

**PETER NICHOLAS TARLING:
A TRIBUTE**

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Nicholas Tarling is one of the foremost historians of the role of the British in Southeast Asia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Well-established in his field of expertise specifically focusing on British policy in and towards Malaya / Malaysia, Indonesia, Siam / Thailand and Myanmar (Burma), he has authored and edited close to 40 books including the two-volume *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia* (Cambridge, 1992), and more than 90 scholarly journal articles in an academic career spanning more than half a century.

Nick, as he is affectionately known, is the quintessential scholar: a consummate researcher and a prolific writer. Poring through literally miles of archival documents is but second nature to him; likewise putting pen to paper for his findings, analysis, interpretations, thoughts and opinions to churn out manuscript after manuscript for publication. Apart from history, his forte, Nick wrote on higher education and on the performing arts (music and theatre).

Born on 1 February 1931 in Iver, south Buckinghamshire, England, Peter Nicholas Tarling is the second child of Ronald William Tarling (1901-67) and Doris Nevill Tarling, née Bibbye (1903-2002). Nick's elder brother, Michael, is four years his senior, and his younger siblings are Francis (b. 1936), Julian (b. 1939), and Fiona (b. 1940). He had his secondary education at St Albans School. At the age of 18 he entered Christ's College, Cambridge where he graduated in 1952 with a BA, and subsequently obtained the MA and PhD in 1956 under the guidance of Dr Victor Purcell, who had long served as a colonial officer in the Malayan Civil Service (MCS). His doctoral thesis was 'British Policy towards the Dutch and Native Princes in the Malay Archipelago, 1824-1871'.

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Nick began his academic career as an assistant at the Royal Historical Society, London (1956-7). Thereafter he left England for Australia where he took up appointment as Lecturer, then Senior Lecturer, in History at the University of Queensland, Brisbane (1957-65). Moving further afield he became Associate Professor of History at the University of Auckland, Auckland (1965-8), and subsequently Professor of History (1968-97). Upon his retirement in 1997 he was appointed Emeritus Professor at the University of Auckland. Made a Fellow of the university's New Zealand Asia Institute (NZAI) in 1997, he was its Acting Director in 2001. In 2002 he was Acting Director of the university's International Office. Following his retirement he spent half a year (1997) as visiting Professor at Universiti Brunei Darussalam. Between 1997 and 2002 he was Honorary Professor at the Centre for South-East Asian Studies, University of Hull. He is a Fellow of the Borneo Research Council.

Without over exaggeration, Nick served on practically every committee and held every position at the University of Auckland including dean, deputy vice-chancellor and acting vice-chancellor. His more than three decades service saw him chairing scores of university committees, elected to the Senate, and as the university's Public Orator.

Off the University of Auckland campus Nick served on three University Grants Committee sub-committees—the Overseas Students Admissions Committee, the Scholarships Committee, and the Curriculum Committee—and also on the University's Entrance Board. He also served on several committees at the ministerial and departmental level in the field of secondary and tertiary education. He was active in the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors Committee and contributed as a member or chair in various sub-committees.

Whilst at Brisbane and Auckland Nick conducted courses on Southeast Asian history at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and supervised a string of MA and PhD candidates. He also taught modern European history focusing on the causal factors leading to the outbreak of World War I (1914-18). Late nineteenth and early twentieth century modern Japanese history was one of his other teaching specialities.

For many years Nick served as a member on the editorial boards of academic journals: *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (Singapore), *Itinerario* (Leiden), *Modern Asian Studies* (Cambridge), *The International History Review* (Vancouver), *Borneo Research Bulletin* (Portland), and the e-journal *International Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies* (Penang). For nearly three decades he was associate editor of *New Zealand Journal of History* (1967-96).

As founder-chairman of the Auckland History Teachers Association (1971-4), Nick was instrumental in uniting secondary and tertiary history teachers under one umbrella organization. He was reappointed to the chair in

1979-81 and 1983-5. He was founder-president of the New Zealand Asian Studies Society (1972-8) with reappointments in later years. In 1995 he was made a life member.

In organizing academic conferences Nick was a veteran. He chaired the organizing committee for the inaugural New Zealand Studies Conference in 1974, 1979, 1987, and 1995. He was organizing chairman of the 49th Congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) in Auckland, January 1979 where some 4200 delegates participated. In 1983 he chaired the University of Auckland's centenary celebrations.

While in Brisbane Nick was a member of the University of Queensland Staff Association. When in Auckland (1968-9) he was president of the Auckland University Senior Common Room. He was involved with the Association of University Teachers (AUTNZ) from 1965 acting as national president (1970-1 and 1973-4), and led a delegation to visit the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1974.

From its foundation in 1971 Nick was a member of the Auckland Teachers Colleges Council until 1980, and also served on various committees of the now defunct North Shore Teachers' College. He also contributed to adult and continuing education conducting classes in history in Brisbane and in Auckland.

Outside academic pursuits on and off campus Nick's love of music and the theatre witnessed his involvement in the performing arts. In Brisbane he joined the Twelfth Night Theatre and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra Advisory Committee. Ever the teacher he offered courses and organized seminars on opera in Auckland, and annually led a study group to the Australian Opera in Sydney. Furthermore Nick served as academic leader of opera tours to Europe (1997, 1999, 2001 and 2006).

Nick was active on the stage in Auckland with his involvement in staff-student groups like the University Theatre Workshop and the revue club as well as off-campus organizations like the Mercury Theatre (its trustee, 1978-92) and Howick Little Theatre. He celebrated his 100th production in 1983. In recent years he has played roles such as Sir in *The Dresser* and C. S. Lewis in *Shadowlands*. He has participated in some 20 programmes of music and dramatic readings, performed publicly in Auckland, and for Elderhostel groups.

While in Brisbane Nick was involved in broadcasting on Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). When in Auckland he spoke on radio and television on current affairs, historical, musical and literary topics and issues; his Sunday morning 'Opera Hour' ran for an astonishing fifteen years. The Auckland Philharmonia benefited from his pre-concert talks.

Nick served as a trustee for the Auckland Opera Trust. He was also for many years the chairman of the Friends of the New Zealand Symphony

Orchestra. In 1975 he was appointed to the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council; later became its deputy chairman and chaired its music panel and its committees on regional development, orchestras and operas. The Minister of Internal Affairs made him chairman of the Northern Regional Arts Council and a member of the Ministry's Cultural Facilities Committee that handed out Lottery funds for construction, renovation and refurbishing schemes. He also chaired the New Zealand Broadcasting Council Orchestral Advisory Committee (1976-8) that was responsible for the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the Schola Musica, and the National Youth Orchestra. He headed the executive committee of the Symphonia of Auckland between 1978 and 1980, was a trustee of Auckland Opera / Opera New Zealand till 1997, and a member of the North Shore Theatre Trust (1995-9).

Nick continues to fascinate with his involvement in the community. While in Brisbane he was a member of the Aboriginals' Advancement League, an activist group promoting native Australian rights. In New Zealand although not a Mason, he was patron of the Masonic Lodge of the Liberal Arts. He also assisted the Masonic Education Trust.

Peter Nicholas Tarling was a recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 1977. He was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in 1996 shortly before his retirement. His alma mater the University of Cambridge awarded him Doctor of Letters (Litt.D) in 1974. The University of Auckland that he served for more than three decades honoured him with an Honorary Doctor of Letters (Hon. Litt.D) in 1996. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society (1963) and Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (1963).

Nick travelled extensively throughout Southeast Asia with repeated visits particularly to Malaysia and Singapore as well as to Brunei, Myanmar and Cambodia. On a Carnegie grant he spent three months in 1963 in Canada and the United States. He delivered papers in almost all the International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA) conferences, delivered addresses at Kyoto University, the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow, the Institute of South Asia in Heidelberg, and in various other institutes and centres. The National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore appointed him external assessor in 2005.

As Emeritus Professor, Nick is currently attached to the New Zealand Asia Institute and continues to undertake research, writing, and publishing as well as being active in the scores of recreational and community interests that he has nurtured over the years.

Published Works by Nicholas Tarling

Nick is a tireless researcher and diligent and consummate writer despite his other undoubtedly heavy administrative commitments in his pre-retirement days. Some time back I remembered requesting him for an essay or two and within a fortnight he delivered the pieces he had promised much to my (any editor's) unabashed delight. He religiously keeps to deadlines and submits his manuscripts according to required house-styles of publishers and journals hence allowing editors to have longer coffee breaks—perhaps a scone or doughnut or two—to savour.

Over more than five decades of dedicated scholarship, the following pages record his prolific output that has contributed to our greater understanding of events and issues.

Books Authored

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Journal of the Polynesian Society
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
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Programme Notes

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Manon Lescaut (Mercury Opera, 1984)
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Tosca (Mercury Opera, 1985)
La Traviata (Mercury Opera, 1986)
Lucia di Lammermoor (Mercury Opera, 1988)
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The Barber of Seville (Mercury Opera, 1990)
Le Nozze di Figaro (Mercury / Auckland Metropolitan Opera, 1991)
La Boheme (Aotea Centre, 1991)
The Pearl Fishers (Auckland Opera, 1992)
The Flying Dutchman (Auckland Opera, 1992)
Carmen (Auckland Opera, 1993)
The Magic Flute (Auckland Opera, 1993)
Petit Messe Solennelle (Auckland University Singers, 1993)
Madam Butterfly (Auckland Opera, 1994)
Rigoletto (Auckland Opera, 1994)
The Magic Flute (West Australian Opera, 1994)
Carmen (Canterbury Opera, 1994)
Faust (Auckland Opera, 1995)
Otello (Canterbury Opera, 1995)
The Magic Flute (Opera Queensland, 1995)
Don Giovanni (Opera New Zealand, 1996)
Turandot (Opera New Zealand, 1997)
Il Trovatore (Opera New Zealand, 1997)
La Cenerentola (Opera New Zealand, 1998)
Verdi's Requiem (Opera New Zealand, 1998)
Macbeth (Opera New Zealand, 1998)
La Boheme (Opera New Zealand, 1999)
Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci (Opera New Zealand, 1999)
Madam Butterfly (NBR New Zealand Opera, 2000)
Falstaff (NBR New Zealand Opera, 2001)
La Clemenza di Tito (Auckland Chamber Orchestra, 2001)
The Pearl Fishers (NBR New Zealand Opera, 2002)
Orfeo e Euridice (Auckland Chamber Orchestra, 2002)
Lakme (Canterbury Opera, 2003)
Tosca (NBR New Zealand Opera, 2003)
Rigoletto (NBR New Zealand Opera, 2004)
La forza del destino (Canterbury Opera, 2004)
Le Comte Ory (Canterbury Opera, 2004)
La Traviata (NBR New Zealand Opera, 2005)
Pagliacci (Canterbury Opera, 2005)

Suor Angelica (Canterbury Opera, 2005)
Lucia di Lammermoor (Canterbury Opera, 2006)
Faust (NBR New Zealand Opera, 2005)
 Programme Notes (Auckland Philhamonia, 2007)

Reviews of Theatrical Events

Opera (London)
Opera Australasia, presently known as *Opera-Opera* (Sydney)
Theatre Australasia (Sydney)
New Zealand Opera News (Wellington)

Stage Performances by Nicholas Tarling

Nick is versatile on the stage appearing and taking on a variety of roles. His stage debut was as Nikola in *Arms and the Man* performed at St Albans School. He has not looked back since then as the following listing reveals his prowess as an actor. Forgive some missing information as they receded over time. (Venue is in parentheses.)

- 1947 Nikola in *Arms and the Man* (St Albans School)
- 1949 Maitre Jacques in *L'avare* (St Albans School)
- 1961 Porter in *Macbeth* (Twelfth Night Theatre [TNT], Brisbane)
 Husband in *Foundations* (TNT)
 Young Pitt in *Vanity Fair* (TNT)
Christmas Revue (TNT)
- 1962 Posket in *The Magistrate* (TNT)
 Magistrate in *Lysistrata* (TNT)
 Lear and Gloucester in *Lear* (TNT)
 Bosola in *The Duchess of Malfi* (University of Queensland Staff Players [UQSP])
 Dan in *The Beautiful People* (TNT)
 Peter in *Colonial Experience* (TNT)
 Parson in *Shipwreck* (TNT)
 First Relative in *Ham Funeral* (TNT at Her Majesty's Brisbane)
 Abe in *Desk Set* (TNT)
- 1963 Schoolteacher in *The Visit* (TNT)
 Fisherman in (and producer of) *Pirates at the Barn* (TNT)
 Premier in *The Applegart* (UQSP)
 King Henry IV in *Henry IV Part One* (TNT)
 Henry in *The Wrong Side of the Park* (TNT)
 Garooh in *Image in the Clay* (Abschol, University of Queensland)
 Doctor in *Cradle Song* (TNT)
 Argan in *The Imaginary Invalid* (TNT)
- 1964 Pochet in *Keep Your Eye on Amelia* (TNT)
- 1965 Lionel in *See How They Run* (TNT)
 Sir Oliver in *School for Scandal* (Auckland University Theatre Company [AUTC])
 Typist in *The Typist and the Tigers* (Central Theatre, Auckland)
 Doctor in *Treasure* (Central Theatre, Auckland)

- 1966 Simeon in *York Nativity* (Theatre Guild in St Mary's Cathedral)
 Producer of Vaughan William's opera *Riders to the Sea* (AUTC)
 Revue, *Short Back and Sides* (Auckland University 5 and 9 Club [5 & 9])
 Man in *The House by the Stable* (Remuera Players)
 Judge in *The Noble Spaniard* (Remuera Players)
- 1967 Bitos in *Poor Bitos* (AUTC)
 Revue, *Once Over Lightly* (5 & 9)
 Poppa in *The Shifting Heart* (Remuera Players)
 Bishop in *See How They Run* (Remuera Players)
 Scrooge in *Scrooge the Miser* (Remuera Players)
 Villain in *Hiss the Villain* (Remuera Players)
- 1968 Revue, *Half A Mo* (5 & 9)
 Baptista in (and producer of) *The Taming of the Shrew* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
 Maurice in *The House by the Lake* (Remuera Players)
 Charles in *Blithe Spirit* (Remuera Players)
 Man in *The Second Step* (Remuera Players)
- 1969 John of Gaunt in *Richard II* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
 Revue, *Was 1969 Really Necessary?* (5 & 9)
 Major and MP in *Separate Tables* (Remuera Players)
- 1970 *Trial and Error* (Remuera Players)
- 1971 Philip in *Relatively Speaking* (Remuera Players)
The Secret Tent (Remuera Players)
- 1972 Husband in *How She Lied to Her Husband* (Remuera Players)
 Crocker-Harris in *The Browning Version* (Remuera Players)
Two Dozen Red Roses (Remuera Players)
- 1973 Jim Preston in *Woman in a Dressing Gown* (Remuera Players)
 Dedication Play (Holy Trinity Cathedral)
 Nativity Play (Remuera Players)
- 1974 Cassius in *Julius Caesar* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
 Farmer in *The Farm* (Central Theatre, Auckland)
 Hugh Latymer in *A Song at Twilight* (Remuera Players)
- 1975 Various parts in *The Great War* (New Independent Theatre)
- 1976 Iago in *Othello* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
 Milkman and Brewster in *Roses Round the Door* (Remuera Players)
 Revue, *Laying Ourselves Wide Open* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
 Ed Devery in *Born Yesterday* (New Independent Theatre)
- 1977 Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
 Capping Revue (Maidment Arts Centre)
 Estragon in *Waiting for Godot* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- 1978 Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
 Capping Revue (Maidment Arts Centre)
 Scrub in *Beaux Stratagem* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
 Herod in *Salome* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
 Narrator, *Bluebeard* (Opera and Ballet Workshop)
 Narrator, *Aida* (Symphonia of Auckland)
 More in *A Man For All Seasons* (Howick Little Theatre)
A Touch of Tinsel, reader and compiler (various venues)
- 1979 Polonius in *Hamlet* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)

- King of Hell in *Release from Hell*, Noh Play (3rd New Zealand Asia Association [NZASIA] Conference)
- Look at the Trees*, reader and compiler (various venues)
- Sir Epicure Mammon in *The Alchemist* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- 1980 *A Moment in Time*, reader and compiler (various venues)
- Revue, *The 1980 Flower Show* (Maidment Arts Centre)
- Lear in *Shakespeare at Court* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- After Magritte* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- Moon in *The Real Inspector Hound* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- Morgenhall in *Dock Brief* (New Independent Theatre)
- Another Touch of Tinsel* (various venues)
- 1981 Revue, *Listen 'ere* (Maidment Arts Centre)
- Tramp in *The Caretaker* (Arena Theatre)
- Newton in *Mr Wilberforce M. P.* (Pilgrim Productions, Centennial Theatre)
- Pinchard in *Sauce for the Gander* (Mercury Theatre)
- Jim Stokes in *The Great 1979 National Strike* (Mercury Workshop)
- Reader in Douglas Mews' *Table Talk* (New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Cushion Concert)
- 1982 Frank Foster in *How the Other Half Loves* (Arena Theatre)
- Porter in *Macbeth* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
- Sir Charles Marlow in *She Stoops to Conquer* (Mercury Theatre)
- Revue (Maidment Arts Centre)
- A Further Touch of Tinsel* (various venues)
- 1983 Hastings in *Richard III* (Auckland University Outdoor Shakespeare)
- Parson Manders in *Ghosts* (New Independent Theatre)
- Who and What Are You?*, compiler and reader (Genealogists Conference, Hamilton)
- Number 11 in *12 Angry Men* (Arena Theatre)
- Christmas Readings* (Holy Trinity Cathedral)
- 1984 Reg in *Table Manners* (Arena Theatre)
- More in *A Man for All Seasons* (Arena Theatre)
- Revue, *The Umpire Strikes Back* (Maidment Arts Centre)
- Coulmier in *Marat/Sade* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- Dr Bradman in *Blithe Spirit* (Arena Theatre)
- 1985 Roat in *Wait Until Dark* (Arena Theatre)
- Chasuble in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Arena Theatre)
- Freedom's Fancy*, reader and compiler (Amnesty)
- PM and Harcourt in *Tomorrow Will Be A Lovely Day* (Arena Theatre)
- A Touch More Tinsel* (Holy Trinity Cathedral)
- 1986 Dr Rank in *Doll's House* (Arena Theatre)
- Colonel in *Journey's End* (Arena Theatre)
- Owner in *Mal de Mer*, opera by G. Seaman (Keys Memorial Concert, Centennial Theatre)
- In Flanders' Fields*, compiler and reader (Arena Theatre and elsewhere)
- Colonel Pickering in *Pygmalion* (Arena Theatre)
- Baron Hardupp in *Cinderella* (Maidment Arts Centre)
- Organ Recital (Holy Trinity Cathedral)
- Softcops* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- 1987 *East and West*, compiler and reader (7th NZASIA Conference)
- Sir in *The Dresser* (Howick Little Theatre)

- Christmas Readings* (Holy Trinity Cathedral)
- 1988 *The Victorians*, compiler and reader (Auckland University Elderhostel and many reps)
Where Is Your Kingdom Now? (Howick Little Theatre)
- 1989 *Christmas Readings* (Holy Trinity Cathedral)
- 1990 Monsewer in *The Hostage* (Devonport Theatre Company)
A Sort of Music Hall, performer, compiler and producer (Devonport Theatre Company)
- 1991 *Bullshot Crummond* (Devonport Theatre Company)
Mozart, Man and Musician, compiler and reader (Aotea Centre and elsewhere)
- 1992 *Jupiter Rossini—Divine Master*, compiler and reader (Aotea Centre and elsewhere)
Husband in *Your Bed or Mine* (Devonport Theatre Company)
Shallow in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Pumphouse)
Loot (Devonport Theatre Company)
- 1993 Annas in *The Crucifixion* (Cyrano Productions / Howick Little Theatre)
Tchaikovsky, Man and Musician, compiler and reader (Aotea Centre and elsewhere)
C. S. Lewis in *Shadowlands* (Howick Little Theatre)
- 1994 *Such Beautiful Melodies: A Programme about Robert Schumann*, compiler and reader (Aotea Centre)
- 1996 Giles in *The Crucible* (Auckland University Theatre Workshop)
- 2001 Harper in *Arsenic and Old Lace* (Company Theatre)