



# The Transported Imagination

Australian Interwar Magazines  
and the Geographical Imaginaries  
of Colonial Modernity

Victoria Kuttainen,  
Susann Liebich, and  
Sarah Galletly

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**CAMBRIA**  
**PRESS**

Amherst, New York



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100 Corporate Parkway, Suite 128  
Amherst, New York 14226

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ISBN 978-162196-415-5

(alk. paper)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The visually spectacular, thematically wide-ranging, and arresting culture and leisure magazines at the heart of this book were collaborative assemblages, drawing on the efforts and talents of many contributors. This book is the result of an equally collaborative undertaking. It would not have been possible without the generous support of Margaret and Colin Roderick, James Cook University, and Heidelberg University's Centre for Transcultural Studies. The ideas in this book travelled across disciplines and countries, and transported us individually and collectively to new and various spheres.

Beyond our core research group, we benefited enormously from many conversations and exchanges with colleagues in the fields of literary studies, cultural history, mobility studies, Australian history, periodical studies, book history, and print culture studies. The TRIP (Tropical Research on the Interwar Period) Reading Group at James Cook University provided a first sounding board for many of our ideas, with many of its members participating in our project symposium, hosted at the Cairns Institute in 2013. In particular, we want to thank our advisory board: Helen Bones, Claire Brennan, David Carter, Liz Conor, Adam Gall, Nicholas Halter, Faye Hammill, Anna Johnston, Russell McGregor, Roger



Osborne, Celmara Pocock, Max Quanchi, Anne Rees, Mitchell Rolls, Frances Steel, and Stephen Torre.

Sincere thanks to the staff at the National Library of Australia and the State Library of Queensland for assisting us with accessing these magazines in hard-copy, and for allowing us to take thousands of photographs, with especial thanks to the NLA for providing us with high-quality scans for this book. We were delighted to see *The Home* join the digitised periodical collection in *Trove* toward the end of our project. These resources have not only enabled and enriched our own research, but also facilitated enthusiastic engagement by our undergraduate students with valuable primary sources.

An earlier version of chapter 1 was published by Kuttainen and Liebich in 2017 as “Worldly Tastes: Mobility and the Geographical Imaginaries of Interwar Australian Magazines,” *Transfers* 7 (1): 52-69. Elements of chapters 2 and 7 derive from Kuttainen and Galletly’s 2016 article “Making Friends of the Nations: Australian Interwar Magazines and Middlebrow Orientalism in the Pacific,” *Journeys* 17 (2): 23-48. Chapter 3 also draws material from Kuttainen’s 2017 article “Illustrating Mobility: Networks of Visual Print Culture and the Periodical Contexts of Modern Australian Writing,” *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature* 17 (2): 1-16. We thank these journals and their anonymous peer reviewers for providing valuable testing grounds for our ideas.

Finally, we thank our partners, families, and friends for living through the 1920s and 1930s with us. Various highs and lows of our own lives brought additional richness, complexity, and challenges to our work. Babies were born, parents became ill or passed away, long-distance relationships were endured. Our love and deep gratitude go to Jonathan, Magnus, Felix, and Sophie; Rick, Clío, and Leni; James, Nigel, and Carole.

THE TRANSPORTED  
IMAGINATION



## INTRODUCTION

# A DOOR TO THE WORLD

In 1931, Dora Payter, *The BP Magazine's* ebullient editress, announced a slogan contest for readers. The aim was to find a motto that would encapsulate the character of the magazine, published by the successful Australian shipping company, Burns, Philp & Co. The prize was a vacation to Melanesia. Papua, New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the New Hebrides (the British colonial name for Vanuatu) were hardly the tropical tourist destinations for Australians that Hawaii had become for Americans by this time. Yet *The BP Magazine* sought to induce its Australian readers to regard these islands as remote enough to be exotic, but still close enough to be accessible by modern, well-appointed transport. The winning slogan was sent in by a reader from Edithvale, Victoria: "A Door to the World—The World to Your Door" (*BP*, December 1931, 83). It captured the dual purpose of the magazine perfectly: to bring a sense of international modernity to Australian readers, and to entice them to be more than merely passive spectators and become active consumers instead—tourists exploring the world through the services of Burns Philp. Through its wide-ranging coverage of travel, arts, and literature, *The BP Magazine* was an Australian culture and leisure magazine that engaged and educated Australian readers about the world beyond their shores.

The magazine also had a directive to expand tourism, and a specific mandate to publicise the idea of the 'cruise' to the islands in the newly expanding pleasure periphery around Australia (N. Douglas 1996, 15; N. Douglas and N. Douglas 1996, 89; White 2005, 94).

Despite its exceptional and explicit connection to the shipping industry, *The BP Magazine* was also representative of a certain tier of print culture of its particular time and place, not an anomaly as claimed by former magazine publisher and literary historian Frank Greenop (1947, 235). For one, it was a strikingly modern periodical, wide in its coverage of general interest topics, and head and shoulders above the firm's promotional pamphlet *Picturesque Travel*, printed at infrequent intervals between 1911 and 1925 (N. Douglas 1996, 56). Its lush, full-colour illustrations, tinted photographs, quality paper, and innovative visual design features gave the magazine a charm and wide appeal beyond those who travelled or even only wished to do so, via Burns Philp or other shipping routes. Moreover, its promotional agenda, whilst directly tied to tourism, did not preclude it from forming wide-ranging commercial relationships with many different advertisers and engaging with a broad spectrum of modern consumer culture. The magazine's stylish appearance and commitment to travel did not set it completely apart from the promotional and commercial ambitions of other magazines of its day; these also drew on the glamour of travel and cachet of cosmopolitanism, linking notions of culture and leisure to various kinds of mobility, in the widest sense of the term.

*The Transported Imagination* explores a specific set of Australian periodicals during the interwar period (1920s and '30s)—*The Home* (1920–42), *The BP Magazine* (1928–42), and *MAN* (1936–74), which shared an attachment to social and geographical mobility, and to modern consumer and commodity culture. Writing in the introduction to Frank Greenop's *History of Magazine Publishing in Australia* in 1947, E.V. Timms, himself a prominent contributor to many Australian interwar magazines, noted the appeal of the magazine format:

Actually, it is the most popular vehicle in existence to-day for the conveyance of imaginative and general literature, of art, of discussion, and of serious and humorous visual entertainment. It is within reach of everyman, and one need only glance at a bookstall to see how wide its appeal. There are periodicals for all, and they range from crude productions to the finest color issues; they cater for the literary dilettante and the man who likes his reading raw, for the connoisseur and the man who likes his pictures hot. (vi)

The magazines we discuss in this book—quality culture and leisure magazines of the interwar period—were available to “everyman”; they contributed to a culture of mass print and a mass reading public. But with their relatively high cover prices and aspirational brief they targeted particular upscale and gendered segments of a rapidly differentiating reading public, at a time when Australian society underwent significant structural changes. These magazines thus embodied the tensions that existed between participating in mass culture while simultaneously attempting to cultivate distinct readerships and establish hierarchies of taste.

All three magazines spoke to an audience that was either highly mobile or desired upward social mobility, expressed in part through participation in modern commodity and consumer culture, of which leisure travel and an imagined involvement in international modernity were key parts. They addressed and successfully captured the attention of rapidly modernising, aspirational readerships. And they did so by conveying travel as glamorous and desirable. Their attachment to the cachet of travel was a large part of their role in signalling notions of exclusivity, prestige, and sophistication. These magazines, we argue, invoked distinct “geographical imaginaries” (Watts 1999) that were oriented toward foreign and exotic locales, in ways that helped coalesce their readers’ collective and individual identities as modern, worldly consumers. As modern, tastemaking publications, they were in more ways than one ‘vehicles,’ and in this book we explore their role in transporting readers

imaginatively beyond the shores of Australia, toward the geographies of international modernity and upward or downward on the scales of cultural value.

We argue that these magazines' orientations are never only spatial or geographical, even as these may appear to be their (and our) primary—though not sole—focus. They also offer orientations within a changing media landscape structured by rapidly shifting appraisals of cultural value and intensifying engagements with international modernity. The guiding question of our study is: *To what realms of the imagination did these magazines transport their readers?* In answering this question, we understand imaginative realms in three connected ways that correlate with notions of place, cultural value, and temporality. Matters of geography, cultural hierarchy, and modernity thus subtend our general approach, and structure—in that order—the three sections of our book. In each of these matters, issues of prestige and escape, or aspiration and anxiety, can be seen to connect these magazines and their target readers to changing cultural horizons, including aspects of emerging middlebrow cultures, unstable media values influenced by the ascendance of the American mass media, and colonial modernity.

Addressing a largely female, upper- and middle-class audience, *The Home* was launched by Sydney Ure Smith into a fast-changing post-war world in February 1920, with Ure Smith as art editor and Bertram Stevens followed by Leon Gellert serving as literary editor (Docker 1999, 18). Initially foregrounding the latest trends in art, society, literature, and design, *The Home* appeared to settle into a more typical women's magazine promoting fashion as well as good taste in house and garden departments, following its sale to the large Australian newspaper conglomerate Fairfax in 1934. The magazine fostered a number of Australian writers' careers, publishing serialised and short fiction from Katharine Susannah Prichard, Marjorie Barnard, Hugh McCrae, Myra Morris, David Unaipon, and D. Lindsay Thompson. Beyond the literary sphere, *The Home* provided an outlet for many Australian commercial artists who would later find

fame—in part through their advertising and illustration work for the magazine. Thea Proctor, Hera Roberts, Adrian Feint, and B.E. Minns made regular appearances in the pages or on the covers of *The Home*, contributing to the magazine's visual appeal and its reputation as modern and sophisticated (see figures 1 and 2).

By the late 1920s, *The Home* had begun to face competition for the attention of aspirational middle-class readers. *The BP Magazine*, started in 1928 as a quarterly periodical, targeted a similar, yet slightly different readership. It foregrounded the world of a colonial elite, appealing to both male and female readers of aspirational as well as firmly upper-class backgrounds. Whereas *The Home's* readers were largely urban, *The BP Magazine* addressed both urban readers and those residing in rural and tropical Australia, as well as pastoralists and planters located close to Australia's shores in the Pacific Islands serviced by Burns Philp's liner routes. Authors such as Hilary Lofting, Margaret Fane, Jean Devanny, Henrietta Drake-Brockman, Kurt Offenburg, and Jessie Urquhart contributed stories and features to *The BP Magazine* accompanied by lavish illustrations from Walter Jardine and Frances (Frank) Payne (see figure 3). In addition to offering engaging examples of the lesser known and often under-examined work of well-known Australian writers and artists in their original contexts, these culture and leisure magazines thus also serve as valuable archives of authors and artists who were well-known and prolific in their time, but who have since been forgotten.

Although *The Home* and *The BP Magazine* both folded in 1942 due to wartime paper shortages, they remain remarkable for how they flourished—maintaining their high-quality appearance and production values—during a period of Australian magazine publishing predominantly characterised by its extreme instability (Greenop 1947, 250). *MAN* similarly prospered as a lushly produced magazine during a period typically characterised by economic downturn, and operated within a shared tier of Australian print culture, even as its audience differed slightly



from the other two publications. With journalist Frank S. Greenop as editor, *MAN* was established in December 1936 by Kenneth Murray, an adman who had previously worked for Gordon & Gotch, Australia's major magazine and book distributor. Its address was to the new urban working- and middle-class man of aspiration. Now largely remembered for its tantalising cartoons and images of nude women that characterised the magazine especially in later years, in the 1930s *MAN* was a genuine gentleman's magazine, offering articles on international affairs, politics and travel, and including original fiction by Australian and international writers (see figure 4). Regular contributors to *MAN* during the interwar period include Ion Idriess, Frank Clune, Vance Palmer, E.V. Timms, Will Lawson, Jack Hides, and George Farwell. Monthly fashion features and film reviews were contributed by Phillip Lewis in the early years of the magazine, appearing alongside book reviews from Russell S. Clark (writing under the pseudonym Gilbert Anstruther). Magazines such as *MAN* were invaluable sources of commercial work for many significant Australian writers and illustrators, at a time when few literary or visual artists could survive on their artistic output alone.

In the pages of the three culture and leisure magazines which are our focus, we identify travel—with its glamour and appeal to the sensibilities of distinction, escape, and mobility—linked to social as well as geographical domains, as key features through which these magazines navigated a competitive marketplace, and through which Australian readers found their place in the changing world. Our focus is the 'outward gaze' of these publications in the golden age of glossy, quality magazines. We observe that this publication phenomenon coincided with the rapid massification of travel, mobility, and print culture, and that these trends are linked. In contrast to previous studies that have focused on the relationship between print culture and nationally "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983), or books and their generalised relationship to "imaginative geographies" (Said 1978), we draw on Watts' concept of the "geographical imaginary," as it offers a useful model for our consideration of how differentiated readings of available information about the world

to the world and, in doing so, constructed their ideas about themselves. We argue that this “geographical imaginary” (outlined in more detail in chapter 1) addressed collective subjects by directing their outward gaze to particular regions of the world and its collective objects, in specific ways that were sensitive to the aspirations and anxieties of readers’ class aspirations, gender, and race, and linked to the target readerships of these magazines. By delivering a potent mix of informative instruction, entertainment, worldliness, and escape connected with distinct geographical imaginaries, these magazines, we argue, guided their readers through the currents of international modernity and helped them navigate the intensive cultural shifts of this era in Australia.

As consumer products tied to the fashions of the modern marketplace, offering the fantasies of travel, worldly sophistication, and escape to their readers, all three of the magazines of our study appealed to the cachet of cosmopolitanism and addressed readers who actually travelled as well as those who only wished to. In an article titled “Do Australians Travel?” (*Home*, January 1927, 91), *The Home* reassured its readers that Australians travelled “extensively,” and emphasised the value of doing so. The piece concluded with the pronouncement that “to lay firmly and broadly the foundation of a good education, to understand fully the requirements of our own age, to obtain a clear and impartial view of the advantages and shortcomings of our own country, it is essential that we should travel” (91). Implicit in its claims that all but “the man on the land” were capable of travel—and its perhaps overblown estimation of the “number of Australian country people one me[t] journeying overseas”—this short article assumed a level of affluence of its readers. Certainly, this affluence was not the socio-economic reality of the majority of Australians at the time, though the aspirations to education, self-improvement, and modernisation signalled in *The Home* were in circulation amongst various tiers of Australian society. More generally, this article’s assumptions and modes of address hint at the ways in which modernity and travel were “riven by class” (Matthews 2005, 77) in ways

As Richard White's work on Australian leisure culture and vacationing reminds us: "As forms of holidaying proliferated, more effort went into establishing social distinctions among them" (2005, 90). Culture and leisure magazines invested significant efforts in ensuring that the social distinctions they promised and casually patrolled were maintained, even as they aimed to grow their readerships. The preferred destinations and manner in which Australians 'got away' for their culture and leisure pursuits, even imaginatively so, thus became increasingly significant in this era. These magazines (and the cultural realms they promised access to) also reinforced the extent to which fantasies of upward social mobility became progressively commoditised in modern leisure culture. Travelling elites sought new ways to distinguish themselves from the 'average' traveller and tourist, and average consumers sought to experience, even vicariously, the sorts of leisure activities and sophisticated pursuits once only available to the privileged few. Just as travelling elites sought to distance themselves from the uncultured tourist, these upscale magazines similarly sought to differentiate themselves and their readers from mass magazines and the general reading public, however vaguely defined. Yet they were also firmly located within the mass market, and opened up a world that might be consumed by ordinary readers who looked to them as tastemakers offering various visual and reading pleasures, and cannily profited by doing so.

The claims of wide access to travel in this *Home* article could be attributed to its appearance in the magazine in the mid-1920s, before the onset of the Great Depression, which greatly hampered the ability for the average Australian to travel overseas (White 1987a, 437). But even before (and after) the Depression, travel was largely though not exclusively the domain of the wealthy, representing "economic and cultural privilege on various levels" (Woollacott 2001, 25). As Ros Pesman has noted, "The Australian elite was" and continued to be "a travelling class to an extent that has not as yet been fully explored" (1996, 23). Although the actual number of Australian overseas travellers was small, per capita Australia's travelling class may in fact have been significantly larger than its North

American counterpart, even with the much longer journey involved in returning 'Home' to the imperial centre from the Antipodes (Pesman 1996, 23). Yet whilst travel appeared to be an elite activity, and even as these magazines' advertisements and features made obvious associations between travel and exclusivity, "one could also travel very cheaply" in this era if willing to travel less "luxuriously" (Fussell 1982, 71). As Angela Woollacott has reminded us, many less well-off Australians did manage to scrimp together a passage to Britain at least once in their lives (2001, 5, 19).

Perhaps even more significant than the act of travel was the cachet it carried. The interwar period saw a number of structural changes to Australia's economy that also triggered wider changes in Australian society and class structures, and shaped the ways in which new leisure practices became markers of social distinction. A conservative-led government in the first half of the 1920s propagated "development" as the main aim for Australia's economy, and believed especially in rural development as the base for prosperity. The impact of the global economic depression during the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, proved that a reliance on growing primary industry exports, especially wheat and wool, had been short-sighted. Australia was hit hard by the Depression and in 1932, unemployment rates hit highs estimated to have been between twenty-five and thirty-three per cent, although these rates were highest among single men and low-skilled workers (Peel and Twomey 2011, 181–186; Bongiorno 2013, 67–68, 77–78). Throughout the period, manufacturing industries expanded partly because of higher protective tariffs, and manufacturing firms were usually located in metropolitan areas to benefit from the economies of scale (Frost 2014, 252). The increasing importance of manufacturing was one reason for the continuing demographic shift from rural settlement to urban living, and for the increase of the professional middle class. By 1921, forty-two per cent of Australia's population of 5.5 million lived in the four big cities along its south-eastern shores, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, as well as in the somewhat smaller city of Perth in Western Australia. Sydney alone

counted a population of close to nine hundred thousand residents in that year, up from six hundred and fifty thousand only ten years earlier. By the mid-1940s, 1.5 million people called Sydney home (Frost 2014, 249; Butlin et al. 2014, 565).

In the popular imagination as well as in historical scholarship, the interwar years are often overshadowed by the experiences of the Great Depression. Yet, the effects of the global economic recession did not hit all of Australia's society in uniform ways. While real wages dropped, so did prices, and as Frank Bongiorno points out, "some people prospered, or were little affected," including "the less well-off individuals who remained in employment" (2013, 77). Likewise, as David Potts has argued, the "myth of the Great Depression is underpinned by an assumption that loss of work and income necessarily led to widespread trauma," a notion that Potts proceeds to debunk, highlighting instead stories of "resilience and happiness" that equally characterised the 1930s (2006, 4). In relation to cultural practices, Jill Julius Matthews has observed that "Too often historians have allowed their subjects only one life." Instead, she suggests that by remembering the effect of "romance" and the attractions of cosmopolitan glamour, "other lives [come] into the light" (2005, 7). As Matthews goes on to point out, "Even during the Great War and the Great Depression people went to the pictures. Not to forget, but to remember: that there was more to life than this, other lives than this" (2005, 7).

Certainly, the Depression was a significant event to shape Australian and global history (Macintyre 2004, 178–185; Peel and Twomey 2011, 185–193), yet it is hardly in evidence in these magazines. They address readers who were looking for novel and inexpensive ways to escape it. In addition, the period of the 1920s and 1930s saw the introduction of annual holidays and reduced working hours for the increasingly urban workforce. As Richard Waterhouse observed in his foundational study of Australian leisure culture, "Australians now had more rather than less time for leisure but they also had a wider choice of recreations" (1995,

167). Quality culture and leisure magazines tapped into this market, by providing recreational reading and by offering particular visions of a broader leisure culture in their pages, heavily structured by ideas of class, gender, and race.

In cultural terms, until recently, interwar Australia has been typically remembered as provincial, dull, blinkered and insular (Reid 1979, 115; Wallace-Crabbe 1974, 51; R. Ward 1982, 185; Bongiorno 2013, 84). The 1920s and '30s in Australia have also been generally regarded as a moment when cultural enterprises—especially art and literature—were focused on and heavily influenced by emerging ideas of nationalism and national identity. The quality culture and leisure magazines at the heart of this study provide evidence for the contrary. They drew on the visual appeals of cinema and indicated cultural aspirations to high culture in a vibrancy that was anything but colourless. And they reflected and constructed an outward-looking, international, and cosmopolitan atmosphere that existed alongside notions of cultural nationalism. Waterhouse noted in 1995 that Australian nationalism and national identity were of less concern to Australians in the interwar years than they were to later historians, a point that has received surprisingly little attention in subsequent scholarship (xii; see also Matthews 2005, 8). Perhaps the issue has been a reluctance to accept the possibilities of both nationalism and internationalism existing side-by-side, a point that historians and literary scholars are now beginning to explore.

Even though we do not focus on nationalism or the imagined nation in this book, we *are* interested in the processes of identity formation of segments of the modern Australian reading public. In this, we do witness the emergence of cultural nationalism in the Australian magazines of the interwar period. Yet whilst the domestic experience suffuses these magazines, from advice offered on home décor to garden design, and in profiles of prominent politicians or places of local interest, concerns with issues on the home turf by no means dominate these periodicals. Rather than inward-looking, the most spectacularly visual examples of

Australian magazine print culture of the interwar period looked outward. Their articles, advertisements, illustrations, and photographs showcased a fascination with the outside world. These well-capitalised quality periodicals transported the public imagination beyond dun-coloured outback scenes or insular Australian outlooks to international affairs, travel, cosmopolitan style, contemporary new writing from Australia and overseas, and popular genre fiction set in a slick world of motion and mobility, awash with alluring new commodities and beguiling promises to consumers and readers. These magazines were vibrantly engaged in the world, and their worldliness was one reason for their success. During the 1920s and 1930s, these magazines therefore played important roles in transporting Australian readers to places and spheres beyond their everyday circumstances.

Long dismissed as mere ephemera, magazines remain critically under-examined sources (Conor and Lydon 2011, 141). They possess largely untapped potential to reveal much about the contemporary attitudes of their target readerships, or assumptions about these, in relation to a variety of societal concerns. Courting readers during a “critical hinge period for modern print and other cultural forms” (D. Carter 2013a, 47), these Australian magazines responded to various cultural reorientations, including the emerging cultures of mass entertainment and new media. Deferring to Ann Ardis’ use of Roger Fidler’s concept of “mediamorphosis” (1997), we observe that these magazines both draw on and contribute to the “transformations of print media and the public sphere at the turn of the twentieth century” as well as other “modernist-era communication technologies” (Ardis 2012, v; vii).

In their introduction to the inaugural issue of *The Journal of Modern Periodical Studies*, Sean Latham and Mark Morrisson remark that modernity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the “golden age of print culture” (2010, iii). At this moment, they note, affordable “new technologies” in printing converged with near universal literacy and, consequently, “mass culture dawned not in film or on the radio, but

on the newspaper stands and in the bookstalls of London, New York, Delhi, Paris, Buenos Aires, and Los Angeles,” centres that offered an abundance of newspapers, books, and magazines (2010, xiii). Our book explores the contraction of vast geographical spaces alongside the advent of new media in the early twentieth century, and it takes seriously the role of magazines as technologies that connected readers to the world and transported them to various realms of culture—even if only imaginatively, through commodities, advertising, and fashion. To the list of locales mentioned by Latham and Morrisson, we add Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, and a wide number of non-metropolitan Australian regions. In this we undertake a re-positioning of Australia and its print culture not as a distant, far-flung outpost of global print and modernity, but as dynamically connected to these and other places, collocated in time.

Our book is intended to extend understandings of the “more outward-looking internationalising phase of Australian studies,” as described by Robert Dixon and Veronica Kelly (2008, xiii), as well as other recent work keen to recuperate the international links Australia participated in, particularly in terms of the networks of cultural production (e.g. Curthoys and Lake 2005). Such work, like Jill Julius Matthews’ *Dance Hall and Picture Palace* (2005); Ann Stephen, Andrew McNamara, and Philip Goad’s *Modernism & Australia* (2006); and most recently David Carter’s *Always Almost Modern: Australian Print Cultures and Modernity* (2013a), has been especially attentive to the collision of colonialism with modernity, a theme we also take up in our discussion of interwar quality magazines in Australia, particularly in their gaze across the Pacific. We draw from Matthews’ conception of Australian modernity, characterised not as “the last station on the line, a backwater ten years behind Europe and America” inhabited by a small group of colonials “clinging to the edges of a vast and empty continent” (2005, 8). Rather, these magazines addressed a society made up largely of urban-dwelling moderns, and helped coalesce their self-identity as an “international coterie of modern cosmopolitans, those who were up with the latest” (Matthews 2005, 10). As Dixon and Kelly have noted of “modernising Australia,” it “was always dynamic and



creative, and always interactively linked with international processes and ideas" (2008, xiii). It is important to underscore that Australia's place within British imperial space did not necessarily mean a position at the periphery of modernity. "The imperial connection did not mean only that local culture was provincial," David Carter writes; it also meant "cosmopolitanism [and] a sense of near simultaneity with literary and intellectual issues in London, Europe and America" (2013a, 17).

In literary studies, the publication of Franco Moretti's *Atlas of the European Novel* (1998) initiated a geocentric shift toward the related materialities of location and a greater awareness of space as a critical category of analysis. As Moretti put it:

An atlas of the novel. Behind these words, lies a very simple idea: that geography is not an inert container, is not a box where cultural history 'happens', but an active force, that pervades the literary field and shapes it in depth. Making the connection between geography and literature explicit, then—mapping it: because the map is precisely that, a connection made visible—will allow us to see some significant relationships that have so far escaped us. (3)

Since then, the spatial turn in literary studies has resulted in much attention to questions of space and place, including the emergence of the broader field of geocriticism, on which we build in our approach to these magazines. Geocriticism, as laid out by Tally (2011), offers a critical frame for consideration of the "spaces of literature," while also exploring the aspects of texts that "give meaning to our spatialized sense of being" (8), yet this approach tends to be quite strict in its understanding of what counts as literature and by implication, what matters in terms of cultural objects worthy of analysis. For instance, in his edited survey of emerging geocritical approaches, *Geocritical Explorations: Space, Place, and Mapping in Literary and Cultural Studies* (2011), Tally notes that "in producing a literary cartography, novels often depict social space by setting their particular plots against a tangle of spatial networks that embody social relations and by focusing on the ways individual characters negotiate

those spaces" (6). Throughout Tally's edited collection of essays, there remains an emphasis on the securely literary domain, and on the activist and utopian potentialities of spatial dimensions of literary texts to 'move' their readers.

However, Tally also grants that "a geocritical approach, taking its lead from literary cartography's analysis of locational data within cultural narratives, provides an interdisciplinary framework for identifying tropes across geographic regions and across media representations" (2011, 4). We share Peta Mitchell and Jane Stadler's concern, in their contribution to Tally's edited volume, with the ways in which "place is depicted and translated across media forms" (2011, 48). Such an approach involves an active attempt to avoid "valorising" the literary text (as Graeme Turner warns literature scholars who turn to film in their considerations of geography and continue to privilege film's literary aspects [1993, 14]). It also requires an attentiveness to the different affordances and cultural values of various media and generic forms, particularly as these are in flux during the intensively modernising period of our study. We draw on Debra Rae Cohen's concept of magazines as "intermedial" technologies (2015) in which book and film reviews, photographs, commercial art, illustration, fiction, and advertisements came together in rapidly modernising cultural spaces where the values of art, literature, entertainment, travel, and geography were in flux. As Matthews notes, modernity was by its very nature international, and as media of various forms were the main conduits of modernity into and through Australia, "Many looked outwards anxiously, but they did look outwards" (2005, 9–10). Aspiration, anticipation, and anxiety suffuse the cultural landscapes of the era of our study, and quality tastemaking magazines are alert to these attitudes in their readers, shaping and responding to them in their consistent attempts to court, capture, and coach their readerships.

Whilst much international periodical scholarship continues to focus on specific incarnations of magazines and pays little attention to questions of space and geography, Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins' work on

*The National Geographic* (1993) or Sarah Frederick's work on Japanese periodicals (2006) provide rare exceptions. Perhaps most significantly, Faye Hammill and Michelle Smith's (2015) study of the links between travel and aspirational middlebrow culture in Canada marks an important orientation in periodical studies toward other geographical horizons, and their exemplary scholarship on magazines, travel, and middlebrow print culture has deeply informed our focus on many of these same issues in the Australian interwar culture and leisure magazines of our study. Hammill and Smith productively employ the middlebrow as a category of analysis, defining it as "a mode of circulation, reception, and consumption of cultural products, and also as a space where high and popular culture meet, and where art encounters consumerism" (2015, 10). By providing their readers with the cultural capital that would "signify and project their class standing" (Ohmann 1996, 244), mainstream magazines, Hammill and Smith argue, "frame and present the artefacts they contain in such a way as to construct their readers as intelligent interpreters and consumers of modern culture, and simultaneously to provide them with a covert education in these practices" (2015, 11). The Australian magazines of our study can similarly be explored through the lens of the middlebrow, which we deploy as a cultural category that allows us to be alert to the often opposing forces of high art and commercial culture as they continuously play out in the constructions and discussions of cultural value.

Elizabeth Webby's (2004) article-length investigation of the international coverage in the Australian magazine *The Bulletin* (1880–2008) is also an important precursor to our study. *The Bulletin* had been hitherto understood as the principal organ of Australian cultural nationalism, yet Webby revealed the late nineteenth century magazine to be surprisingly freighted with cosmopolitan considerations. We are also heavily indebted to David Carter's collection of essays on Australian print culture and its orientation to international modernity, in *Always Almost Modern* (2013a), even if its focus is not always squarely upon periodicals or geography. Aside from his insightful reading of Australian modernity, emphatically connecting the Australian experience to international trends, Carter has

also stressed that periodicals ranging vastly in content and style, and reaching a sizable local audience, were an important index of interwar Australian print culture (see also Greenop 1947, 234; Osborne 2008), at a time when national book publishing in Australia was “seriously underdeveloped” (2013a, xii–xiii).

Mitchell Rolls and Anna Johnston’s recent study of the way in which the Australian institution *Walkabout* magazine (1934–1974) cultivated a deep curiosity about the nation in its modern Australian readers (2016), and Jane Stadler, Peta Mitchell, and Stephen Carleton’s work on the “Cultural Atlas of Australia” (2012; 2016) also demonstrate an enduring concern in Australian cultural, historical, and literary scholarship with geography and place. As Mitchell and Stadler put it succinctly: “Space, place and landscape are long-standing themes in Australian literature and cultural studies and, from the colonial era to the present day, Australian cultural narratives have proven fertile ground for spatial analysis” (2011, 47). Cumulatively, this body of scholarship amounts to a significant contribution to research into the relationship between print culture and place, and gestures toward an emerging body of Australian magazine scholarship strongly oriented toward considerations of geography.

We build on this existing work in literary geocriticism and extend it by considering mobility across space, and by looking to the sea as well as land. Throughout this book, our optics increasingly focus on the emergence of the Pacific as a significant region for the construction of social and cultural identities for the Australian readers of these magazines. While Paris, London, and New York occupy central places in the imaginaries of this period, and remain fashion-leaders and trendsetters, Los Angeles and Sydney emerge as new centres of fascination, progressively connected across the Pacific, and increasingly featured in magazines alongside Japan, China, Fiji, Noumea, Papua, Tulagi, and Java as travel destinations and places of interest. The Pacific (including its vast and interlinked island archipelagos and its various ports on islands and along the Pacific Rim) is a geographical, political, and cultural space that has received

far less attention in literary and print culture studies than other ocean basins, most notably the Atlantic and Indian Oceans (an observation also noted by James J. Connolly et al. in *Print Culture Histories Beyond the Metropolis* [2016]).

Epeli Hau'ofa's important call in "Our Sea of Islands" (1993) to reconceptualise Pacific territory as connecting rather than separating a vast oceanic community structured on trade, reciprocity, and travel—and striated by modernity and increasing contact between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples based on relationships of inequality—remains seminal to scholarship of Pacific Island cultures and literatures. Yet this call has gone largely unheeded by scholars on the Pacific Rim or elsewhere. Our book is the first study that joins periodical scholarship to considerations of late colonial modernity in the Pacific region, and we attempt to respect the diverse indigenous cultures in and across it, even as these magazines more rarely did. Our concern is not merely with how notions of style and fashion travel across the rapidly modernising Pacific and find their way into the periodicals of our study (such as in work already undertaken by visual culture scholar Erika Esau in *Images of the Pacific Rim: Australia and California 1850-1935* [2010]). Rather, we focus on the Pacific as a space variably conceived, as an "ocean of story" (to borrow a phrase from one of Australia's pre-eminent cosmopolitan writers of the interwar period, Christina Stead). Chris Dixon and Prue Ahrens argue, in the introduction to their 2010 collection *Coast to Coast: Case Histories of Modern Pacific Crossings*, that "The Pacific, as Westerners understood it, was always more imagined than real, signifying a fantasy rather than an understanding of the region" (1). Our book shows how magazine readers' fantasies were also part of understanding the world around them, and these imaginaries were often difficult to segregate from information and facts.

In the interwar period, the Pacific was at the fore of the nation's consciousness and imagination. Several factors contributed to this. First, Australia increasingly cemented its role as an imperial power in Melanesia.

In 1902, Britain placed Papua (until then known as British New Guinea) under official Australian control, becoming “an Australian territory in 1906” (Akami and Milner 2013, 540). Following the First World War, in 1921 Australia received the League of Nations mandate to govern German New Guinea, which had previously been a German colony (Douglas 1996, 28; Peel and Twomey 2011, 152; Fischer 2002, 176). As a result, Australia formed *de facto* sub-imperial relations with these places. Second, and related to this, a vocal public debate underscored an increasing awareness that Australia could no longer rely on Britain to provide naval defence in the region, and the question of Australia’s security in the face of a potential Japanese threat remained paramount (S. Ward 2008, 242–248). Thirdly, passenger liner traffic across the Pacific vastly grew in terms of scale and liner routes, expanding further into Melanesia and Asia, and opening up the Pacific for mass travel in unprecedented ways (White 2005, 94). Lastly, the influx of imported American magazines and Hollywood movies that arrived with the expansion of shipping routes and across the wireless beckoned with modern glamour, further facilitating a reorientation towards the Pacific (Peel and Twomey 2011, 179; Bongiorno 2013, 85). The result of all these developments was that Australians were engaged and familiar, even if only by proxy, with the Pacific, a familiarity that was further fostered through print culture and its various affordances. Whilst the persistent cultural orientation towards Britain and its accompanying Anglo-centrism remains in evidence in these culture and leisure magazines, their pages also present an emerging consciousness of and fascination with the Pacific, its islands, and the up-and-coming nation across it: America.

These real and imaginary engagements increased understandings of the region while simultaneously entrenching fantasies of racial threat and exoticism, as well as developing new modes of consumption and leisure in Australia’s emerging pleasure periphery. Culture and leisure magazines mediated these trends, in both their slick, genre fiction and romances, as well as in their non-fiction articles and advertising. These mediations, however, did not construct or build on a consensus of what the



Pacific actually signified—as recent historiography also reveals (Armitage and Bashford 2014; Matsuda 2006, 2012). Our book thus ‘discovers’ a number of simultaneous ‘Pacifics’ in these magazines, and notes that magazine readers were variously transported to South Sea idylls and to the ‘progressive,’ or even Westernised Pacific of Japan, for instance, and to the glamour of Hollywood or exotic Hawaii. The Pacific of colonial modernity emerges as a complex, contentious, and particularly significant space in these magazines.

Our exploration of the geographical imaginaries of Australian interwar culture and leisure magazines involves a deep consideration of the kinds of modernities such publications presented and helped to create. We take up Robert Dixon’s interest in the interrelationship between emergent media and “colonial modernity,” borrowing his term to rectify the “occlusion of colonialism” (2001, 12) in histories of modernity, and to signal the complicated intersection of a rapidly internationalising and modernising mass media landscape with modernity’s ‘others.’ The term “colonial modernity” is key to our study. Several scholars have invoked the term before us in ways that suggest a generalised condition, or which imply a more specific set of geopolitical relations of subordination. Gelder and Weaver have used “colonial modernity” to refer to Australia’s ongoing imperial connections to England, specifically in terms of describing Australia as a set of British colonies prior to Federation (2014), and at other times extending this period “at least as far as the First World War and arguably beyond, into the 1920s” (Gelder 2011, 1). Other scholars, notably Ngaire Douglas, have employed the term to describe Australia’s own sub-imperial role in the Pacific (N. Douglas 1996, 28). In spite of these varied attempts to discuss and define colonial modernity, and “to elaborate the ways colonialism has structured modernity” (Woollacott 2001, 10), it remains the case that “little attention has been given to the intersections of colonialism and modernity” (8). Even as the studies of Australian modernity we have already enumerated have since contributed to a re-envisioning of the period as culturally vibrant and complex, few

modernity to its colonial or sub-imperial role in the Pacific" (2001, 10), or to engage in studies of the entanglements of modernity and colonialism more broadly.

In our book, we suggest that colonial modernity can be understood in these various, overlapping ways, and that the term also relates to Australia's version of modernity as it played out on the streets of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, and in many regional centres connected through print. Still, such local expressions of modernity were always connected to global forms of cultural expression, and in the Australian context this included British imperial ties. Empire was an inescapable part of colonial modernity, but it did not mean that Australian modernity was necessarily backward. As David Carter has explained of the paradox at the heart of Australian modernity, as a nation of migrants, Australia was "born modern" even as its provincialism is often understood "to be the very opposite of metropolitan modernity" (2013a, viii). The pre-eminence of the voyage back to England in *The Home's* travel rhetoric, for instance, reinforces the degree to which travel (especially for women) was "not only a matter of individual liberation but also of education about and participation in the empire" (Woollacott 2001, 19). At the same time, these periodicals bore witness to, and helped construct, the ways that different classes of Australian readers re-oriented their bearings not only to England and empire, but also across the Pacific in various ways.

The culture and leisure magazines at the heart of our study portray this imperial dimension of travel and geography in complex ways, in which attitudes to and notions of race become evident. Within the context of the 'White Australia Policy,' which restricted immigration to Australia along ethnic categories and was responsible for the expulsion of many South Sea Islanders who had been imported for labour in the cane fields decades earlier, few white Australians had exposure to people of other races and ethnicities within Australia, apart from limited contact with Aboriginal Australians. These magazines constructed and reinforced a perception which saw the peoples whom travellers might expect to encounter during



the course of their overseas trips regarded with heightened exoticism and primitivism. Despite the way these publications pandered to their readers' assumed sense of racial superiority, they also fed an appetite for these encounters and encouraged Australians to get to know their international 'neighbours.' We argue that they contributed to a repositioning of Australians toward the Pacific, in ways that demonstrate an earlier, Australian version of the phenomenon Christina Klein has characterised as a modern middlebrow form of orientalism (2003). The 1927 article in *The Home* referred to earlier, "Do Australians Travel?", repeatedly expresses its conceptions of the 'educational' benefits associated with travel to "the centres of the older civilisation" in Europe. Cultures older than those of Europe or England, however, are not mentioned and positioned by implication as ex-centric, peripheral, and uncivilised. The article also avoids mentioning the increasing allure of new entertainments hailing from America, or the call of Australia's own emerging pleasure periphery, destinations that figure more or less prominently in all of the Australian interwar magazines of our study.

In our book, we suggest these various, overlapping conceptions of colonial modernity are mirrored in the contents of these magazines themselves. More specifically, our gentle critiques of the utopian impulse of geocriticism and its links to securely literary culture follow Dixon who, in his 2001 book, *Prosthetic Gods*, outlined a new way of "doing postcolonial studies" which purposely moves away from earlier tendencies to use "theoretically driven textual interpretation" as historical evidence in itself (something he considers himself guilty of in *Writing the Colonial Adventure* [1995]). Instead, he pointed out the need to work "upwards from detailed evidence rather than downwards from theoretical models, and always to place literary or visual texts in as richly contextualised settings as possible in order to understand their relation to other texts, to their consumers, and to related domains" (2001, 3). Magazines are ideally suited for such endeavours as they force us to consider texts in relation to consumption, and through magazines we are able to see into and beyond literature across varying cultural domains to engage with

a diverse array of print and visual matter. Such an approach, always aware of magazines' embeddedness in consumer culture, and of their mediation of the increasingly attenuated relationship between culture and leisure, helps us attempt to avoid the pitfalls of overly privileging literary material and potentially conferring upon it far more cultural significance or social agency than it may have held in its original context. As David Carter has bemoaned, "literary postcolonialism has had little to say about popular culture, popular modernity, or the culture industries" (2007, 117). By paying close attention to "the different domains in which texts circulate and have meaning" (Dixon 2001, 7) we endeavour to uncover the intersections between different domains of culture that mediated modernity in these magazines, by considering the ways they courted their variously conceived target readerships, and through our focus on their engagement with and across overseas geographies and the Pacific region.

In many cases, the various locales imagined in these quality culture and leisure magazines were entirely products of fantasy. Yet the magazine as a publishing genre holds the consumer fantasy and the real in productive tension. As David Earle has put it: magazines are critically important but often disregarded repositories of culture; they are "the great ignored literary product of the twentieth century" (2009, xi) that can provide deep insight into the cultural milieu of their time, place, and readership. They do so through content and through the materialities of production, the "material markers of genre, such as price, page size, types of advertising, and frequency of publication" (Morrisson 2001, 39), which are suggestive of target readerships. Yet it must be stressed that magazines are by no means 'documentaries' of social history. Instead, they are carefully marketed consumer products designed to appeal to readers by addressing and cultivating desire. As Earle has noted, American magazines of the 1950s offered "visual lollipops" (2009, 2) that fed fantasies of desire and appetites for consumerism. This equally applies to magazines in interwar Australia. To readers with increasing time for leisure, whether through new legal provisions for vacation time or involuntarily because of the

Great Depression, these magazines offered escape from the confines of domestic life and the insularity of Australia.

In not only serving up fascinating write-ups and entertaining stories often set in foreign locales, but also in juxtaposing these texts with lush, colourful, and attractive illustrations, these magazines were also deeply connected to the ascendancy of cinema and the broader aspects of modern, ocularcentric culture and its appeals. The growing visual attraction of advertisements during the early twentieth century and the marked increase in the ratio of picture to printed text meant that in quality magazines, defined by their technical and design innovations, “texts themselves took on an artistic appearance” (Ohmann 1996, 180). The highest paying advertisements, and perhaps the classiest ones, were for travel companies. These also contained the most arresting images, resonating most deeply with Ohmann’s observation of modern periodicals that “the advertisements themselves were a spectacle, a cornucopia, a gallery of popular art” (1996, 212). Commercial art was intimately tied to magazine publishing in this period, when “American-style art direction was collapsing the boundaries between advertising and editorial approaches taken to magazines” (Aynsley 2007, 52).

In interwar Australia, as David Carter explains, “*Home* and *BP Magazine* are not just new magazines but new *kinds* of magazines, invested in a new relationship between distinction and style, stylishness and modernity” shifting prestige away from “old money” and “*gravitas*” and orienting readers “towards style, fashion, *and* artistic distinction” (2015, 180, emphasis in original). These new kinds of relations are one of the subjects of our book. Arty advertisements by signature commercial artists were part of these magazines’ appeal, merging advertising with art and fiction illustrations, and blending the registers of consumerism, entertainment, and literature. Artists often worked across magazines of the same class. Likewise, advertisements were duplicated in several titles of magazines within the same market segment. For instance, in *The BP Magazine* and *The Home* the same Orient Line and Burns Philp advertisements illustrated by

Walter Jardine regularly appeared, as did P&O advertisements by Adrian Reint, signalling an understanding of style and artistic distinction shared by both publications (see figures 5 and 6 for examples of such work). These full-page, full-colour advertisements—in many cases providing the only colour in the magazines in the early twenties, and still offering the most spectacular images through the late thirties—promoted a dizzying array of exotic destinations and ports of call, amongst them London, Cape Town, Honolulu, Singapore, Suez, Ceylon, Java, Japan, Papua, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. This cemented the relationship between travel and the magazines, consolidating the affinity between cosmopolitanism, mobility, consumer culture, and art. By the interwar years, many of the new magazines were paying enormous salaries to attract the best graphic artists (Caban 1983, 37), and these quality culture and leisure magazines set the highest standards.

In the international market, the titles that upheld the highest production values were the upmarket ‘quality magazines’ such as *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue*, and *Esquire*, publications that scholars have subsequently identified with the middlebrow—a cultural category associated with cultural products and practices somewhere between the modernisms of high culture and the assumed pulp of popular culture (D. Carter 2013a; G. Douglas 1991; Hammill 2007; Hammill and Leick, 2012). The upmarket Australian magazines of our study were tastemakers of high production quality that managed to emulate these titles in the local publishing scene. The tensions they upheld between the imagined and the real, we argue, can be mapped, albeit inexactly, onto a related set of tensions between mass and class that register in these magazines’ relationships to the emergence of middlebrow culture, and also alongside other changes in the proliferation of new media technologies as well as the rise of national literatures.

The middlebrow, as David Carter has put it, represents “the vast middle where high culture values are folded into the commodity form of quality entertainment or discerning lifestyle choice” (2013a, 129). Culture and leisure magazines were key sites that “reproduced high

culture values and forms—such as good music, good writing, or serious talk—but reconfigured them through new media and new forms of consumption” (2013a, 132). Recent work on the middlebrow as a cultural category has aimed to reclaim what people actually read in their day, including mainstream and quality magazines. The significance of this has been a greater alertness to the dynamics between print and society, and to the shifting and contingent nature of cultural value. As Hammill and Smith argue, by attending to the “dynamic model of interaction between different forms of cultural capital” middlebrow culture reveals “a constant, nervous juggling” between high culture and the mass market, “rather than a stable, in-between category” (2015, 8–9).

The work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) has been vital to the way in which middlebrow scholarship has attended to the social discriminations and identifications involved in judgments of taste. Paying attention to the processes of social validation or exclusion offered by acts of reading has uncovered the anxieties and aspirations of the middlebrow as formative aspects of an emerging middle class. Long dismissed as “delightful entertainment” for female readerships and tastes, middlebrow culture has also often been characterised in gendered terms, as Erica Brown and Nicola Humble have separately noted (Brown 2013, 1; Humble 2001). Recent scholarship has begun to extend the category of the middlebrow to mid-range, masculine, non-fiction writing and its readerships. Kate Macdonald has observed that in the interwar period, the cultural values of entertainment and elucidation, taste and self-education “were thrown into question,” and so too was “their relationship to changing ideas about masculinity and femininity” (2011, 11). Such re-negotiations of notions of gender in connection to cultural taste and value are also visible in the magazines we discuss here, in terms of their target female and male middlebrow readerships, and in the ways in which the magazines negotiated a particular Australian version of international modernity connected to mobility.

In contrast to the emergence of the middlebrow in Britain, Europe and North America, the middlebrow in Australia, as David Carter argues, did not arise in reaction to experimental literary modernism or cultural institutions, but through imported books, and through art more emphatically than literature, most especially in tastemaking quality magazines such as *Art in Australia* and *The Home* (2013a, 137–138). In interwar Australian magazines connected to the art, commodity, and international book scene, we argue, fashion, glamour, advertising, entertainment, and literary culture operated as shaping aspects of class, gender, and race, as did travel and mobility. Quality culture and leisure magazines such as *MAN*, *The Home*, and *The BP Magazine*, like their overseas equivalents *Esquire*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Sunset* played a key role in linking taste to reading and commodity culture. They also connected Australians' outward gaze to worldliness through middlebrow aspiration and international modernity. International in outlook from the very first, in the way they consciously emulated sophisticated quality magazines imported from overseas, they also, we argue, linked social standing and mobility to particular terrains of geography and geographical mobility, in ways that consolidated the shared identities of their readers.

As Hammill and Smith (2015) have demonstrated, quality mid-range magazines connected travel to middlebrow culture, navigating emerging cultural hierarchies and trading on attendant notions of aspiration and anxiety that proliferated in the early twentieth century. The aspirational and luxury associations of travel fed directly into the “middlebrow project” of such magazines, whereas the “presentation of travel—whether actual or vicarious” signified and functioned as “a pleasurable form of self-improvement” in “interactions between text and image, commercial and editorial content” (2015, 65). In such a way, these magazines did not just, as Earle suggests, provide escapism and entertainment, though no doubt these aspects mattered. They also offered ways of participating in cultures of aspiration. As Ohmann has noted, when branding emerged as the greatest advertising innovation of the early twentieth century, a brand's “personality” and “aura,” as well as its “association with the sorts



of people who supposedly use[d] it” became values which magazines both absorbed and promulgated (1996, 102). Branded advertisements in American upmarket publications, Ohmann points out, “consistently addressed readers as belonging to one of the two highest social classes, or as aspiring to be like such people” and “constituted their audience as one that valued prestige” (1996, 206).

In Nicola Humble’s conception (2011), the middlebrow was less a matter of properties inherent in texts than an indicator of how texts were received and read, including the bodily experiences of reading positions: a simple matter of sitting forward or leaning back—of distinguishing those texts that are read at a desk from those read while relaxing. Humble considers the culture of leisure that shapes middlebrow reading practices, alongside the institutionalisation of university scholarship that shapes those of the highbrow. Our study considers the way these magazines bring together the loaded categories of “culture and leisure,” and the way they position readers as both sitting forward and leaning back; while also orienting them outward beyond the shores of Australia, and consolidating their identities as modern, sophisticated Australian consumers. These magazines combined instruction in culture (which appealed to aspirant readers seeking edification and cultural instruction) while also offering them relatively affordable outlets for leisure (which appealed to readers seeking various kinds of entertainment and escape). As such, they were important transmitters of middlebrow culture in an Australian milieu that lacked at this time, as David Carter has explained, the “density” of the institutions and avant-garde aesthetics that defined middlebrow culture overseas (2013a, 137).

As with other middlebrow institutions such as book clubs, book societies, or the ABC radio, quality magazines “reproduced high-culture values and forms—such as good writing, good music or serious talk—but reconfigured them through new media and new forms of consumption” (D. Carter 2013a, 132). These definitively modern, consumer-oriented aspirational arts and lifestyle magazines were thus, we argue, at once

products of and reactions against what Dixon and Kelly have called “the sensuous and emotional effects of everyday life of technology-driven, mass popular culture” as it arrived on Australian shores (2008, xvi). The culture and leisure magazines of our study both embody and address the “dialogic relationship maintained between high and vernacular expressions of modernity” (2008, xvi). In various ways they mediate for their local readerships high cultural aesthetics and tastes on the one hand, and popular cultural appeals and entertainments on the other. They also, as we go on to show, demonstrate how the relations between lightly entertaining, edifying leisure and serious culture become strained in this time; before the period after the Second World War, when cosmopolitanism was to matter, as David Carter has argued of Australian culture, less and not more (2013a). Although work has already been undertaken by Tony Bennett, Michael Emmison, and John Frow (1999) to track the cultural construction of taste in an Australian context, their study focuses on a more contemporary time period and explores Australians’ responses to a wide range of modern mass media forms, while our attention remains solely focused on the role of magazines as mediators of cultural value in this key, underexamined but importantly constitutive modern period, between the wars.

The quality culture and leisure magazines we discuss here contributed to an emerging middlebrow culture in Australia, but it would be too restrictive to identify them merely as middlebrow products. *The Home*, as Robert Holden has argued in *Cover Up*, “established and popularised the very notion that Australia even had a smart set in the first instance. In a very real sense,” he maintains of the magazine, it “created its own audience and then provided a product and a range of interests for them” (1995, 63). David Carter notes that both *The Home* and *The BP Magazine* were defined by their very modernity, and also by their links to travel: *The Home*, he writes, was “launched in 1920 as an upmarket magazine to promote good taste in art, fashion, and design” while *The BP Magazine* “focused on travel, society, and entertainment” (2015, 176). *MAN*, which described itself as “both highbrow and lowbrow” (June 1937, 7) also



attempted to attach itself to the cachet of cosmopolitan sophistication, as Richard White (1981) has explained. It was, White argues, a reaction to the “paranoia and isolationism of the 1920s,” and part of a more widespread “conscious effort to give Australia a more sophisticated image” as “‘high’ culture became one of the measures of sophistication” (1981, 145, 146). *MAN* addressed readers as “city sophisticates, with interest in men’s fashion, French wines, ballet, cars, modern art, cocktail recipes, theatre and—of course—women” (1981, 146). Most importantly, it condemned the old image of a parochial, insular Australia: “drab pictures” that they considered at least “half a century old” (*MAN*, March 1945). For *The BP Magazine*, a new modern image of Australia and Australians was also part of its appeal to the modern aspirational reader. As the editorial on the very cusp of the Great Depression noted:

The aim is to give our best to the best public—the Australian reader. Contributions and illustrations are by Australians, covering at the same time a wide field of interest in the Old World as well as the great countries of the Southern Hemisphere. As wide as the seas, as far as the Poles, stretch the vast areas of human habitation, and anywhere and everywhere, by sea, land and air, our readers will be able to travel, in imagination, to the isles of their dreams—in preparation perchance of the day when fortune enables them to make their dream come true. (December 1929, 19)

It is these imagined Australian readers, variably conceived, targeted, and addressed as aspiring, modern internationals with distinct geographical imaginaries and dreams that interest us. We note that even though these magazines were of a similar class, they all hoped to find a particular niche amongst the Australian reading public, and were all aimed at distinct reading segments. In the opening chapter of our book, we explore their target markets and geographical ambits as fully as possible by adopting a ‘slice approach,’ reading all three magazines closely across one year. This process uncovers their imagined readerships and main features, in ways that sustain the focus of our book as we then proceed to trace these more broadly and more intensively across their publication spans

in the rapidly changing interwar years of our study. Whilst it is the unity of these magazines that interests us most, and their changes over time in their bids to capture and maintain a modernising and rapidly evolving segment of the reading public, we organise our book in chapters that resemble, but do not entirely focus on, discrete departments of the magazines. Our chapter headings are thus loosely modelled on a typical table of contents found in the magazines of our study: "International Affairs" (chapter 1), "Non-Fiction Travel Features" (chapter 2), "Fashion and Advertising" (chapter 3), "Authors and Artists," (chapter 4), "Book and Film Reviews" (chapter 5), "Currents of Fiction" (chapter 6), and "Pacific Travellers" (chapter 7).

Increasing its periodicity from a quarterly to a monthly format in January 1926, *The Home* editorial reflected on what had made the magazine a success. "Once floated," the editorial announced,

*The Home* has kept its course slowly but surely. Richly and heavily cargoad she had needed careful steering. Subscribers were swift to see the excellence and luxuriousness of her freight and advertisers were quick to appreciate the value of her trade routes. (13)

The cultural freight and trade routes of these magazines sustain our study, and our endeavours also call on careful steering. Our first challenge is to describe the various seductions of these magazines without being seduced by them ourselves. We look to recover this important set of outward-looking magazines and read them alongside each other, through the lens of a wide body of international and interdisciplinary scholarship that connects Australia's experience of modernity to transnational histories of modernism, consumerism, leisure, and reading culture; in doing so, we hope to do justice to the value of this similarly 'richly cargoad' material. We also hope that this book contributes to new understandings of the interwar period and its emerging segmented readerships by considering the complex Australian experience of colonial modernity and an important range of its periodical artefacts within larger contexts of international modernity and print culture. Our work is informed by

what Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz identify in their influential *PMLA* article as the “transnational turn” in modernist studies, and by broadened conceptions of modernism that go beyond the literary object of analysis to consider print culture’s wider relationship with “media in an age of mass persuasion” (2008, 737). In addition, it is inspired by Susan Stanford Friedman’s work on *Planetary Modernisms* (2015), and other expanded re-conceptualisations of the modernist project that have drawn attention to a wide array of cultural material beyond the typical canon of high modernism and its more limited engagement with geography.

*The Transported Imagination* offers a counterbalance to some of the radical nationalist accounts generated of Australian literary and cultural history from the 1890s onwards, which continue to dominate cultural and historical understanding despite the transnational turn in Australian literary and historical scholarship. Our reading of this set of Australian culture and leisure magazines thus attempts important new work in the cultural and textual tracing of periodical and print culture that is, as Ann Ardis explains in other contexts, necessary to redeem its promises, and to open up fresh lines of inquiry to unsettle established frames of reference (2011, 20–21). While Ardis refers to the established frames of modernist and middlebrow studies in British and American literary scholarship, our contention (following David Carter’s point) is that periodical studies promise to open up new understandings of Australia’s engagement with international modernity during a period typically considered as insular and isolationist. A focus on magazines thus puts Australian scholarship in dialogue with international scholarship of the middlebrow, modernism, modernity, print cultures, magazines, mobility, and international media history. In such a way, we answer here a call made by Dixon and Kelly in *Impact of the Modern: Vernacular Modernities in Australia 1870s-1960s* (2008), to “imagine new types of cultural history” tracing the circulation of people, print and ideas “in but also beyond the territorial spaces of the nation” (xii); and to conceive of “international modernity” and its “different manifestations”—not just

Australia" (xiv). *The Transported Imagination* considers how magazines, as modern media technologies, brought the world to Australian readers, and in so doing, identifies Australia's colonial modernity as a manifestation of international modernity in the interwar period.