western' approach to origins and development with Aboriginal perceptions of their past. This is achieved fairly impressionistically by recounting a miscellany of myths from various areas, which introduce the reader to some concepts of creation and of the ancestor beings and their relevance in explaining Aboriginal society, their mores and customs. Elaine Godden's accounts of art and land in the Kimberleys in terms of Aboriginal myths and comments are particularly successful in their evocation of the deeply emotional relationship between Aboriginal people and their land, and the role of the Wandjina style paintings in this context.

A digression into the technical and ethical questions of conservation and control of heritage is superficial and lacks sophistication. It tends to mar the flow from the previous section to her final chapter which is a descriptive account of the major regions of rock painting in Australia. These regional descriptions are interwoven with the ideas evolved out of the earlier chapters, illustrated with myths and stories from the areas and reference to recent historical or prehistoric data. Godden is, however, meticulous in pointing out the lack of direct correlation between art and known Aboriginal culture for areas such as Cape York Peninsula, and especially south-eastern Australia. It is probably for this reason that these areas receive more sketchy treatment than the Kimberleys and western Arnhem Land. Well over half the book and over half the colour plates are devoted to these two regions.

The photographs by Jutta Mainic are generally of a high standard of clarity, and include a welcome array of new items, not featured in the literature. Unfortunately, the colour balance in the printing is often poor, and some of the black and white photographs dispersed through the text lack adequate contrast.

The book is aimed at a general, perhaps fairly unsophisticated readership with little or no prior knowledge of Aboriginal culture. It attempts to induce the reader to view Aboriginal rock paintings from an Aboriginal perspective, rather than the essentially academic or aesthetic emphasis of most literature. This is a unique quality, and in this respect the book is a most welcome addition to the growing body of publications on Aboriginal art. It is to be hoped that the fairly lavish style of publication, and correspondingly high price will not place it beyond the reach of the readership for which it is (apparently) intended.

ANDRÉE ROSENFELD

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.


The history of the people who once occupied the eastern part of the Lake Eyre Basin is one of the darker chapters of Australia's past. It is a history of alienation of lands, massacres, and resettlement of much of the remnant population at the Lutheran mission at Killalpaninna on the lower Cooper. There was considerable similarity in the languages and traditions of the people of this area, and they have all suffered a drastic decline. The Biladaba and Garangura have been extinct for some time and they have left no descendants. There are still a few persons of Ngamini, Yawarawarga, Yandruwandha and Yarluyandi descent, but knowledge of these languages has become negligible over recent years with the death of the last fluent speakers, while Dhiriari is reduced to one speaker. During the years that Peter Austin's work was in progress, the best represented language, Diyari, suffered a further decline, so that there are now only three fluent speakers still living. Peter Austin's study therefore represents a remarkable 'salvage' operation that throws light not only on Diyari, but on the whole language situation of a vast area, the eastern Lake Eyre Basin.

Through the efforts of the Lutheran missionaries at Killalpaninna Diyari became better known than any of the languages in the area. The language work of the missionaries consisted mainly of a large vocabulary by Reuther, and a translation of the whole of the New Testament. But the grammars by Planert and by Reuther, and the unpublished sketches by
Flierl and Schoknecht are not meant to be major studies. Peter Austin’s book therefore fulfils a most important role, it is a detailed, well argued and coherent account of the language. It is sophisticated without being excessively theoretical, it is in the forefront of the recent advances in our knowledge in this field and it makes Diyari one of the best documented Australian languages.

The work uses only a minimum of special symbols, the spelling system is close to a ‘practical orthography’. This leads to just one problem: Diyari, like the neighbouring languages, has three r sounds, the single tap r, the retroflex, and the strongly trilled r, which Dr Austin regards as the intervocalic allophone of d. There can be no argument that within the framework of Diyari this interpretation is accurate, but it means that the strongly trilled r is always written as d. Having frequently heard Diyari spoken, I find this hard to take: I see words like *wadu ‘white’* and *jidiva ‘east’* and can’t understand until I realise that of course these words are pronounced as *warri* and *jirriwa*. This might well be a case where a phonetic spelling would be preferable to the theoretically more justified phonemic spelling.

It is hardly fair to look for errors in a work of such excellence — but there are a few minor slips that should be corrected in a future edition, even if it is only a hook left out as in *yata* for *yata ‘to speak’* (p.68), or the ‘lignum tree’ for ‘lignum bush’ which appears on p.22. The outline of the semantic content of adjectives mentions physiological characteristics, where ‘personal attributes’ might have been better (e.g. silly, clever, quiet): *pa’u ‘naked’* is hardly a physiological characteristic, besides *pa’u* just means ‘bare’ and can even refer to clear, open ground. It is true (p.58) that a number of bird-names in Diyari and related languages are inherently reduplicated nouns such as *kilajkila ‘galah’*; but the interesting part is that no bird any bigger than a galah has such a name and the names of a number of other small creatures such as tiny lizards, and tadpoles *yundflymdfl* are inherently reduplicated. The diminutive aspect of reduplication may still be involved here. The dustjacket comments: ‘This is the first account of an Australian language with a “switch-reference system”’. This is not strictly accurate. W.H. Douglas pointed out such a system in *An introduction to the Western Desert language* in 1964, (p.115) but he uses the older terminology ‘Actions of Two Subjects’.

The work is excellently documented and the examples given not only illustrate the grammatical points in question but also show the kind of things Diyari people talked about, and this gives some insight into recent ways of life in the area. The collection of the mythological text — when all such traditions were regarded as extinct — is a remarkable achievement, as is the whole work. We must be grateful to Peter Austin for this outstanding study, he did his work in the eleventh hour and has made a major contribution to Australian languages.

LUISE HERCUS

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*Trucanini: queen or traitor.* By Vivienne Rae Ellis. Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra, 1981. Pp x+196. h.c. $9.95, p.6. $6.95.

and


*Trucanini* and *The Aboriginal Tasmanians* both deal with the struggle of the Tasmanian Aborigines to survive invasion. But each tells a different tale. Whereas *Trucanini* laments the extinction of the Aboriginal race and memorializes the life of ‘The last Tasmanian’, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians* pays tribute to their ultimate survival. Indeed Ryan states her overriding purpose to be to demolish the ‘myth of extermination’. In this purpose she unquestionably succeeds.

A comparison of the two books provides an instructive exercise for the student of history. Using many of the same sources, Ellis and Ryan produce strikingly different accounts.
Given that Trucanini is a biography one would expect a biographical emphasis and given the nature of her sources (Robinson's journal and letterbooks), it is not surprising that the dynamic of Ellis' account resides in the relationship between Robinson and Trucanini. A 'close association' (p.19) develops into a 'love affair' (p.35) which is consummated during the long trek of the Friendly Mission around the island when 'Trucanini began to share Robinson's blanket' (p.38). The story ends with Trucanini abandoned, left to suffer Robinson's cruel 'indifference' (p.116). The strengths of Ellis' account are her vivid portraits of her protagonists, 'the pompous little white man and the effervescent Aboriginal' (p.19).

The differences between the two books are more important however than differences in form. Ryan celebrates the Aborigines' resistance, cultural and military, and their adjustment and adaptation. Ellis underlines their collaboration. The chief collaborator is deemed by Ellis to be Trucanini, 'chief protector of the Chief Protector', 'betrayer of her own people' (p.1). Ryan on the other hand chooses to emphasise Trucanini's (spelt Truganini) spiritual independence of whites and her ultimate rejection of Robinson's authority (pp.217-218). In Ellis' account William Lanne, the last male 'full blood' was 'fat and unhealthy.' 'He drank far too much . . . [and was] regarded as a ridiculous figure of fun by most of [Hobart's] inhabitants . . . and, as rather an interesting oddity, he had been introduced to Queen Victoria's son . . . ' (p.136). Ryan's Lanne, by contrast, is a figure of dignity. 'His proudest moment came in 1868 when during the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh in Hobart Town, he was introduced as the 'king of the Tasmanians' . . . he had not been exposed to the disease and despair that overtook the rest of his compatriots . . . he took his responsibilities as the last male “full blood” Aboriginal very seriously' (p.214). In Ellis' book the sealers and whalers are victims of the class prejudice which usually informs accounts of early European settlement. They were not 'men of the calibre and compassion of the early exploring parties' and they are quickly enrolled as the villains of the piece. In Ryan's version the pastoralists are the real villains for their occupation of the land allowed no means of survival to the Aborigines, no accommodation. The sealers on the other hand 'saved Aboriginal Tasmanian society from extinction because their economic activity enabled some of its traditions to continue' (p.71).

What do we make of these divergent accounts? The point is of course that whether its practitioners are aware of it or not the writing of history is a political activity. Emphasis, inclusion and omission all derive from a political perspective. A comparison of these two works nicely illuminates this fact.

The authors' differing treatment of women further illustrates this point. In both accounts, refreshingly, women move beyond victim status and their important political role in 'black-white' contact is highlighted. The most prominent women in Ellis' account are the mission Aborigines, the 'traitors' Trucanini, Dray and Pagerly who are instrumental in enticing their compatriots to surrender. On the west coast for example 'Dray had done much of the spade work for the Mission and it was probably through her efforts that the Mission was successful in making its first conquests so easily' (p.66). Ryan prefers to examine the activities of the resistance. There is the notorious Walyer or Tarerenorerer, leader of the Emu Bay people whom she taught to use firearms after escaping from the sealers. Walyer was known to stand on a hill and give orders to her men to attack the whites, taunting them to come out of their huts and be speared' (p.141). In captivity in Bass Strait she told Robinson that she liked the lute tawin or white man as much as a black snake. When kidnapped by the sealers Walyer continually incited the sealing women to rebel. Their rejection of the culture of European 'civilisation' Robinson found most disappointing.

Together Ellis' and Ryan's books show the difficulties in generalising about the impact of European settlement on Aboriginal women. Ellis ponders Trucanini's apparent preference for the company of 'white' men and suggests that considerations of power influenced her. Unfortunately the nature of that 'power' is never probed. Neither author explicitly joins the debate on the position of Aboriginal women in pre- and post- contact society pursued by Hamilton, Grimshaw, Larbalestier et al., though both provide information relevant to it. Ryan also provides a helpful framework: 'Their skills at first made them chattels in the
exchange system devised by the Aboriginal men and the sealers but later proved a useful means with which to bargain for their independence' (p.69). The Aboriginal women introduced the sealers to a new industry — mutton birding — and by adapting their traditional technology the women were able to maximise production. By laying the basis for the Bass Strait community’s economic security, it is argued, the women thus saved their race from extinction. It is the descendants of these women who now demand recognition of their identity and rights.

MARILYN LAKE
MONASH UNIVERSITY


The work of Bishop Salvado at New Norcia is well known through his own writing and the survival of the institution he founded (albeit long since diverted from its original purpose). Few West Australians would realise that the Benedictine Order’s efforts were preceded by an SPG (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) mission at Fremantle and a Wesleyan mission sited first at Perth and later transferred successively to Wanneroo and York. The Rev. John King’s Fremantle school (1841-1851) has still to be rescued from historical oblivion, but the Wesleyan Native School which operated during the same period is the subject of this useful monograph by a retired Methodist minister and a senior tutor in anthropology at the University of Western Australia. The University’s press is also to be congratulated for the quality of production which leaves little to be desired.

Professor R.M. Berndt’s reference to the authors in his Foreword as ‘coordinators’ might well be seen as acknowledging the undigested nature of parts of the book. Pioneer Aboriginal mission is a good semi-official account of the mission and the Rev. John Smithies’ relations with both the colonial government and the ‘Fathers and Brethren’ of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in England, but some of the larger slabs of documentation could surely have been summarised as part of the narrative. Smithies was an indefatigable worker, serving the spiritual needs of the Swan River Colony Wesleyans as well as supervising the Native School. Unlike Francis Armstrong, the teacher employed there, he had neither the time nor the interest to learn the local Aboriginal language and consequently attained very little knowledge of the culture he was dedicated to extirpate. He continued to believe that Aborigines were completely bereft of spirituality in their natural state, although he was enormously gratified by the spate of conversions made at the School in 1844. Ironically enough, some of these were girls and boys dying of tuberculosis peritonitis contracted from the milk so thoughtfully supplied. It was this mortality and the subsequent outbreaks of pulmonary diseases and measles which caused Aboriginal parents to withhold their children and thus destroyed the mission’s raison d’être. Smithies’ attempt to transform it into a self-sufficient farm at Wanneroo proved unsuccessful due to poor soil and the final move over the Darling Range to York reduced numbers to a handful when the children refused to move away from their own country.

Smithies had received willing support from Governor Hutt, who incidentally overrode strong opposition from his Executive Council, and during its early years the Native School made good progress. A marriage between an Aboriginal girl from the School and a European artisan in March 1845 confirmed Hutt’s faith in the principle of close association between the two races. Nevertheless, in spite of all the vaunted benefits of Christianization and civilization, there was an extremely limited employment market for even the most advanced students. Domestic service, the only opportunity for girls, had its own occupational hazards. Nor did the Wesleyan community take the new converts to their bosom, although they supported the school financially. Some advance was made in teaching work-skills along Moravian lines at the Wanneroo farm, but the government was loath to make over land to would-be Aboriginal farmers.
Smithies was limited by the difficulties of conducting both a colonial and an Aboriginal mission, but greater resources would not necessarily have achieved better results. However, the need to make the mission more financially independent led to comparative segregation from 'white' society — a development which contradicted Hutt's assimilationist ideas but pleased the Fathers and Brethren. The authors' conclusion that Smithies 'arguably accomplished a great deal' reflects an uncertainty as to what he did in fact achieve. Much of the early success of the School seems to have been due to Armstrong, who enjoyed excellent rapport with the Aborigines through his knowledge of their language and customs and his work as court interpreter. Nor do the authors produce much evidence to support their claim that Smithies, like Salvado, was a mediator between black and 'white'. He did oppose the 1848 proposal for the summary trial and punishment of Aboriginal offenders but at no point does he appear to have upheld the principle of Aboriginal rights so gallantly attempted by Robert Lyon and his own Wesleyan predecessor, the Rev. Louis Giustiniani, whose brief but stormy career in the colony awaits proper recognition. What can be said is that Smithies' work helped cushion Aborigines of the Perth area against the full impact of conquest and dispossession during the period following the end of conflict.

While the book documents an important aspect of early Aboriginal institutional history in Western Australia, it is disappointing that the authors did not attempt to collect oral tradition about the mission from its students' descendants. There must surely be Aboriginal families with stories from great-grandmothers and great-grandfathers about the Native School and the Wanneroo farm. The recent opening of Ken Colbung's Lake Gnangara Aboriginal school in the Wanneroo area seems a particularly appropriate memorial to well-meaning efforts of the past.

R.H.W. REECE

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY


This book is the first attempt in over twenty years to provide a complete history of Western Australia, but unlike all previous attempts, it is not a single-author volume. Included are contributions by nineteen historians of different temperaments and interests. It is, as the editor explains, a product of the current dynamic nature of historical research within the state. If there is any single theme, it is one of diversity in the ways the past can be viewed through contemporary eyes. There are twenty-two chapters divided into five thematic sections, an extensive bibliography, and a remarkably thorough index. It is intended for general readers, secondary schools, colleges, and universities. It is a huge volume and very broad of scope. I have, therefore, limited myself to describing only briefly the contents of those subject areas outside the topic of specific interest to readers of this journal.

Part I, 'First settlers and white settlers', contains four chapters which deal specifically with Aboriginal history. The first two ('Aboriginal cultures of Western Australia' by I.M. Crawford, and 'The first Western Australians' by Sylvia J. Hallam) use the writings of the early explorers and settlers combined with the results of recent archaeological research in an attempt to reconstruct Aboriginal history before the coming of the Europeans. Chapter 3, 'Aborigines and white settlers in the nineteenth century', by Neville Green and Chapter 4, 'Black and white after 1897', by G.C. Bolton, provide a record of the interaction between the two peoples from initial contact to the present day. All the authors are Australians of European stock; there are very few contributions from Aborigines among the source materials upon which their chapters are based. It is an essentially European view of Aboriginal history. Thankfully, the authors are well aware of this limitation, state it explicitly, and attempt to compensate for it where possible.

Crawford spends the first third of his chapter attempting to analyse the cultural biases in the early records he proposes to use in describing the Aboriginal cultures. This is an
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absolutely necessary exercise, and sets the stage for the entire Aboriginal section, but it unfortunately leaves him very little space in which to describe the cultures themselves. He deals briefly with three separate cultures: those of the Southwest, the Western Desert, and the Kimberley Aborigines. He explains that the process of adjustment to differing environments is, in part, responsible for some of the striking differences between these cultures. It certainly does seem to account for variations in the diet, seasonal movement patterns, and a large proportion of the material culture. It does not, however, necessarily explain the difference in more abstract traits of the societies such as religion. Crawford suggests that these differences result from the separate histories of the cultures after they presumably separated from a more uniform parent population. Just what these separate histories are, of course, is very difficult to know. Crawford reviews the informed speculations of others, and, using evidence from archaeology, adds a few speculations of his own.

This first chapter finishes with an attempt to give some idea of how the Aborigines of the early nineteenth century may have viewed the quality of European culture in relation to their own. This should be especially enlightening to those who automatically assume that the invading culture with its wealth of material goods would be instantly considered superior. As Crawford writes, 'In retrospect, the European civilization of the nineteenth century appears very unattractive, and must have held even fewer attractions for the Aborigines' (p.34). While undoubtedly specialists in the field might quibble with many of its statements, this chapter provides a good introduction to Aboriginal history in the west. Although no full-rounded picture of any of the cultures emerges, it is probable that the fault lies more with the paucity of available data and the lack of space in which to present it, than with Crawford himself.

Hallam's chapter deals in detail with the archaeological data already introduced by Crawford. It focuses on the material culture of prehistoric Aborigines as it is preserved in archaeological sites. This mainly consists of stone implements and what bone has survived the ravages of time. Archaeology is a specialist field, often dealing in arcane concepts and terminologies probably unfamiliar to the general public. Archaeologists also need to work closely with data from other sciences like geology and palaeontology, so this will not be a chapter which the average reader will necessarily easily read or understand. Hallam does her best to make things clear by explaining her terms, and a glossary is provided at the end of the chapter. Some illustrations of the prehistoric implements she is describing are also provided; more of these would certainly have been helpful.

Archaeology is a relatively new field in Western Australia; formal excavation was only begun in the late 1960s. It is an extremely active field, however. Many new, sometimes quite large, research projects are undertaken every year, and the data base is expanding rapidly. The still rudimentary understanding of Western Australian prehistory is constantly being altered by this new information, so the reader would be advised to view most of Hallam's statements and conclusions as provisional. For instance, at the time this book was published, there was proof that human occupation of the state had begun at least 33,000 years ago. Such is the dynamic nature of archaeological research, however, that since then, a further 5000 years of antiquity has been documented. The state now has the oldest secure evidence for human occupation of the continent of Australia. Humans undoubtedly have been present in Australia for somewhat longer than that, too; but evidence confirming just how long has yet to be found. Hallam's suggestion that this may have been for as long as 150,000 years must be considered speculative.

The breadth of Hallam's knowledge is awesome. She presents an enormous number of facts: indeed, almost every fact known that is relevant to the prehistory of Aborigines in the West, and perhaps a few of which the relevance is not so immediately clear. Because of the nature of archaeological research, however, these facts are necessarily often tied together by speculation, and the somewhat effusive writing style will sometimes make it difficult for the untrained person to separate one from the other. She always does separate the two, however, even if this is not always done incisively; if the reader proceeds carefully he will end up knowing as much about the prehistory of Western Australia as anyone else did at the time this chapter was written.
Green's chapter begins the actual history of white and Aboriginal relations in Western Australia. The earliest known sightings of Aborigines by Europeans in the West were those of the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century, and isolated encounters are recorded from then on. Green notes these but begins his discussion in earnest with the establishment of the first European settlement at King George Sound in 1826. His major theme is that the history of contact should not automatically be poured into a mould of ready-made taxonomies such as Elkin's six phases of Aboriginal reaction to the European presence. He shows that the Western Australian evidence suggest there were few universals in the patterns of 'white' and Aboriginal behaviour and response.

At King George Sound, on the south coast, the only hostilities recorded occurred when a woodcutter was speared on the first day the European party landed. Major Lockyer, the commander, judging it the result of a misunderstanding, allowed no reprisal. From that time, until the local Aborigines were totally decimated by European diseases several years later, relations remained most amicable. The two peoples, in fact, joined in a mutual support relationship. The Aborigines moved into the village, even into the houses with the whites; not as servants, but as co-residents. Albany for several years was a joint settlement of both Europeans and Aborigines.

At the other extreme is the history of contact in the Kimberley. From their experiences with the Macassans, the Aborigines there were already aware that lands existed over the seas populated by other peoples, and they wanted nothing to do with them. They fought encroachment onto their lands by the Europeans from the very first, with numerous bloody battles and massacres occurring right up to the 1930s. Green supplies very thorough documentation for these events and discusses a wide variety of contact situations from all over the state. Throughout he tries to isolate and explain the variables which made each situation different from all the others.

This is an excellent contribution to the history of cultural contact in Australia. There are few villains, mostly just ordinary human beings with all their frailties trying to live their lives in difficult times. It provides a welcome relief from early themes of noble pioneer heroes beset by homicidal savages, and the more recent ones of vicious genocidal invaders swooping on helpless innocents. Here we see normal individuals dealing with other normal individuals of a different colour, both caught up in an historical process much greater than themselves, and over which they have little control outside their immediate sphere. The reader, however, will be left with a prevailing sense of tragedy; no matter what the variety of European-Aboriginal relationships the result was ultimately the same.

Bolton begins his history of European-Aboriginal interaction in 1897, the year the Western Australian government took over administration of Aboriginal affairs from the British Colonial Office. One of the few general trends in European-Aboriginal relationships that Green was able to isolate in the previous chapter, was that native-born 'white' Western Australians were generally less tolerant of the Aboriginal life style and Aborigines than were migrants from Europe. Newcomers had a sense of intruding onto someone else's land, and, at least in the early days, were often aided in surviving by Aboriginal assistance and know-how. For Europeans born in the colony, however, actual survival was not so much a problem, but 'getting ahead' was, and the Aborigines were seen by them as obstacles in the path of expansion and development. At the turn of the century this element of Western Australian society took control of the destiny of the Aboriginal inhabitants of the state. It marked the beginning of a period perhaps more devastating for some than the years of initial contact.

At that time, the state's Aborigines were living in almost every stage of the contact situation imaginable. The new laws, however, saw them all as equally 'Aboriginal'. Legislation was passed which, in effect, established a feudal system for control of the still war-torn north. It restricted the Aborigines to servitude on the pastoral stations, but at least allowed them to retain much of the basis of their culture. In the southwest, however, the traditional culture had completely collapsed. Its descendants were now mostly part-Aborigines living on the fringes of Australian society. Many were engaged in more or less regular employ-
ment, and some owned their own farms. Bolton carefully documents the disaster wrought when these people came under strict government control for the first time in their lives. Their articulate petitions for citizenship were ignored, and their children were suddenly denied access to schooling. They were eventually driven out of the towns and herded onto reserves where supervisors exercised total autocratic authority. The quality of life for these people continued to decline until the mid-1930s, when there was only one Aboriginal farmer left in the entire south-west.

It is generally accepted that during the Second World War things began to change for the better; Bolton devotes over half of his chapter to documenting the slow rise in Aboriginal status over the last thirty-five years. Although he tries to be even handed when dealing with controversial figures such as Don McLeod, and explosive problems like Noonkanbah this chapter will not please everyone as it loses the benefit of historical perspective and moves into the thorny realm of modern politics.

The remainder of the book focuses on the development of the European-derived society in the state. Part II is divided into four chapters on economic and demographic history. The first two cover the period from settlement to 1914, and the authors, Pamela Statham and R.T. Appleyard, are involved primarily with collecting the data base for this early period. Extensive detail is often lacking and their conclusions are tentative, but these chapters will be informative and clearly understandable to the general reader. The second two chapters by G.D. Snooks and R.N. Ghosh deal with the current century. Here, the data base is well established, and the authors are free to delve deeper into the interpretation of economic trends. These, like Hallam's chapter in the section before, are specialist studies: full of tables, graphs and formulae. General readers are apt to find them fairly tough going.

Part III is on political history. It contains two chapters by B.K. De Garis and three chapters by David Black which trace the evolution of the Western Australian political system from colonization as a free settlement through the introduction of convicts, self government, and reluctant federation on to the present day. Also included is a chapter by I.H. vanden Driesen on the development of the trade union movement in the state.

Part IV deals with social history. Its seven chapters each explore a separate subject: the family, architecture, education, religion, literature, crime, and sport. The quality of these varies considerably from Marian Aveling's chapter on religion which is little more than a succession of lengthy and loosely integrated quotations from original sources, to Margaret Grellier's excellent study of the family in the mid-nineteenth century. The latter is undoubtedly the finest piece of historical research in the book, an example of the way the 'new' history should be written. It has an explicitly stated theoretical framework, meticulous research, and a punch-line conclusion which will aid the reader to a better understanding of why people today act as they do.

Only one of these chapters ('Crime and society' by J.E. Thomas) deals in more than a passing nature with Aborigines. Thomas' theme is that systems of criminal justice strike out at deviance not necessarily because the latter is morally wrong, but because such activity is a threat to the ideology of those who hold power in parliaments. He deals extensively with two examples: crime relating to the use of alcohol, and the specifically Aboriginal crime of cattle stealing in the north of the state. This chapter is full of details of the criminal apprehension process and the use of criminal statistics. The reader will be convinced that there are proportionately more Aborigines than 'whites' in the prisons of Western Australia simply because the Aborigines do not make the laws. If they did, undoubtedly, the situation would be reversed.

Part V contains a single chapter, 'Western Australia reflects on its past'. The author is again G.C. Bolton, and it is a history of history. Bolton traces the development of the discipline from the early uncritical and jingoistic volumes where the focus was on economic development and founding pioneers were seen as heroic figures, through the slow changes that led to a more critical and pluralistic view of the state's past.

The present volume amply illustrates what Bolton considers to be the best trends in contemporary historical research. The forgotten portions of society: Aborigines, women,
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convicts, 'footy fans', and other 'disreputable' types who seldom figured in the previous histories are well represented here. Many of the topics included are covered in more detail elsewhere, but this book brings them all together under one cover. As far as I am aware, this volume is without parallel elsewhere in Australia. It is for the most part eminently readable and very informative. It could serve admirably as an advanced text for high schools and colleges, but its obvious destiny is as a superb introductory reader for university courses.

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and


The aim of both these books is to draw public attention to the Aboriginal viewpoint on issues which have become the foci of conflict in two different places along the south coast of New South Wales. Both involve matters of land use and land rights. Hopefully these works foreshadow others in which there is an endeavour to circulate generally in Australian society the Aboriginal perspective on such contentious issues in more than simple and often distorting headlines. Attitudes towards Aborigines are characterised by stereotypes and in limiting understanding not only do stereotypes provide the means of their own recreation, but ignorance can be mobilized by those with specific interests so that the propriety and subsequent advance of such interests is not generally challenged. This is hardly new information but it is useful to restate it in order to underline the need for books such as these which are accessible to and readable by the public.

Guboo Ted Thomas is an Aboriginal leader at Wullaga Lake. He speaks for the Yuin people in whose history Mumbulla Mountain is so important. For years he has been distressed by the despoliation caused by logging of the natural environment of the mountain which threatens the local Aboriginal cultural heritage. He is the inspiration behind this work.

The book is beautifully produced and in itself is something of a work of art. Unfortunately its size, which contributes to its visual appeal makes it impossible to store on a normal bookshelf. It is thin but very tall and wide. Yet it clearly does not belong to the common coffee-table category; the direction of its content assures that. Nearly all the pages are given to large photographs with simple captions. The photographs, which are excellent art productions although not always very informative, are by Wes Stacey. They represent a change of direction for him as his reputation as a photographer was earned in presentations of architectural history. The two critical series of photographs are firstly of an apparently unassailed Mumbulla — distant views of the mountain or studies of natural features and associations which constitute places of Aboriginal significance; secondly and in contrast, records of the ravages of logging and attendant works.

The captions underscore the points made in the foreword by Ted Thomas, in the afterword by Terry Fox, and in the petition to the Legislative Assembly to protect the sites which is reproduced in this work. The bones of the case as presented are: Mumbulla Mountain is a special place to Aborigines of this area and there are many sacred sites on the mountain where initiation and other important rituals took place. There is a known, deeply felt and traceable connection between Aborigines on the south coast today and this Aboriginal heritage. Further, there is a close relationship between all natural features of the environment: 'the bush is part of the place, the trees and the rocks belong together'. Logging in the
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area of sacred sites is threatening them with destruction. At the time of this threat no local Aborigines had been consulted about the proposed action. Indeed, it was not until the Aboriginal people became organised and vocal in their objections that heed was paid to them. Even then the economic pressures exercised on the Forestry Commission led it to turn a deaf ear to recommendations made to State Parliament.

The book ends with a plea for the whole area of Mumbulla Mountain in which sacred sites are located to be gazetted as an ‘Aboriginal Place’. It is important to note that in 1979 Brian Egloff, working for Aboriginal and Historical Resources, National Parks and Wildlife Service, produced a full and persuasive report in which he details evidence in support of the significance of this locale to Aborigines in the area (B.J. Egloff. *Mumbulla Mountain: an anthropological and archaeological investigation*. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Sydney, 1979).

But a realistic review must take into account that all people will not find that these photographs necessarily illustrate or support the written messages. Particularly if the readers are not moved by the messages in the first place. There will be no problem of fit for those people who already know what the connections are or who are sympathetic towards them. But for others, the photographs will not provide evidence of any spiritual or sacred quality of the mountain. It must be acknowledged in the circumstances of Aboriginal/white relations on the south coast that for some they will portray no more than a piece of Australian bush which has the potential for economic development. Moreover Aboriginal claims to it, which are of another order and less comprehensible, are suspect. Thus, for those who want to see, this book is eloquent with hope — and there is also an element of despair — but the entrenchedly antipathetic may well find it printed proof for their rejection of Aboriginal culture and any Aboriginal cause. Yet hopefully, there will be some people, otherwise indifferent or perhaps even hostile in their ignorance, who will be persuaded by the case presented. The book is directed at them.

There is a postscript. Mumbulla Mountain continues to be logged, but not in any area which local Aborigines see as threatening their significant sites.

In the second decade of this century Aborigines established permanently the fishing settlement of Wreck Bay. This second book reviewed here aims to reconstruct the social history of the village. Some of the early settlers were local people, others came from the far south coast of the State, others from the north — La Perouse and beyond. The important point to be stressed is that over the years a strong sense of community developed, linking the residents and the place.

The settlement is on Australian Capital Territory land (originally designated for the port of Canberra), and recently conflict has arisen over land use. Although Wreck Bay is in federal territory, the New South Wales Aborigines Protection Board was persuaded to undertake the administration of this Aboriginal Station in 1928. It was not however until 1952 that its boundaries were gazetted. By that time early assumptions on the location of the boundaries had been completely accepted by the residents and were believed to have legal standing. Yet what were thought to be the customary limits were not followed in the official physical delineation of the station, and thus for years this matter has been of concern to the Aboriginal population. Since the 1971 proclamation of nearly all this territory as Jervis Bay Nature Reserve — which contracted the old gazetted boundary quite dramatically — the issue has become critical. There are other pressures on the community, such as those associated with education, housing and welfare, but land rights to the area originally associated with the settlement are paramount. The land is significant also because it includes a number of traditional sites.

Egloff describes well the development of this problem, although it would have been more useful to have done this fully at the beginning of the work rather than at the end, with some of the relevant information appearing in other parts of the text. Especially as the book, commissioned by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, was born of the land rights controversy. The Secretary of the Wreck Bay Housing Company asked that a social history of the community be written with the intention of making clearer the Aboriginal perspective.
This is not only a worthwhile project, it is an important one. Unhappily the result holds disappointments.

The work is not directed to anthropologists. It is likely to be read more widely by Aborigines, local Europeans and hopefully by those people in positions of authority who act in connection with the settlement. Egloff has obviously sought to match his style and presentation with this generalised readership with variable success. It is a small book, attractively presented and well larded with illustrative material — some of the historical photographs are splendid. There are however two major weaknesses. In the first place the Wreck Bay of today remains unknown to the reader. There are some informative photographs of the surrounds of the settlement, but there is no thoroughgoing discussion of the present day community. Snippets concerning individuals are embedded in various parts of the text but I doubt that they are very meaningful to readers who do not know the place. There is no general information given on the size or structure of the population, kinship patterns, the cast of relations within the community or how the residents interact with the outside world. It is an historical profile of a community, never really clear, but which strangely becomes less distinct in recent times. Given the purpose of the work this is certainly a defect.

The early section on the prehistory of the region provides a background to understanding aspects of traditional and past behaviour. The following chapter on European occupation of the south coast of New South Wales — and some of its consequences for the Aboriginal population — takes us up to the first few years of the twentieth century. There are no available data relating specifically to Wreck Bay and the intention in both chapters is to create a general picture. But the second weakness of the work, which escalates as a real difficulty in the succeeding and most substantial chapter on the settlement itself, is already noticeable here. This is a scrappy presentation of a range of disparate parcels of information. It is not incorporation for they are not drawn together as a coherent whole. They remain snippets of details of various practices or events. Thus, without explanation or connection, in three short successive paragraphs (p.16) we are given results of an athletics carnival at Berry, brief comment on an instance of Aboriginal street theatre and what Aborigines working on the Coolangatta estate received in wages and rations. This tendency to throw together all manner of information, coupled with Egloff's endeavours to write in a light and relaxed style has some curious results. For example, following a paragraph dealing with station housing, road building, an epidemic of mumps and touching on the payment of unemployment benefits, there is another (p.37) which states:

In 1964, when a catch of mullet sold for 2 cents a pound, the Wreck Bay primary school closed. Thirty-eight station children then attended mixed classes at the Jervis Bay Primary School. From an enrolment of 3 in 1959 the figure rose to 11 Aborigines at Nowra High School; this was the year of the stranded whales.

Community or district histories are commonly enough characterised by a dislocated presentation of recorded information (usually gleaned from official records) or personal and episodic recollections. Egloff is not alone in experiencing difficulty in managing the presentation of these kinds of data. His task was no doubt make harder by the fact that he both researched and wrote the history in forty-five days. The results suggest that this was not long enough. He acknowledges that his research was limited, but in this context that is not the real problem which lies in the non-integration of detail he has collected. As it is, sorting out the information presents something of a challenge to the reader who is stranger to the community for there is no historical framework in which to place and interpret the quantity of offerings. The overall result is a form of timeless collage.
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This book is one of the major publications stemming from a continuing programme run by the North Australia Research Unit, Australian National University, under the energetic direction of Peter Loveday. The sub-title is a little misleading — the book covers a good deal more than the campaign and results of the 1980 election. Bob Reece begins with a concise assessment of attitudes apparent in the various new masters of the Territory (South Australia, 1863, Commonwealth 1911, N.T. Government 1978) at the time they took up their new responsibilities. Determined optimism was the mood in each case, contrasting with considerable relief felt by those who were ridding themselves of their northern burden. Lenore Coltheart follows Reece with a stimulating attack on the progressive — or 'Arcadian' — view of Australian history as it has been applied to the Northern Territory. Regrettably, neither Reece nor Coltheart has enough space to fully develop their arguments.

Alistair Heatley is able to do more with his chapter on constitutional, legislative and political developments in the immediate pre-election years, highlighting particularly the shrewd, pragmatic attitudes of the ruling Country-Liberal Party (C.L.P.) government which enabled it to keep the campaign initiative — at least amongst 'white' urban voters — and cast the A.L.P. largely into the roll of 'knockers' of economic development; and, as several of the contributors emphasize, economic development is the great shibboleth of the Northern Territory. The editors of the volume both contribute, singly and in collaboration with others, to scholarly appraisals of parties, issues and the composition of the electorates. The results of painstaking fieldwork amongst a small electorate (c.55,000 electors) are apparent; and the work of scholars is offset by contributions from Jon Isaacs and Neville Perkins, then leader and deputy-leader respectively of the Territory A.L.P. (both have since left N.T. politics) and from C.L.P. member for Stuart, Roger Vale, and Graeme Lewis, the C.L.P. campaign director. There is a certain amount of unintentional humour in Lewis's enthusiasm for the promise and performance of his party; but the liveliest contribution by far is that of Neville Perkins, in putting an Aboriginal viewpoint.

Given the current land rights situation in the Territory and the fact that there alone of all Australian States and Territories do the Aborigines form a powerful element in the voting population, it is not surprising that discussions of 'black' and 'white' attitudes towards one another provide the most interesting sections of the book. The work of the various authors confirms at least one common assumption about Territory Aborigines, that land rights ranks with them as the most important political issue; but it also becomes clear that land is far from being the sole issue of significance to them; Loveday and John Summers list local support services (school, police, health, roads, airstrip), sea rights and protection of sacred sites as important concerns of Aboriginal communities. Another assumption commonly made by 'whites', that Aborigines have little interest in or understanding of the 'whitefella business' of politics, is not supported by fieldwork studies carried out by the N.A.R.U. team. Neither, in spite of an Aboriginal voting pattern which strongly favoured the A.L.P. does it seem that Aborigines indulged in the kind of bloc voting so much feared by conservative Territory 'whites'. Aborigines reacted more positively to individual candidates and their views on local issues than to party labels. As Roger Vale points out, the 1977 Northern Territory Assembly election saw the C.L.P. lose three seats to Labor on the Aboriginal vote, while the Aboriginal vote for the C.L.P. increased in at least two other seats. Vale's own retention of the strongly Aboriginal electorate of Stuart is testimony to the influence of an active local member, even one of the 'wrong' party for land rights.

According to N.A.R.U. surveys, land rights did not rank highly with 'white' voters as an election issue. Even in Alice Springs, where racial tensions can run high indeed, Dean Jaensch's survey team found that transport and communications easily outranked Aboriginal policy as the main pre-occupation of 'white' voters. This does not invalidate Neville Perkins' scathing comment on Alice Springs 'whites' whose attitude 'gives the strong impression of a
town under siege, with the black hordes beyond the gap just waiting to move in and take over; but the evidence this book presents on the great diversity of 'white' concerns should help to divest southerners of any preconceptions about mass anti-Aboriginal feeling in the Territory. The editors candidly admit that the results of their work are 'to some extent impressionistic, tentative and open to further argument' — and indeed they could be little else at this early stage in the study of Territory politics — but the Aboriginal issues which the Territory faces now are spreading to Queensland, Western Australia and may even make an impression some day on the insulated havens of New South Wales and Victoria. Territorians should read the book to gain greater understanding of their political environment. Southerners might well consider the future implications for their own society.

ALAN POWELL DARWIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE


All Queensland Aborigines and Islanders who read Thaiday's book will recognize the patterns of history that followed the post-contact period of the invasion of our land. Some of them, along with other peoples who have lived in a police state, will re-live the hopelessness and futility that saps all desire to fight against a system.

Thaiday's story is told simply — too simply in fact. The casual reader who has no knowledge of oppression cannot be blamed for wondering, particularly, in the early pages, at the Island boys' seemingly calm acceptance of further banishment from their home, after having just completed their initial punishment for a 'crime' of minor proportions. A chapter on the futility of protestation and the types of additional punishment that were imposed as a result thereof, is a serious omission. Non-aborigines have, for nearly 200 years, been indoctrinated into a belief that Aborigines and Islanders have inferior intelligence; this omission reinforces such a stereotype.

It would have been interesting to have more detail of Thaiday's own struggle to establish his banana farm — the means by which he was able in part, to overcome the system, particularly after his family's horrific experiences at Woorabinda.

On the other hand, the author has not been able to resist the temptation in his pages, to have a 'go' at some Aborigines now prominent in the community. His 'guns' would have been better held for those still enforcing the Queensland Act (still oppressive in its amended form). 'White' supervisors' taking credit for Aboriginal achievements is well-known to Queenslanders — Thaiday tells the story well. 'Palm island reflections', is perhaps the most important chapter — a warning that the developers have their eyes on Palm Island with a view to seizure for a resort. It is hoped that all who read this will take political action to avert another takeover of Aboriginal land.

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Dr Elspeth Young's book is the first of five that will come out of the Aboriginal economics project of the Development Studies Centre of the A.N.U. Her own project began in 1977, and involved about fifteen months of fieldwork at three locations in the Northern Territory.

Her book shows that it is not easy to write an economic analysis of Aboriginal people in the centre and northern Australia who have a basically 'welfare' economy and are few in

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number. Usually, in such an exercise, questions of what constitutes production and labour would not be raised. That is not to say, however, that the author should have concentrated solely on production and consumption of goods and services by the 'Aboriginal component in the Australian economy'. For if that were the case the interdependence and the inter-relations between the Aboriginal social and economic system would not have emerged.

If there is a weakness in the book, which of course may be corrected in the next four volumes, it is that all of the communities studied are in the Northern Territory. This means that comparisons between groups with even less support, such as Yalata in South Australia (without land of their own) or between communities in New South Wales, Queensland or Western Australia cannot be made.

Although it is one more in an already lengthy line of reports and enquiries on Aboriginal societies that have been produced by non-Aborigines, it is at a considerable distance from most earlier works in that Aboriginal day-to-day struggles and the many frustrating aspects of institutional living have been revealed. Its style at times approaches that of government reports but for the most part the book is understandable and easy to read.

The Commonwealth government has now had seventy years of direct control over the administration of Aborigines in the Northern Territory. Its 'race' policies have ranged from the 'intelligent parasitism' of 'assimilation' to the current hybrid policy of 'paternalism/self-determination', now boldly called 'self-management' and 'self sufficiency'. Elspeth Young's work reveals however, that government policy and its administration have left Aboriginal society pretty much fully 'institutionalised' (Tomlinson 1978:208-221).

The situation in the N.T. is that 'Land Rights' has widened the boundaries of the government reserves and missions; 'economic' enterprises are nowhere successful, and therefore highly subsidised, and socio-political control is still very much in the hands of 'whites'. Young (p.11) provides a clear example of this when she writes that 'the problem is not simply an inability on the part of both Aborigines and non-Aborigines to comprehend each others' concept of labour, but also that Aborigines have rarely been given the responsibility for running monetary enterprises'. She emphasises that 'theoretically, self-management of Aboriginal communities should provide a remedy but unless it is associated with control over an economy (e.g. land, mineral rights) adequate to provide an income for the population, it will never succeed in practice'.

Young's book shows that Aboriginal communities do not have control over their economic policies and are now economically dependent. Their habitat is largely unproductive, their ecological system so finely balanced, and there is over-population; traditional life is really no longer possible because the original parameters upon which it was based have drastically changed, i.e. self-government, plentiful food, water, recreational, spiritual life and a low population.

The communities shown in this book: Yuendumu, Willowra and Numbulwar, can still largely be seen as social experimental playthings for 'white' society to salve their colonial consciences. For example, at Yuendumu government settlement 'lack of resources and the creation of extreme feelings of dependency have inhibited the growth of independent business ventures' (Young p.101). Moreover, 'with high rates of population growth unlikely to be alleviated through outmigration to out-stations or to Darwin or Alice Springs, the gap between the size of the potential labour force and the local job market will increase. Thus community dependence on government funding, which currently provides most of the necessary financial support, will also increase. If restrictions are placed on such funding, Yuendumu can hardly survive' (p.65).

It is worth quoting Young's (p.165) summary of the situation at Willowra, an Aboriginal-owned pastoral station:

Willowra is therefore above all an Aboriginal community and according to most of its residents, a highly congenial place in which to live. Its social cohesiveness stems from its closely knit kinship structure — as people have frequently said "We Willowra mob are one family"; its strong and united leadership; and above all, ownership and control
of its tribal land. Willowra is lucky to have all these things. Most other communities in Central Australia contain a variety of family and language groups, many of which are cut off from their land. This causes divisive leadership and generates enormous social pressures which often lead to violence and alcohol abuse. Willowra people are well aware of the difference and indicate this in their unwillingness to spend long periods of time in such places as Yuendumu or Warrabri even although they have relatives living there. Preservation of the social stability of Willowra is obviously crucial, and a major reason for the grant of freehold title to the land

Although Willowra's position is, in some ways, relatively favourable it would be false to suggest that there are no problems which are a cause for future concern. First, there is the land right issue, coupled with the issue of control over the entry of outsiders. If government policies change towards the imposition of rigid control over the use of Aboriginal controlled property, then both of these issues will be vital. The Willowra people undoubtedly want to be able to decide on the use of their land, and to control who has rights of residence upon it. Secondly, there is the high rate of population growth, both through natural increase and migration; since this is likely to continue, the strains within the community will grow and the benefits to be gained through monetary earning will decline. As Bell and Ditton (1980:55) note, Willowra has so far managed to retain its young people; although its leaders hope that this process will continue, they are also worried about what these young people are going to do with their lives. Thirdly, although relatively well-knit, Willowra does have internal divisions. These are likely to become more significant as the population grows and equitable distribution of resources becomes more difficult. Present residents are concerned about an influx of relatives from Yuendumu or Warrabri, because it is usually from these sources that alcohol reaches the communities and hence generates violence. Finally, like other Aboriginal communities, Willowra does have problems in dealing with the white bureaucracy.

Numbulwar, on the Gulf of Carpentaria was originally called Rose River Mission. It was established during the severe droughts of the 1940s and early 1950s. The Nunggubuyu people migrated south during that period and settled at Roper River Mission. They were then resettled at Numbulwar due to over-population at Roper. The sixty people who were moved from Roper River to Numbulwar could hardly have been described as over population. Nevertheless the church, i.e. the Church Mission Society (C.M.S.), took full responsibility for mission management, schools, employment and training etc.

The policy of the C.M.S. from the 1950s was 'aimed at teaching Aborigines agriculture and industrial pursuits and encouraged them to relinquish their nomadic past for a more settled life-style' (Cole 1977:182-183). This was in line with the government's assimilation policy as officially stated in 1951.

Neither the 1950 policy of church and of government, nor the 1978 policy which emphasised self management have worked at Numbulwar. For example, out-station formation or, if you like, re-migration to traditional land is still very dependent on the amiability of seasonal weather patterns, transport, availability of stores and other essential services. Since these re-migration sites or centres are not supplied with essential services there is almost no ability to move permanently.

Flous statements of policy hide the fact that the necessary support services, which require adequate funds, are not forthcoming. This means that the so-called policies have failed. They are also seen as failures by Aborigines because they have not controlled the many mining companies anxious to take up leases, such as at Gove and Groote Eylandt. Because social and economic support were kept to a minimum these disrupted communities found it next to impossible to re-colonise their own land; they could not make their own living in ways they knew, nor in 'white' ways.

Such places as Willowra, Yuendumu and Numbulwar were affected by the 1968 A.C.T.U. motion to alleviate Aboriginal wage rates (Stevens 1980:89-92) which requested
pastoralists to provide equal wages and housing, and the ensuing 1965 equal wages hearing which to all intents and purposes backfired.

In general, Aboriginal men followed the seasonal muster and drifted conveniently with labour demands. But as labour costs shifted upwards following the 1965 award decision, alternatives such as ‘white’ contract labour were preferred. The ‘surplus’ black labour then drifted to the fringe of towns or back to their home cattle stations — ‘the nigger farms’. Gibb’s 1971 report put it in these terms:

The Pastoralist requires a supply of labour competent and reasonably skilled... In the past he has usually been content to have resident on his property a community of Aborigines from which he could draw it (the ordinance under which his pastoral lease is granted requires at least access for hunting and ceremonial obligations) (Gibb 1971:63). Suddenly many populations became permanently larger, thus compounding the reserve, cattle station and mission population problems. The then Minister for the Interior, Mr Peter Nixon, said ‘I am anxious to have the situation of Aborigines on pastoral properties in the Northern Territory looked at in some depth’ (Gibb 1971:1). Of course this had next to nothing to do with the unemployment or the squalor in which the people lived or the appalling health problems which existed, but was done because of the way pastoralists saw Aboriginal groups. ‘Today, called upon to pay wages and to meet the accommodation demands of the pastoral awards, the pastoralist is increasingly unwilling to continue on this basis’ (Gibb 1971:63). So it had become with the sons of the ‘righteous pioneers’; in the 1920s and 1930s many of their fathers simply shot Aboriginal people, as Young’s book reminds us.

Health is of particular importance to the functioning of any labour force in any economy. Young shows that Willowra (a pastoral lease) has a different administrative relationship to the funding body, D.A.A., than does Yuendumu or Numbulwar. ‘Willowra is not designated as a settlement’ (p.140) despite the fact that upwards of 270 people live there. The essential services, including health services, that municipal and shire councils in the eastern seaboard States have supplied to even very small numbers of ‘whites’ have just not been supplied to Aboriginal communities.

When the C.D.H. had responsibility for health in the N.T. it was very slow to provide even the most rudimentary service. It knew little at best about Aboriginal society and the dynamic changes taking place. When the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 was proclaimed on 27 January 1977 the C.D.H. had no idea what this might do to the health requirements of Aborigines. They still do not know, and neither does the N.T. Government which inherited the reponsibility. It still does what ‘whites’ in other States have always done — control and use scarce health resources themselves. Young (p.141) notes that the N.T. Department of Health’s 1979 Environmental Health Survey described the condition of people at Willowra as ‘absolute squalor’. While the Commonwealth had the responsibility no such survey was ever carried out, whereas the main aim of the N.T. survey seems to have been to make it possible to blame Aboriginal people and to allow the government to relinquish its public health responsibility by claiming that it was an ‘environmental health’ problem. Yet this necessarily involves health facilities. Back in the nineteenth century health authorities had handed over to local government authorities all responsibilities for facilities vital to community health. What is done now, it seems, is simply blame Aborigines for living in their own pollution. Commonwealth Department of Health evidence to a House of Representatives Standing Committee did, however, blame the D.A.A. for not providing the necessary facilities (see Aboriginal Health 1979 and the official Hansard transcript for 21 October 1977:5-41, 44-91). This of course means that health officials feel no need to put unnecessary strain on their budgets or medical staff. Young’s volume does not examine health questions, or mention any examination of evidence contained in the 1979 study by the House of Representatives Standing Committee or the 1972 report of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Environment.

In Australian society both education and health are considered necessary investments. Just as past neglect of health has consequences, the past has had a significant effect on what
is now possible in education. Up to a decade ago (economic) decision makers in these communities were deprived of the most rudimentary schooling.

The situation of education today is a little better — but we still need to ask if it is appropriate for the economic systems in which these communities are placed. First, it has been clearly shown that these three economies are not able from their own resources to sustain their already high populations. Second, any further economic growth can probably only take place if minerals or hydro-carbons are found. Not only would such a wind-fall probably be detrimental to such communities but they have not been given any meaningful opportunity in the situation in which they now find themselves. All they have is limited control over artefact industry, limited control over settlement employment, limited prospects in cattle industry employment, and low prospects of out-migration. One of the bad aspects is the refusal by the Commonwealth Government in the early 1970s to acknowledge the racial prejudice in such frontier towns as Alice Springs, Gove and Tennant Creek. After seventy years, no Aboriginal people hold positions of any significance in the N.T. Government, Local Government Council administration, or in private or government banks and private industry or clubs. The Aboriginal Study Grant scheme begun in 1973 and various employment schemes (including those discussed in this book) have had virtually no educational impact on these communities. There has been no proper attempt by the education authorities to provide a model to suit the environment of these communities.

Consultation with these (and other) communities is scandalously bad, as this book clearly shows. For example, throughout the book Dr Young complains about 'consultation' regarding school buildings, the lack of education models for out-stations, the lack of adult education and the lack of programs for tertiary education. Clearly government policy has failed Aborigines in education. Dr Young (p.89) points out that 'The maintenance of the bi-lingual program, on which much of Yuendumu's success rests, depends on Department of Education policy which may become less favorable'. This passage shows that a fragile structure has been created. What is worse, hundreds of Aboriginal youths are being churned through such schools as Yirrara and Dhupuma to return, as shown, to a situation of despair because their chances of economic development at home remain slim.

Research in and/or about Aboriginal communities is slowly becoming relevant; this work by Elspeth Young is concrete proof of this trend. Much of the research so far has been completely out of the reach of most Aboriginal people but this work and the others in the series will expose many facts about the daily lives of Aborigines throughout Australia.

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REFERENCES


Senate Standing Committee on Social Environment (Ref. — Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders) 1971-76. Vol. 1, 1972.


BOOK NOTES

(Inclusion here does not preclude review in future issues)

All that dirt: Aborigines 1938. Edited by Bill Gammage and Andrew Markus. An Australia 1938 Monograph, History Project Incorporated, Canberra, 1982. Pp x+109. p.b. $8.00. (Obtainable from the Secretary, Bicentennial History, R.S.S.S. Australian National University, P.O. Box 4, Canberra 2600).

The various teams involved with research for individual volumes of the Bicentennial History are all concerned that Aboriginal history should be a vital part of their studies of Australian society. This has often led them to new and exciting research on hitherto unstudied topics, especially in the field of social history of twentieth century communities. This volume is the result of such research and indicates its rich potential. The papers present individual and community histories in New South Wales and Western Australia, and studies of 'attitudes' in a survey of 'coverage' relating to Aborigines in one daily newspaper in 1938 and of scientific writing of the time, and its impact on administrators and politicians. As the editors say in their introduction, 'These studies serve to highlight the gulf between Europeans and Aboriginal Australia in the 1930's'. This gulf is seen as in part imposed by Europeans, in part the product of the continuing distinctive Aboriginal culture which resisted attempts at assimilation.


Eight studies of modern Aboriginal political activity, first presented at a University of Western Australia seminar in January 1975, make a useful text for courses on contemporary society. The writers (Howard, Sackett, Douglas, Vaszolyi, Dagmar, Dix, Kolig and R. Tonkinson) assess government programs and Aboriginal reaction in isolated reserves, country towns and Perth. Warwick Dix raises important questions about sites legislation, suggesting that the interests of Aborigines may conflict with those of conservationists and archaeologists. Erich Kolig provides an analysis of how religious dogma can be used to validate changes in land use. Wilfred Douglas uses mission records to extend his analysis of social change. All of the papers are useful. Tonkinson's account of the Jigalong community council is an elegant essay which deserves reprinting in future anthologies.


Press reports are invaluable records of events and attitudes. We all make our own collections of clippings, but regret that these are unsystematic and culled from a limited range of daily and periodical publications. So this presentation in microfiche form of a comprehensive and representative collection of material from the Australian press should prove invaluable. It covers news items, commentaries, letters, book reviews and pictorial features and offers an index sequence to guide users to relevant items. Issues will come out twice yearly; those for 1981 are now available from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (P.O. Box 553, Canberra City, ACT 2601).


Blomfield's Baal Belbora records the events of Aboriginal history in the rugged country between the high New England plateau and the coast, country forming the catchments of the Manning, Hastings and Macleay Rivers. This area was a refuge for dispossessed
Aboriginal communities in the period when graziers followed cedar getters into its rich valleys and ranges. The writer knows the land and its people, of Aboriginal and of European descent, well. He shares his knowledge, and his concern for what he sees as a tragic series of events. The book indicates the richness of oral evidence and local tradition awaiting the researcher of regional histories in this part of New South Wales. May it stimulate further detailed studies of these sources on Aboriginal history in the land of the Three Rivers.


These archives were deposited in the Institute in 1979 where they were catalogued. The archives are open to researchers though certain papers are restricted and permission of various authorities is required before they can be consulted.