

Marjorie (41). The thematic rather than chronological structure will be useful for researchers aiming to access Mee's experience of particular events, such as the First World War or his position on social and cultural phenomena such as the temperance movement or the work of empire building, but it makes for a slightly choppy reading experience for those seeking a narrative of the arc of Mee's life.

Despite Mee's purported reliance on Marjorie to generate topics for his publications, there is little in the biography about her reception of her father's writing, nor does a picture emerge of Mee's wife, Amelia (Amy), or her sister, Lena Fratson, who worked as his private secretary. Crawford acknowledges that this "fleeting" glimpse is due to the absence of self-authored material in the archive (120) and yet his own work certainly could have done more to establish their role in maintaining his household and supporting Mee's prolific output. What Crawford describes as "manag[ing] the home" through hiring "cooks and housemaids, mak[ing] cakes and darn[ing] socks" is of course the vital labour that made Mee's success possible (120).

Crawford does not shy away from the ways in which Mee enthusiastically embraced the racist and eugenicist thinking that characterised much "liberal" thinking and the belief in progress in the first half of the 20th century. However, in returning repeatedly to different versions of the notion that Mee was a man of his time, Crawford's account borders at times on an apologia for Mee's deep implication in the rhetorical structures that underwrote the dispossession and genocide of Indigenous peoples throughout the Empire or those that justified the extension of relief only to those deemed the deserving poor. Crawford's description of the role Mee's faith played in his endorsement of "positive eugenics" (73) or his belief in Empire as a "compassionate" project to "civilise the uncivilised" (101) is uncomfortably uncritical. Children's literature, whether "encyclopaedic" or fictional, has long been a pedagogic vehicle for the inculcation of colonialist, elitist and ableist thinking. Crawford's own expertise in the field of the cultural work performed by children's textbooks could have been very fruitfully brought to bear on Mee's writings. *Arthur Mee* is a detailed portrait of a man who is arguably more interesting for his contradictions than for his achievements. I look forward to further work on the reception of his writings from scholars of Childhood Studies in "Greater Britain".

Hilary Emmett

American Studies, UEA, Norwich, UK

Found in translation: many meanings on a North Australian mission

Written by Laura Rademaker

University of Hawai'i Press

Honolulu

2018

xix + 231pp.,

ISBN: 9780824872656

Review DOI [10.1108/HER-10-2020-080](https://doi.org/10.1108/HER-10-2020-080)

Historians, writes Laura Rademaker, should be "skeptical of missionaries' overconfident claims that might lead us to think a 'colonization of consciousness' took place" at the Angurugu Church Missionary Society (CMS) mission on the Groote Eylandt archipelago, in Australia's north (181). The phrase "colonization of consciousness" is Jean and John Comaroff's term, developed in their 1991 book on Christianity and colonialism in South Africa. In her nuanced and deeply researched history of the Angurugu mission, Rademaker

convincingly demonstrates why we should be skeptical both of missionaries' wishful thinking and of scholarly arguments that overstate the effects of European colonialism, particularly in places where imperatives of land dispossession or labour exploitation were not as significant. She invites this scepticism not in order to rescue the evangelical project but, rather, because of the enduring agency of these Indigenous people – Anindilyakwa speakers. Rademaker certainly does not let missionaries off the hook. She repeatedly draws attention to their settler colonial ambitions, the coordination of their intentions to evangelize with white nationalist policies of the assimilation of indigenous peoples for their own good. But she is alive to the ways in which Anindilyakwa speakers selectively engaged Christianity, sometimes indigenizing aspects of it, other times rejecting its ideological premises or presumed benefits.

Rademaker's focus in the book, as the title alludes to, is on verbal language. This makes sense given that the missionaries' primary mode of conversion was through the spoken word. It also makes sense given that Anindilyakwa is the now-standardized term for the language that the "clans" (an anthropological import) speak across the archipelago; they do not have an ethnic or political name for themselves as a whole and in this book it is language that convenes them. Opening the book with an amusing example of mistranslation, when Anindilyakwa people re-named the song sung to them by the first missionary as "Jesus loves my chest hair," Rademaker points out that her focus is primarily on *mistranslation* and the possibilities that such failed acts of carrying meaning across linguistic difference opened up for Anindilyakwa's indigenizing of Christianity. The opportunity is also one for the historian coming later, as Rademaker finds rich examples of the ways in which Anindilyakwa people resisted, refused, or transformed aspects of what the missionaries were trying to teach them. By the end of the book, we discover that in fact the teaching was two-way (although Rademaker is hesitant to fully embrace Howard Morphy's claim that at the Yirrkala mission across the water Yolngu speakers and the Methodists engaged in a "mutual conversion").

The book is organized into seven chapters. Six of these span the years from the mission's founding in 1943 through to the 1970s (an epilogue suggests that at present the church is barely attended). Chapter one provides a useful history of Christian missionary activity in the Pacific and Australia in the 19th century; this context is significant mainly in elaborating what was distinctive about the "late" efforts on Groote Eylandt. In the 19th century, the CMS had made use of vernacular translations of the bible, the deployment of Indigenous missionaries, as well as encouraging the development of European agricultural practice to civilize first in order to win converts; the earlier 20th-century missions on the northern Australian mainland were mainly concerned with protecting Aboriginal people from annihilation. These ideologies were at work only inconsistently at Angurugu. Chapter two explores the differing interpretations of the founding of the mission, the attempts by missionaries to use force and threat, and their reliance on interpreters. Chapters three, four, and five examine the competing language ideologies of missionaries and Anindilyakwa speakers in relation to orality, the written word, and the debate over whether or not the missionaries should themselves learn Anindilyakwa. By the 1960s, it seemed to missionaries on Groote Eylandt that their efforts to Christianize were having little effect. Moreover, Indigenous rights activists across the country were forcing white Australians to change their assumptions about assimilation. Whereas in the first two decades, missionaries had been preoccupied with English as the medium of conversion, policy now changed. Missionaries should learn Anindilyakwa. But this decision was not one that went down well, either with missionaries themselves (only one ever made any real progress in learning the language) or with all Anindilyakwa speakers, for a variety of reasons that are explored in chapter six. Chapter seven returns to the role of *emeba* (songs) that play a central role in Anindilyakwa life and were the medium through which they engaged perhaps most extensively with the evangelical repertoire.

Historians of education, particularly those interested in cross-cultural histories, will find much of value in this book given its focus on language learning, orality and the written text, and strategies of reading and listening. Rademaker's clear prose and methodological sensitivity make it a suitable model for upper-level undergraduate as well as postgraduate teaching. *Found in Translation* is a fresh and vitally important addition to new studies of Indigenous history in the context of settler colonialism that seek to move beyond the binaries of colonizer and colonized and explore the limits of one-dimensional assumptions of power.

Miranda Johnson

History, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand