

**Victoria Kuttainen, Susann Leibich and Sarah Galletly. *The Transported Imagination: Australian Interwar Magazines and the Geographical Imaginaries of Colonial Modernity*. Buffalo NY: Cambria Press 2018. 339 pages
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The Transported Imagination: Australian Interwar Magazines and the Geographical Imaginaries of Colonial Modernity is a timely and significant addition to the field of periodical studies in Australia, which has seen an increasing amount of academic focus in recent years. The innovative and instructive uses of Trove, as well as a deepening understanding of the role periodicals played in the development of Australian literary culture and production, has led to the burgeoning of periodical study in both quantitative and qualitative directions. *The Transported Imagination* builds on the groundbreaking work of such researchers as David Carter, Robert Dixon and Roger Osborne as well as the work on island spatiality of Elizabeth McMahon and engages in a qualitative, focused deep-dive on three interwar periodicals, *The BP Magazine*, *The Home* and *MAN*. As the authors note in their concluding chapter:

Novels and anthologies are considered serious and important cultural artefacts. Often, though not always, they are explicitly tied to an artistic project of nation narration and a pedagogical project of inculcating national values and citizenship. Contrastingly, magazines provide insight into the everyday reading choices and the cultural practices and aspirations of larger sector of the reading public and more differentiated segments of a national culture. Further, whilst Australian book production and culture had historically been routed through London, the three titles of our study show that an emerging modern magazine culture in Australia was largely influenced by and became increasingly oriented across the Pacific to the USA. (275–76)

The study engages with notions of geographical imagination and modernity through both comparative analysis and close readings of the writing published in the magazines during the interwar period. It focuses Michael John Watt's concept of the 'geographical imaginary' that 'offers a useful model for. . . consideration of how differentiated readerships variably imagined their relationships to the world, and in doing so, constructed their ideas about themselves' (6–7). The insightful and well-structured introductory chapter, aptly titled 'A Door to the World' in echo of *The BP Magazine*'s grandiose slogan 'A Door to the World—The World to your Door,' notes that these three magazines 'shared an attachment to social and geographical mobility, and to modern consumer culture' (2). In discussing the parameters that informed the choice of focal magazines the authors also note that 'These magazines. . . invoked distinct "geographical imaginaries"' (Watt 1999, quoted page 3) that were oriented toward foreign and exotic locales, in ways that helped coalesce their readers' collective and individual identities as modern, 'worldly consumers' (3).

By embedding their study of these magazines within a geographical, aspirational, and developing modernity the authors created an effective multifaceted container in which to investigate the individual periodicals, their writers, editors, and readers. The structure echoes the format of a magazine, with chapters on International Affairs, Non-Fiction Travel Features and Fashion and Advertising collected under Geography; Authors and Artists, and Book and Film Reviews collected under Cultural Value; and the final section, Temporality, containing chapters on Currents of Fiction, Pacific Travellers and Points of Disembarkation. This structure,

while effectively focusing the study, also allows the authors to work deeply within the magazines themselves, including both visual and written material within their scope. There is occasionally a shifting of focus between topic and periodical in the chapters which can break the flow of the discussion, often a difficulty when engaging in close reading of several texts.

Moving between analysis and close textual engagement, this study demonstrates the depth of information to be gained from considerations of all aspects of periodical publications, from advertising to news and reviews, as an indicator of readers', editors' and publishers' geographical anxieties and interests. The visual material, a section of striking and beautiful images from the magazines that lifts the discussions of interwar aesthetics from abstract to concrete, is contained in a section at the end of the study, which, while an effective addition, might have been more efficaciously embedded within the chapters to which they refer. This may have been a practical consideration, however, and publication parameters often dictate such choices.

The consideration of periodicals as expressions of geographical awareness and anxiety adds a complex layer to our understanding of the significance of periodicals to Australia's interwar cultural and spatial identity. However, the study's authors are at pains to point out that the periodicals they investigate 'are never only spatial or geographical . . . they also offer orientations within a changing media landscape structured by rapidly shifting appraisals of cultural value and intensifying engagements with international modernity' (4). The study considers the geopolitical and economic factors that influenced the publication and consumption of periodical products while acknowledging that this field is expanding quickly; in the penultimate paragraph the authors note that the 'wide-ranging culture' with which the study engages makes them unable to be experts in all areas and that their research and conclusions could be seen as a 'ventur[ing] forth' out 'of the islands and comfort zones of disciplinary security' on which they wish to begin a discussion. This recognition of the transmutability and constantly expanding nature of research and the role of any publication as part of a larger, ongoing discussion signals the enthusiasm the authors feel for their study as well as their keenness to continue the research journey with their academic readers.

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