

**ANU HISTORICAL JOURNAL II EDITION 1  
(2019)**

**INTRODUCTION**

The 2019 Melbourne Historical Journal Committee were thrilled to hear that the Australian National University History Society was to relaunch its journal in 2019. The ANU Historical Journal II (ANUHJII) has strong historical ties with the MHJ, and in this very new climate we were excited at the prospect of renewed collaboration. Included below is our review of the exciting first edition of the ANUHJII. A review of Volume 46 of the MHJ will be published by ANUHJII.

The journal opens with an editorial that provides an overview of the history of the ANU Historical Journal, and of its place alongside other student bodies, particularly the ANU Historical Society. It highlights the role of postgraduate-run journals as an important space not only for young historians to develop their voice and professional identities, but also as a place for postgraduates to make a meaningful intervention in, and to develop their understanding of, the pragmatic considerations which sit at the heart of the publication process. As editors of the MHJ Collective, the editorial resonated with us. It clearly articulated the inherent value of postgraduate-run journals and potential sites of

solidarity amongst such journals, all of which are currently facing similar challenges, and are motivated by the same ideals. The editorial emphasises also the original journal's very strong sense of commitment to publishing primarily the work of students, which is suggestive of the role the ANUHJII may play in expanding this space. The commitment to publishing the work of young historians from undergraduate to early career researcher (ECR) level speaks to the editorial team's awareness that participating in a student publication, both as a writer and as part of an editorial team, is 'formative for emerging scholars', and an important aspect in developing as an academic.

Linked to this is the editorial note that a small number of public lectures found a place in the first series of the journal. The inclusion here of public lectures from Professor Frank Bongiorno and Emeritus Professor Stuart Macintyre is an excellent way to incorporate the contributions of established academics, as well as to maintain the original series' commitment to publishing postgraduate scholarship. Balancing the celebration of young academics with a demonstration of support by established researchers is a crucial part of postgraduate journals as it fosters collaboration and community between academics at different stages of their careers.

## REVIEW OF MEMOIRS

Following the 'Editorial' section is an exciting collection of 'Memoirs' which complement the editorial by reflecting on the history the ANUHJ and of the History Department as a whole: its foundation, its people, and its ambitions. The founding editor of the original ANUHJ, Alastair Davidson's, memory on the difference between the 'old and new' Australian historians summarise the core belief of one generation of young ANU scholars' dedication in transforming Australian's history writing enterprise from an imperial one to a national one, that is, to write an Australian history of its own. With respect to that ambition, Emeritus Professor Manning Clark was no doubt, as mentioned by most of the contributors, the mentor and motivator of this transformation. However, the ambitions of ANUHJ did not stop at a political re-centralisation of inquiry and narrative: the demonstration of a desire to tell one's own story, the liberation from the traditional gender role attached to female historians (as articulated in Rosemary Auchmuty's article of how ANU had instilled in her the ideals of women's liberation), and the hope of incorporating a focus on Asia and the Pacific in historical research, were all evident as parts of a collective number of ambitions longing to be achieved. As a social and intellectual hub as well as an academic journal, the ANUHJ was

a comfortable shelter for young historians who had 'no long-term friends in Canberra' (Ian Britain), and were sometimes 'miserable and alone' (Rosemary Auchmuty), giving them a community that nourished a sense of belonging as young historical researchers. This is one of the common themes that link the ANUHJ to its Melbourne counterpart, the MHJ: that young historians need an intellectual space to exchange ideas, critique each other, and foster friendships. Another important role the ANUHJ has played, and that the ANUHJII will continue to play, is summarised by Caroline Turner, who writes that 'in this current era of 'post-truth', people's historical awareness and knowledge of context and history is diminishing ... [which] makes history journals such as ANUHJ even more relevant today, especially if they deal with the importance of scholarly research'.

## OVERVIEW OF ARTICLES

Not only is ANUHJII's substantial articles section impressive for the diversity of its contributors, it is also impressive in terms of content and approach.

As the opening article of the ANUHJII, Tobias Campbell's "'Ours will be a tent": The meaning and symbolism of the early Aboriginal Tent Embassy' is a fitting choice. Campbell's insightful survey of the history of the Tent

Embassy rightly locates this crucial site of contemporary Aboriginal activism at the centre of Australian political life in the 1970s. As a study of the symbolism of sovereignty, it is innovative, as the first article for the ANUHJII it is particularly apt. Situating the Tent Embassy not only within the Australian cultural political landscape, but also within Canberra's vast geography of state-sanctioned memorials is a particularly strong theoretical approach that both grounds his argument and positions the journal immediately within its local geographical and political context.

Fitting for the ANHUJII in a somewhat different respect is Ingrid Mahoney's article 'A new dawn: rights for women in Louisa Lawson's *The Dawn*'. The ANUHJII has highlighted the work of a number of young historians and centred their new approaches in the Australian historical landscape. In turn, Mahoney reframes one of Australia's best-known feminists as a literary figure, a political leader driven by a vision for the future (in addition to, and as a constituent characteristic of her feminism). By centring Lawson's language and exploring the particularity of her politics, Mahoney has subtly redefined Lawson's position in Australian political, gender and intellectual history, and suggests new approaches to histories of Australian feminism.

That the third essay of the journal is so notably different from the two that preceded it is a testament to the commendably wide net the editors cast when seeking papers for their inaugural issue. These qualities are crucial ethical and intellectual principles for postgraduate journals. Ashleigh Green's article, 'Cultural responses to the migration of the barn swallow in Europe' is a wonderful read and a more than welcome addition. Green's *longue durée* approach is an excellent contrast to the first two articles, and her study of the shifting symbolic significance of the swallow is genuinely delightful. Particularly interesting is the ways in which the swallow captivated spiritual and scientific interest, and her comparison of this with the way maritime cultures viewed swallows.

Postgraduate journals should be reactive spaces where young historians have the chance to contribute to debates in their fields. Bodie A. Ashton's 'Kingship, sexuality and courtly masculinity: Frederick the Great and Prussia on the cusp of modernity' is a fine example of this. Taking a new approach to persistent contemporary questions about Frederick the Great, Ashton's article demonstrates both the role journals such as the ANUHJII can have for young historians, and the vital contributions of young historians to the wider historiographical landscape. Ashton's article is commendable

in approach and execution, and its inclusion in the ANUHQJ is an important acknowledgment of the role this new generation of historians must play in the centring of gender and sexuality studies in historical debate.

The final three articles fall under a loose thematic heading of faith and politics. Nayree Mardirian's 'Lebanon's 'age of apology' for Civil War atrocities: A look at Assad Shaftari and Samir Geagea' explores how the global trend towards political apology and atonement for former atrocities from the 1990s manifested in Lebanon in the early 2000s. Mardirian draws on recent interviews and press coverage to explore the contexts of and responses to two political apologies (Shaftari's in 2000 and Geagea's in 2008) to elucidate how shifts in how the Civil War is memorialised, have affected the political climate in contemporary Lebanon. Focused on such recent events, the article speaks very clearly to current debates around memorialisation of all sorts. Like Ashton's, Mardirian's article demonstrates a refreshing engagement with contemporary historical discussions that speak to its relevance today.

Focusing on the conceptualisation by Christian evangelicals of prisoners and Indigenous Australians as sinners in need of salvation, Tande Wang's article "'O Sin, sin, what hast

thou done!": Aboriginal people and convicts in evangelical humanitarian discourse in the Australian colonies' provides a strong exploration of how concepts of respectability were constructed in colonial Australia. Wang highlights the importance of the evangelical worldview to British imperial policy, and nuances contributes to discussions of how ideas of race and gender played out in mid-nineteenth century Australia.

The final article, Sarah Macallan's 'Object Study – The Tombstone of Anne: A case study on multi-lingualism in twelfth century Sicily' is important in the context of the final three articles in that it is focused on material culture, and is directed at understanding the broader purposes and implications of a single object. Macallan's combination of text, material and spatial analyses enables Macallan to argue for a nuanced interpretation of the tombstone that both accounts for its suggestion of religious tolerance and highlights its message of Christian superiority. As a reflection of the turns towards materiality and spatiality within the discipline, Macallan's article is especially fitting as the final article included in a relaunched postgraduate journal.

While the variety of articles presented is at first glance somewhat disorientating, and the reviewers feel this collection of essays may

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have benefited from a more explicit curatorial hand in relation to the ordering of the articles, postgraduate journals ought to reflect – and celebrate – the extraordinary diversity of research being undertaken in Australian universities. This edition does so admirably. It is an exciting reflection of new trends in historical research. That it highlights new approaches to gender, sexuality, race and object studies is a testament to the originality of Australian young historians, and to the important role postgraduate-run journals play in highlighting this work.

**Reviewed by Jessie Matheson,  
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