

Bader, Rudolf, Boris Braun, Adi Wimmer, eds, 2002. *Vergangenheit und Zukunft in Australien: Australia's Legacy of the Past.*, 231 pp.; Tübingen: Stauffenberg Verlag. ISBN 3-86057-754-9.

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It is a good maxim not to judge a book by its cover, but in this case you might do so without taking too much of a risk, because *Vergangenheit und Zukunft in Australien: Australia's Legacy of the Past* effectively initiates the reader into its content and its thematic orientation. The cover of this volume is symbolical at two levels, and the message it conveys is perhaps somewhat ambiguous. Its soft and unobtrusive ochre reminds us of the colour of Australian sandstone, which is so typical of the topography of the Fifth Continent and seems to signal absolute constancy and permanency. Its iconography, however, seems to offer a slightly different text: This iconography, as well as the German section of the title, alludes to a noticeable socio-economic dynamism in Australia which may involve a breach with many cherished features of life as it used to be in Australia, and is perceived by many people with mixed feelings or even with a certain amount of anxiety. The reaction often is a more or less nostalgic look back on what was (or what in collective memory seems to have been) the "past".

The cover shows an envelope commemorating the opening of the Australian Stockman's "Hall of Fame & Outback Heritage Centre" by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 29 April 1988, Australia's bicentennial year. The foundation of this museum dedicated to a specific aspect of Australia's political and economic history was stimulated by the bicentenary and can be seen in the context of museum openings highlighting the dialectics between past and future.

Commemorating the legacy of the once important drovers crossing the country on stock routes and the scientific achievements which were a prerequisite for the exploration of Australia's arid areas, it shows how much emphasis is currently placed on the preservation of history in a world marked by an accelerating pace of innovation. Burkard Hofmeister in his contribution on newly established museums devoted to special themes (pp. 131-140) elaborates on this aspect quoting the philosopher Odo Marquard in his introduction: "Je schneller – durch Innovationen – in unserer Welt aus Gegenwart Vergangenheit wird, umso stärker wird das Interesse an der Vergangenheit [...]. Immer mehr Vergessenes wird darum modern gerade nicht vergessen, sondern erinnert; (...)" (p.131).

The current flourishing of museum culture in Australia is representative of the country's attempt to re-define its identity. Not only the bicentennial celebrations but also political and cultural events and developments such as the High Court's Mabo judgement in 1992 recognizing Native Title of Aborigines, the federation issue or Australia's growing awareness of its factual multiculturalism stimulated the search for a new identity and raised Australia's interest in its legacy. With regard to this situation the Association for Australian Studies e.V. decided to devote its 7th biennial conference, held in Klagenfurt in October 2000, to Australia's dealing with its past against the back-drop of accelerating socio-economic change and cultural diversity. *Vergangenheit und Zukunft in Australien: Australia's Legacy of the Past* presents 13 contributions by participants of this interdisciplinary conference covering five different fields: the history of colonialism and imperialism, the battle of recognition of

indigenous peoples' rights, ecological limits and challenges, problems of space and land use patterns, and finally social and economic change viewed from a long-term perspective.

The volume is structured more or less chronologically starting with Frank Di Marco's essay on "Empirismus, Kolonialismus, Imperialismus: Ihre Rezeption im zeitgenössischen australischen Roman" and ending with issues of urban (here Sydney) and regional developments by Anke Schüttemeyer and Boris Braun. Moreover, it can be divided into two parts: the first seven essays review consequences of imperialism and colonialism in the 20th century, whereas the second part deals with Australia's economic, social and urban history since the beginnings of white settlement in order to derive chances and opportunities for future developments.

In his well structured and clearly researched essay Di Marco verifies his theory of a connection between empiricism and colonialism by concentrating on three aspects: epistemology, the theory of possession and the complex of narrative structure and scripturalism. On the basis of a selection of three contemporary Australian novels, Murray Bail's *Eucalyptus*, Roger McDonald's *Mr. Darwin's Shooter* and Mark Henshaw's *Out of the Line of Fire*, Di Marco shows an existing anti-empirical counter-discourse which implies criticism of imperialism and which in line with Said questions the realistic attitude of colonial literature. His selective analysis is convincing and ends with food for thought, namely that the above-mentioned authors are white male Australians and thus belong to a group of society which has up to now only profited from an empiricist ideology.

Peter Read's essay "Separation, Trauma and the Extinction of Aboriginality" is a shockingly sad case study covering four generations of an Aboriginal family affected by separation. Read presents Aboriginal case stories by quoting their words and by including poems, written by Alma, who embodies the second of the so-called "stolen generation." Even more deeply than Read's text the poems bring out the traumatic effect of this separation policy resulting in a distorted relationship between mother and daughter (Read predominantly has given accounts of the female family members) and in a personal identity crisis. The author ends with the sad prediction that the extinction of Aboriginality eventually will be "successful," although it might take longer than the initiator of the separation policy, Robert Donaldson, intended in 1927. He also ends on a contemplative note by raising the question of whether Aboriginal children will know enough in the future about their family history to identify with.

In her essay "New Voices in Australian History: Indigenous Knowledge and the Silent Country," Carolyn Wadley Dowley, also dealing with Aboriginal history, opens a new perspective; in fact, her initial question is whether historical knowledge can be "detrimental to Australia's present processes of reconciliation" (p. 39). Her discussion results in affirming the importance of a comprehensive, inclusive and "shared" history for the collective identity of society as a whole as well as for each individual's identity. She states, however, that indigenous memories have not yet become part of Australia's collective memory illustrating this situation through three interesting case studies and ends up with the thesis that inclusion of Aboriginal collective memory into mainstream Australian historical memory is the basis required for reconciliation. As it stands, her argumentation implies criticism of Howard's policy, too.

Margret Carstens is concerned with nature and environmental protection in Australia. Her concept of indigenous/non-indigenous partnerships of resource users and administrators who work together towards sustainable environmental management and thus preserve the Australian environment sounds brilliant but also somewhat dreamlike. However, she can provide agreements, legislation and examples as proof of feasibility. In her view a healthy environment secured by sustainable development involves social and political development as well, and requires participation in resolution finding.

In "The Legacy of the Cold War in Australia" Cassandra Pybus deals with an unusual and specific topic, namely how the CIA influenced the *Australian Association for Cultural Freedom* by financing cultural events, exhibitions etc. and the literary magazine *Quadrant*. Thus political attention was oriented towards American foreign policies and diverted from political issues in Australia itself. Despite its complicated subject and her demanding presentation, Pybus in her well researched argumentation succeeds in highlighting the manipulation of the intelligentsia. She reveals how a close-knit clique of critics like James McAuley, A.D. Hope, Leonie Kramer and Vincent Buckley took advantage of CIA funded magazines and seminars and thus influenced Australia's literary landscape for three generations in a way that minority rights and achievements (e.g. those of Aboriginals) were neglected.

In opposition to the view commonly held Gerhard Leitner in his chapter on "Varietätenkontakt: Der amerikanische Einfluss auf das australische Englisch" shows that the linguistic effects of American English in Australia have been exaggerated. In the process of globalizing the English Language American English is only one factor of influence together with other forms of influence such as political correctness. Referring to numerous examples Leitner grippingly illustrates his point and places it in the context of the dialectics of Australia's past and future, clearly following the thread running through this edition.

"Unsichere Zuflucht: Politische, kulturelle und soziale Probleme jüdischer Exilanten in Australien zur Zeit des 'Dritten Reiches'" by Manfred Brusten concerns itself with an important topic that has also to be viewed against the background of the interaction between past and the future. Brusten provides excellent literary references and presents an extensive bibliography. His essay offers an illuminating insight into the political, cultural and social problems Jewish immigrants faced in Australia after they had escaped the horrors of Fascist Germany and shows that even remote Australia turned out to be fertile soil for Hitler's terrorist ideas and methods as well as his virulent anti-Semitism. He shows how Jewish immigrants survived and managed to start a new life despite being treated like criminals (e.g. by the British when on their way to Australia) and despite being considered as 'enemy aliens'. Taking into account the potential of oral history, Brusten supports his argument by including personal accounts, which are often told in a very matter-of-fact way but move the reader through their touching content.

Arnold Beuke's uncommon but, as his results show, rewarding method of analyzing written sources of information on destinations for migrants (so far untouched in historical research on Australia) provides valuable information on the social and economic history of 19th century Australia. Beuke's selection of aspects is surprising at first glance, but turns out to be most fortunate: He focuses on sheep farming and its appeal to German immigrants ("Schafzucht und deutsche Einwanderung: Anreiz oder Widerspruch?") This seemingly

boring topic turns out to be most interesting, entertaining and even funny. Sheep farming proved to be one of the best export products during Australia's early history; however, for Germans two opposing representations in migrant guidebooks prevailed: Literature addressing migrants who considered acquiring a sheep farm of their own was written in a realistic and even sceptical tone, whereas working opportunities at sheep stations were promised to prospective labourers euphorically. Most illustrative and highly entertaining is Beuke's set of quotations: "Neigt die Sonne sich dem Untergang, so folgt Abendessen und Nachtruhe wie Tags zuvor, und so geht es, nicht nur bis die Station erreicht ist, sondern von da an erst Jahr für Jahr und ein Tag gleicht dem anderen auf ein Haar (p. 151)" and "Der junge Schäfer fand sehr wenig Poesie in seinem neuen Beruf. Er hatte weder Zeit unter dem Baume zu sitzen und die Schalmei zu blasen, noch Gelegenheit mit jungen Schäferinnen zu kosen, wie er sich's erinnerte, auf Bilderbogen gesehen zu haben (p.155)."

The geographer Reinhold Grotz follows a problem-oriented approach when analyzing "Ökologie und Ökonomie in der Landwirtschaft Australiens: Gestern – Heute – Morgen." He gives a pessimistic resumé of 200 years of agricultural activities in Australia, which is well supported by literary evidence. He deals with important issues such as soil erosion, salinity and acidity. He calls for collective responsibility, convinced that it is a duty of society as well as of the government to take care of environmental problems in an active way (e.g. Grotz mentions the already existing Landcare movement) and to provide the money required.

The title of George Seddon's essay "Legacies of Mining in Australia" suggests that the mining industry has left a negative effect on Australia. But on the contrary, Seddon states that mining is in "good health" and has internally and internationally overcome the "tyranny of distance." It is surprising to read that mining is environmentally more sound than pasture and agriculture. A contradiction, however, can be detected between Grotz's estimation "Crown Leasehold Land [ist] weniger degradiert als Privatland (p.174) and Seddon's judgement "More than half of Australia is leasehold rangeland, and much of it is now degraded beyond repair (p. 182)," but maybe it simply implies that privately owned land is in a much worse condition.

Anke Schüttemeyer's contribution entitled "Strukturen der Vergangenheit für eine nachhaltige Zukunft: Probleme der Stadtentwicklung in Sydney" is a clearly structured analysis of urban development in Sydney that combines precision and compactness. Dreams of the quarter-acre-block and of space being necessary for comfort and health led to urban sprawl and its accompanying ecological, economic and social problems. The author derives possible solutions from her own empirical research: She pleads for further urban consolidation that should result in a reduction of automobile traffic, use of space, infrastructure costs and energy.

Last but not least, Boris Braun refers us back to the cover of the book: He uses Dorothea Mackellar's poetic description of Australia's interior as "The Wide Brown Land," in the title for his essay ("The Wide Brown Land: Regionalentwicklung in Australien zwischen Kontinuität und Wandel"). Braun sets up a detailed model (logistisches Regressionsmodell) to determine what economic and non-economic factors influence regional population development outside the metropolitan areas. While lifestyle factors (beaches, climate etc.) turn out to be relevant for population increase especially along the east coast, negative economic factors are still the reason for depopulation. Overall, the population distribution

pattern developed over more or less 200 years will continue to prevail. It will be Australia's challenge for the future to find a balance between efficient economic development and measures to revitalize disadvantaged rural regions. Maybe the new visa regulations (Nov 2002) for business migrants that requires them to stay in a sponsored state for four years before being granted permanent residency is an adequate approach to develop the wide brown land.

The book ends with an index of the contributing authors, who succeeded in composing a diversified investigation into Australia's current position between its past and its future. The authors have managed to show that nothing is permanent (not even sandstone), although structures developed in the past continue to prevail and will exert their influence on the future. At the same time the authors have set out to show plausible ways how Australia could deal with its legacy of the past in a positive and fruitful way. *Vergangenheit und Zukunft in Australien: Australia's Legacy of the Past* is well worth purchasing not only because of its attractive cover.