

four-dimensional places” (44). Simultaneously, the spatial haecceity of the garden is emphasized: “A garden is not merely sited on a place; a garden is a place” (39). This latter argument strengthens the overall thesis that a garden is an aesthetic “object” while acknowledging the uncontrollability and intrinsic change of the garden as a point of differentiation from other media. Gardens reflect the aesthetic, social, and environmental forces of their time in a fashion which is distinct from other artforms. The book emphasizes how gardens operate as powerful symbols and practices of cultural engagement. It must be noted that while the Fenners effectively map gardens as tools of cultural identification, inquiry into how gardens might *reshape* culture or contest existing cultural norms falls outside the purview of this book. Certain points, such as a subsection on “Public Access,” (186–7) or the acknowledgment that “massive English landscapes . . . require enormous wealth to maintain” (97) lend themselves to possible elaboration, perhaps with recourse to (for example) Frederick Law Olmsted’s writings on greenspace accessibility or John Berger’s remarks on the connections between landscape painting—a point of comparison in the authors’ analysis (74–75)—and property. The fact that such connections are not drawn speaks, above all, to the book’s systematicity and focus. Such moments are another promising indication that *The Art and Philosophy of the Garden* will enrich future scholarship in the growing field of garden studies. The book is ambitious, richly layered, and offers fresh insights into the intersection of culture, ecology, and aesthetics. It is a thought-provoking work that will be valuable to scholars and readers interested in the significance of gardens as aesthetic objects.

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BEYOND HOSTILE ISLANDS: THE PACIFIC WAR IN AMERICAN AND NEW ZEALAND FICTION WRITING. By Daniel McKay. New York: Fordham University Press, 2024. 240 pp.

Daniel McKay’s *Beyond Hostile Islands* examines American and New Zealand fiction writings from the early 1960s to the present day. His book offers an insightful and perceptive analysis of a wide range of literary texts about the Second World War and its aftermath, especially focusing on the Pacific theater by invoking the memory of both well-known histories and suppressed histories of the war. Through an engaging comparative analysis of mainstream American and marginalized New Zealand war literature and their narrative forms and valences, McKay foregrounds varied topics such as combat, internment, propaganda, and nuclear weapons, as well as asymmetrical power relations between nations and their effects on representations of racial, ethnic, cultural, and national identities. His incisive analysis of Pacific War literature throws into sharp relief not only the less examined areas of literary history such as racialized stereotypes of the Japanese and the fear in America, or the West, created by Japan’s meteoric economic rise in the 1980s, but also American literary works’ deliberate evasion of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and their devastating effects in those two cities and the country.

In the immediate aftermath of a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. government, which had previously favored isolationist policies, launched propaganda campaigns against the Japanese and used racial stereotypes to portray them as nonhumans, comparing them to animals, insects, rodents, and reptiles. More strikingly, however, these literary or cultural representations of Japanese people stood “in marked contrast to the more conventional objectification of the German enemy in wartime propaganda, which clearly distinguished between the Nazi leadership and ‘good Germans,’ a model that tended to hold true throughout the British Dominions as well” (2). Here Edward Said’s notion of the Orient or the Other is both salient and yet limited, for the propaganda posters of the Second World War depicted the Japanese not just as others in the Saidian sense but as nonhumans –

an indubitable form of objectification, but one that goes beyond East vs. West binaries. Hence, American soldiers “actively look forward to killing Japanese,” whereas “most did only their professional duty by killing Germans” (2). Against this backdrop, McKay poses an intriguing question: could a sense of New Zealand’s geographical isolation “develop a war literature canon in ways that were less disposed to the tropes and ideologies commonly found in American writing?” (4). Another way of putting this would be whether a New Zealand provincialism offers a vantage point to view US literature and culture. New Zealand war narratives, McKay opines, are not always modeled on American war narratives despite their heavy influences on them. Interestingly, he shows how stories of Allied Far East Prisoners of War (FEPOWs) and Japanese American internment narratives are often overlooked, and yet play a significant role in combat narratives (6). Even so, McKay avers that the branches of literature – Australian, British, Canadian, New Zealand, et al. – ultimately defer to the American canon as it emerged from the Second World War.

*Beyond Hostile Islands* contains five chapters, and each chapter discusses a specific genre of Pacific War literature and key American and New Zealand texts. For instance, the first chapter examines the combat novel of the 1960s in which combat is a central narrative component in most major novels. McKay then moves on to what some would call the corporate thriller, a continuation of the same novelistic form that “emerged as a genre . . . pertinent to Japan” (59). He further delineates how the period of the 1940s through the early 1960s saw a veritable spate of combat-themed works, such as that of New Zealand author Errol Brathwaite in his novel *An Affair of Men* (1962). Other influential New Zealand works of later vintage include Keri Hulme’s “Kaibutsu-san” (1985), Wendy Catran’s *The Swap* (2004), Peter Wells’ *Lucky Bastard* (2007), and James George’s *Ocean Roads* (2006). McKay observes how “[t]he phenomenon of ‘Japan-bashing,’ as Japanophobic discourses tended to be called in mainstream media, received its first critical examination during the 1990s, particularly in David Morley and Kevin Robins’ coauthored study *Spaces of Identity* (1995),” which coined “the newly emergent phenomenon known as techno-Orientalism” (59). This “techno-Orientalist imaginary” then constructed East Asian societies as following the same “developmental trajectory” of the West, rather than showing them as “timeless and changeless” cultures and peoples (60). Chapter 3 analyzes internment novels that narrate the story of Japanese civilians/minorities in New Zealand and the US, along with those of the small island communities of the South Pacific – again, a topic that remains relatively underexplored. Prisoner-of-War (POW) testimonies, chiefly characterized by the experiences of silences, traumas, and memories, constitute another branch of captivity narrative. McKay’s final two chapters explore diverse POW narratives and Manhattan Project novels, respectively, paying special attention to the figures of prisoner, the scientist, and *hibakusha* or the atomic bomb survivor, as well as their literary and cultural representations.

Above all, McKay’s *Beyond Hostile Islands* is a great addition to contemporary global Anglophone literature, especially contributing to a new conversation about American and New Zealand island literatures. His comparative interpretive paradigm offers a fresh and thought-provoking analysis of the Pacific War accounts in Anglophone literature. While grounding his literary and cultural analysis in historical and theoretical ideas ranging from Edward Said’s Orientalism, Cathy Caruth’s trauma theory, memory studies, and Elizabeth Deloughrey’s environmental idea of “tidalectics,” McKay’s book examines both major American and marginal New Zealand and Japanese fictional writings to map out divergent trajectories of war narratives (170–71). The US–New Zealand juxtaposition is more unsettling and messier than one would think, in that it does not necessarily align with continental worldviews and in that war narratives may, or may not be, shaped by the geographical separateness and dominant American literary, cultural, and politico-historical views.

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