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*Transported to Botany Bay: Class, National Identity, and the
Literary Figure of the Australian Convict* by Dorice Williams
Elliott (review)

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wall, Ormiston Gorge (1946), acquired by the NGV in that same year; it was actually Albert Namatjira's *Illum-Baura (Haast's Bluff)*, *Central Australia* (1939), added to the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia in 1939. More could have been written about how the acquisition of British landscape painting supported a particular conservative ideology in Australia heralded by art critic and gallery director J. S. Macdonald, art critic and printmaker Lionel Lindsay, and landscape artist Hans Heysen, among others. Indeed, the coverage of the modernist period in Australia is a little cursory. In the spirit of collaboration, a coauthored publication with an Australian art historian may have avoided these occasional missteps.

At points more detailed histories and descriptions of particular works, as well as more background concerning individuals discussed, would have livened the account. So too would an expanded discussion of British-Australian relations as a backdrop to the acquisition of artworks from Britain. This is alluded to at times but not explored in depth. This may be due to the fact that Potter is attempting to cover a broad period of ninety-three years.

Overall, though, Potter is to be commended for producing an extensively researched, thought-provoking, and convincing account of the previously overlooked area of acquisitions of British art for Australia.

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Transported to Botany Bay: Class, National Identity, and the Literary Figure of the Australian Convict, by Dorice Williams Elliott; pp. xii + 289. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2019, \$80.00.

The figure of Magwitch is crucial to Dorice Williams Elliott's *Transported to Botany Bay: Class, National Identity, and the Literary Figure of the Australian Convict*, a lively study of Australian convict culture in nineteenth-century literary texts. Charles Dickens's compelling portrait of the sacrificial outcast—named Abel, in contrast to the many villainous Cains of London's underworld—asks crucial questions about the ethics of transportation in Victorian penal policy while also probing the dynamics of narrative expulsion. In his moving first-person account of his descent into crime, Magwitch complains that he was treated by the state as a chattel—of no more account than a “silver tea-kettle” (*Great Expectations* [Penguin, 1985], 364)—and while Dickens does not launch a full-scale attack on a legal system that vilified poverty, he nevertheless recognizes the interdependence of the wealthy and those who labor for others: in Magwitch's words to Pip, “I lived rough, that you should live smooth” (343). Historians recently have described eighteenth-century criminal law as a form of class war: during the early years of the Industrial Revolution, almost 250 offenses against property were made capital under the terms of the Bloody Code, and as Elliott describes here, another 160,000 men, women, and children were punished with shipment to the ports of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) between 1787 and 1867. Many died on the way out, in prison, or in exile, but

others found prosperity and a chance of social redemption. Elliott is alert to the ways in which Britain's attempts to slough off its surplus of working class criminals became the foundational narrative of a new nation, and how that process of identity formation had to negotiate the original sin and social stain of convict transportation.

Elliott situates Magwitch's plight alongside articles in *Household Words* (1850–59) that illuminate Dickens's wider exposure to, and attitudes toward, nineteenth-century penal policy. She notes, rightly, that narrative treatment of the convict serves as a test case for nineteenth-century practices of sympathy: on the one hand, convicts deserve compassion for their sufferings (especially if sentenced to the centers of secondary correction, such as the dreaded Port Arthur, where flogging was inflicted regularly); on the other hand, the judgment of the law could not be questioned—hence the oft-repeated plot device in which convicts could only be treated as fully human if they were the innocent victims of wrongful accusation, as in Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of His Natural Life* (serialized from 1870 to 1872). Elliott brings Dickens's work into conversation with broadsheets and ballads that also addressed crime against property and the aptness of punishment, concluding that “most of the extant English transportation broadsides uphold the notion of a just and ideal nation.” Crimes and punishments “are portrayed as aberrations that actually reinforce the justice provided by the English state, an important function in incorporating the working classes into the notion of a national subject” (71).

Much of the novelty of Elliott's study lies in her careful illumination of lesser-known texts by convicts: James Hardy Vaux's *Memoirs* (1819), for example, as well as the only two known novels published by convict authors, Henry Savery's *Quintus Servinton* (1831) and James Tucker's *The Adventures of Ralph Rashleigh* (1844–45). She also considers Victorian novels depicting convicts—Charles Reade's *It Is Never too Late to Mend* (1856) and Richard Cobbold's *The History of Margaret Catchpole, a Suffolk Girl* (1845)—by placing them in dialogue with canonical works by Anthony Trollope and George Eliot. Hetty in *Adam Bede* (1859) is a female Magwitch, sacrificed that others may learn “there's a sort of wrong that can never be made up for” (George Eliot, *Adam Bede* [Penguin, 1994], 507). Elliott describes the contours of oppression in different national communities and gestures toward other experiences of involuntary migration—a topic of current concern. She treads carefully around the obvious problem caused by the settlement of Australia for penal purposes and the expulsion of impoverished English, Scottish, and Irish convicts—all deserving of our sympathy, and the latter group in particular also subject to oppression at home—that nevertheless constituted an invasion that destroyed ancient Indigenous cultures, either by deliberate acts of genocide (as in the Black War in Van Diemen's Land [1828–32]) or (more indirectly but equally as effectively) through disease and competition for resources. Elliott rightfully notes that most nineteenth-century novels are silent on this subject, and it remains for contemporary writers to illuminate the terrible costs of the wholesale transplantation of British subjects to a land otherwise untouched by Europeans.

There are many riveting stories beyond Elliott's book. The recuperation of the convict as a figure who might be rendered economically productive in a newly democratic nation is brilliantly depicted in Peter Carey's *Jack Maggs* (1997). Yet the redemption of Maggs/Magwitch is only a part of the Australian national story. Those who are interested in the experiences on the other side of the frontier might read Richard Flanagan's *Wanting* (2008) and Rohan Wilson's *The Roving Party* (2011), novels of extraordinary

lyrical intensity that acknowledge the full extent of Indigenous suffering. Additionally, the memoirs of Jørgen Jørgenson (a Danish adventurer once proclaimed King of Iceland, and subsequently transported to Van Diemen's Land as a convict) and the papers, later published in two volumes as *The Friendly Mission* (1966) and *Weep in Silence* (1990), of George Augustus Robinson (the so-called conciliator of the Aboriginal tribes in Van Diemen's Land during the Black War), make for tragic and compelling reading. Finally, the experience of political prisoners like the Young Irelanders could also be addressed in more depth. John Mitchel's *Jail Journal* (1854), written in prison in Van Diemen's Land in the early 1850s, casts light on British attitudes toward the internal borders of Empire (and ends with his daring escape from imprisonment dressed as a Catholic priest). Life on the Antipodean frontier produced both comedy and tragedy beyond measure, and literary authors in recent years have quarried it to produce experimental and moving works (of which Flanagan's prizewinning account of convict life in *Gould's Book of Fish* [2001] remains one of the most prominent examples).

Elliott suggests that the convict experience—and its literature—is little known in the U. S. and U. K. But it is, of course, well known in Australia, where many children can still recite the ballads and ditties passed down from their convict forebears. For my grandparents, it was a source of tremendous shame to have, in their words, so *many* convict ancestors (in our case, members of the thrice-exiled generation, sent first to Port Jackson, then on to Norfolk Island in the early 1790s, and finally to Van Diemen's Land). But the belief in the convict stain has faded in the last fifty years or so. Elliott's study reminds us of the ways in which mass migration, voluntary and involuntary, has shaped the contours of the modern world.

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Intimacies of Violence in the Settler Colony: Economies of Dispossession around the Pacific Rim, edited by Penelope Edmonds and Amanda Nettelbeck; pp. xi + 285. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, \$119.99, \$99.99 paper, \$79.99 ebook.

The growth of comparative scholarship on settler colonialism has been accompanied by methodological divergences over questions of scale and approach. On the one hand, there is what might be called the gargantuan-economic approach of British World scholarship. This is exemplified by James Belich's *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (2009), which offers a broad-brush model of “explosive colonization” as an explanation of settler expansionism in both the British Empire and the U. S. ([Oxford University Press, 2009] 182). On the other hand, there is the social-network approach of the new imperial history. Associated especially with the work of Antoinette Burton, this approach focuses on transnational webs of culture, gender, and reproduction. Penelope Edmonds and Amanda Nettelbeck place their collection of essays, *Intimacies of Violence in the Settler Colony: Economies of Dispossession around the Pacific Rim*, squarely in the latter camp, as part of the effort to “move beyond” the British World