

Jupp, James, ed., 2001. *The Australian people. An encyclopedia of the nation, its people and their origins.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0 521 80789 1 hardback. xxx+940 pp. [2nd edition]

Reviewed by Gerhard Leitner, Freie Universität Berlin

The first edition of this encyclopedia appeared 1988 to commemorate the bicentenary but it was soon out of print. The second edition, now published by Cambridge University Press, is therefore more than welcome. Both editions reflect the enormously impressive scholarship on all aspects of the demographic history and texture of both pre- and post-colonial Australia and the editor's attempt to bring the nation's demographic diversity under a common theme. In his preface Jupp describes its objective in these terms:

"The main object is to illuminate, as fairly as possible and using the most reliable information, the great variety of the Australian people as they enter the second century of federation and the third millennium of the Christian era. The variety of the Australian people cannot be denied but neither can its common destiny in a democratic and harmonious society based on tolerance and mutual understandings." (2001:1)

The book follows the design of the first edition with its four parts. The first outlines the demographic history of Australia in its socio-historical context. The second one turns in great detail to indigenous Australians, giving due weight to their cultural history, the legal and political structures they developed and their responses during the colonial and independent periods. The third part discusses with varying degrees of emphasis the diverse communities that have come to settle in Australia in alphabetical order. It is built around ethnic groups, rather than countries of origin since they provide less of a coherent picture of diversity than does the concept of ethnicity. The final part takes up major common themes, such as the policies of assimilation and integration, Australian nationhood, multiculturalism, language policy, etc. There are informative appendices on birthplaces, languages and religions, a chronology of events and a name index. The book is impressively illustrated, has tables wherever appropriate and facilitates reading and cross-referencing in many other ways.

The first edition though had a somewhat different orientation and gave greater weight to diversity, less to the common denominator—multiculturalism—while the second one brings out more coherently the nationhood that all groups share. Different times have different focal points. The first edition also reflected to a greater extent the original source of many articles, especially those on demographic data. That was both an advantage and a disadvantage in that it allowed readers to see more the basic research that went into some topics but also the contradictions in and between these studies. The second edition ironed over clashes between data and suggests a greater level of cohesiveness of findings than is probable, as can easily be demonstrated in the section of the demographic background of convicts and free settlers, Germans and other communities. Without belittling the achievements of the first edition, such conflicting reports did provide insights into what future research might have to do. A lot of information was spent on linguistic diversity, its maintenance and gradual loss. Much of that has, alas, disappeared in many chapters, though it was retained in some, e.g. regarding the Celtic people, the Italians, Greeks, Dutch, Germans, Chinese, etc. Mainstreaming must have been a general policy to make the volume more readable and considerably shorter.

There was one aspect that is worth adding in this context. The first edition did not get as much attention in research as it should have done—at least in the field of language studies. It can only be hoped that the second edition will get the attention it undoubtedly deserves.