

# antipodean aesthetics, public policy and the museum

*Te Papa, for example*

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## — INTRODUCTION

The Museum of New Zealand—Te Papa Tongarewa has proved a complex cultural site that has generated much public debate and a growing academic literature. In this article I depart from critical approaches that resolve the analysis of this museum by pointing up its programmatic inconsistencies, internal contradictions, representational inadequacies or its institutional paradoxes.<sup>1</sup> While these formulations do get at matters important to the operations of Te Papa, what is striking in these analyses is that the museum somehow always disappoints the critic by not living up to its stated aims or some ideal of the museum form.<sup>2</sup> Rather than establishing Te Papa as an object for reform as these critics have done, I read it as an archive for reflection on the cultural predicament of an antipodean modernity.<sup>3</sup> To this end this article proceeds by initially establishing the wider movements in which the institution is located. Then it maps how these movements have shaped the museum's formulations and its reception by focusing on the period leading up to its opening. Finally, it considers a particular antipodean style of representation associated with these movements. In this context, I conclude, Te Papa might best be understood as a monument to 'antipodean camp.'<sup>4</sup>

Before entering into a discussion of the museum proper it is helpful to sketch the pressures shaping the wider economic, social, political and cultural scapes whose contours marked Aotearoa/New Zealand (A/NZ) in the closing decades of the last century; the period in which Te Papa was conceived and came into operation as a public institution.<sup>5</sup> Principally, this concerns the accumulation crisis that drove the restructuring of the nation's economy according to the dictates of global capital and a correlated discursive project which sought to re-invent

the national community in its wake. Here, as elsewhere, in the face of the historic failure of the import-substitution tradition, an economic–political project embracing neo-liberalism was advanced. In A/NZ this was contemporaneous with a particular socio-cultural project that sought to reinvent the national community in a postcolonial image which has gone by the name of biculturalism.

#### — RESTRUCTURING

Following a twenty year period of economic decline, exacerbated by the loss of the country's traditional market for agricultural products when Britain joined the EEC in 1973 and by the OPEC shocks beginning the same year, A/NZ's unemployment, inflation and public debt by the 1980s had spiralled to levels unprecedented in the post war period. By the mid 1980s the import-substitution policies that sought to protect the domestic economy from the vagaries of global capital flows had all but run their course. Driven by the imperatives of this global transformation in the regime of accumulation and by the rhetoric of neo-liberal public policy, there followed a rapid dismantling of the legislative shock absorbers of the domestic defense tradition, which subsequently exposed the country to the full force of the world economy. In a relatively short period New Zealand's economy was transformed from one of the most highly regulated in the world to one of the least regulated. Domestic production came to be dominated by international money markets, large corporations and international speculators, in particular those from Australia, Japan and South-East Asia. Labour market legislation individualised employment contracts between employers and workers, and changes to immigration legislation encouraged wealthy and highly skilled immigrants from 'non-traditional source countries' to counter negative migration and encourage investment. Substantive steps were also made towards the dismantling of the welfare state. In addition to the corporatisation of many government departments which were required to operate on a commercial basis, a programme of asset sales, introduced to reduce A/NZ's level of overseas debt, resulted in a number of these corporations being fully privatised. Ironically enough, it was following the election of the Fourth Labour government in 1984 that A/NZ made this switch to Thatcherism, initiating a restructuring programme in which the old 'laboratory of welfare statism' was to be transformed into the new 'laboratory of economic rationalism'.<sup>6</sup> Celebrated by *The Economist*, among others, the New Zealand Experiment, as Jane Kelsey labeled it, was for a time widely advocated by neo-liberal economic and public policy analysts as a model for the world to follow.<sup>7</sup>

The once pervasive discourse of an utopic little Britain in the South Seas—liberated from the class inequalities of the Old World and free from the racial injustices of much of the New World (expressed in the popular refrain 'the best race relations in the world')—became an increasingly unsustainable settler mythos following these transformations in the regime of

accumulation. As Simon During observed: the 'strategies of state minimalization, deregulation, orientation to global, and especially East Asian markets fractured the colony's hegemonic, if blind, understanding of itself as an outpost of British culture and civility'.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the ideologues of neo-liberalism made a direct assault on the residue of this once pervasive myth, arguing that it was 'the culture' that was holding the country back from accelerated economic growth. The Porter Project (a state sponsored neo-liberal think tank), for example, stated: New Zealand's only constraint to achieving its potential was the 'people's inability or unwillingness to adapt, change and thus compete successfully in the global economy'.<sup>9</sup> This concern to install a neo-liberal ethos in the citizenry aimed to move 'the culture' from one of egalitarianism and 'welfare dependency' to an internationally viable 'Enterprise Culture' based on competitive individualism. It also sought a cultural change in regional orientation away from the old economies that had so painfully rejected the country, towards the new economies of the Asia-Pacific rim through which its future might hopefully be secured.<sup>10</sup>

#### — BICULTURALISM

The downturn in the market for A/NZ's agricultural production, along with the abandonment of domestic defence policies of import-substitution that promoted a local manufacturing sector, increasingly propelled rural Maori into the ranks of the urban working class. This process had begun in the 1950s and accelerated over the 1960s and 1970s, leading to the disembedding of many Maori from their tribal affiliations. Facilitating this process and all the while seeking to ameliorate social fragmentation, was the welfarist policy of assimilation.<sup>11</sup> Here Maori were to be progressively 'raised' to the level of Pakeha (settler heirs) through policies in education, health, housing and social welfare. Assimilation remained the dominant model of social policy until the late 1970s. The situation of tribal disembedding and institutional racism gave rise to a resurgent anti-colonial activism over the late 1970s and 1980s.<sup>12</sup> Significantly, this political movement secured the legal recognition of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi that the British Crown had signed with Maori chiefs to regulate relations between indigenous communities and European settlement. Although the Waitangi Tribunal was initially established in 1975, it was not until the passing of the Treaty of Waitangi Amendment Act in 1985 that the Treaty was officially acknowledged and the Tribunal was given the power to investigate Maori claims of injustice and loss back to 1840. From the early 1990s, government policy developed to acknowledge past wrongs and to supply compensation to recapitalise tribes.<sup>13</sup>

Associated with this development was a wider project which sought to acknowledge and bridge the economic, social and cultural fault-lines of a nation whose inheritance was forged in the violence of an earlier globalising movement of capital: nineteenth century British colonisation.<sup>14</sup> To re-ignite, for Pakeha at least, good faith in the future possibility of

harmonious race relations, a prominent and increasingly state sanctioned discourse of biculturalism announced its utility. Imported from Canada, the concept began to be used in academic circles from the late 1960s.<sup>15</sup> From the mid 1980s it has increasingly been advocated in public policy and has emerged as a legislative practice of compensation for Maori. It has also served as a discursive practice of reconciliation, to promote a new 'postcolonial' national imagining. This has seen the Treaty of Waitangi recognised, not only as the basis for Maori to seek redress for loss and injustice, but as the constitutional origin of the nation, being increasingly articulated as such in public culture over the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>16</sup> Here, anti-colonial efforts by Maori to reassert aspects of their traditional culture and political autonomy, have given rise to a socially liberal desire among Pakeha to reinvent the national imagining and 'change the culture' (in ways that are not theoretically, historically, and politically unproblematic) from the colonial to the postcolonial.<sup>17</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the relationship between the processes of economic restructuring that forced the hegemony of an utopic little Britain to fragment, and the project of biculturalism that emerged to replace it, has been contentious. For many commentators of the time, restructuring and biculturalism appeared to be deeply antagonistic agendas. Wendy Lerner and Paul Spoonley, for example, enthusiastically emphasised biculturalism's progressive potential:

Biculturalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand provides a powerful expression of progressive and inclusive forms of politics based on self-defined identities and reflecting local sensitivities ... [It] provides one of the most effective counters to New Right ideologies and the harsh realities of the monetarist experiment based on market competition and individualism.<sup>18</sup>

Other commentators conceded it was not a coincidental conjuncture that as A/NZ became increasingly assimilated into a new regime of global economics and cultural politics it simultaneously became 'more sensitive to [cultural] differences'. For example, cultural critic, Mark Williams, found biculturalism rather less oppositional. More cautiously, he wrote, 'biculturalism has clearly been advantageous in fashioning an acceptable national self-image in a world where colonialism and racism are bad for business'.<sup>19</sup>

#### — TE PAPA

In 1993, shortly after her appointment as CEO for the new museum project, Cheryl Sotheran acknowledged the mission with which the state had charged her institution.<sup>20</sup> Embracing the logic of public sector restructuring, she was to deliver a museum product that would generate a wide audience, while 'bedding down' biculturalism within the institution. Presciently, Sotheran announced that when it eventually opened, the museum would be 'as popular, in Kiwi terms, as Disneyland'.<sup>21</sup> This rhetoric confirmed that the legislative authority was purchasing an 'info-tainment experience', which, if the museum was to fulfil

its statutory obligations, must 'create a new audience' whose demographic profile extended traditional patterns of attendance and more adequately mapped the contours of the country's population.<sup>22</sup> Yet this demand for a new expanded audience was only partially motivated by a desire to democratise the Museum. For, while making a substantial fiscal investment in the project—a purported \$NZ320 million—the state was making no on-going commitment to meet the full costs of its operations once the Museum opened. Rather, it sought to construct conditions in which the Museum would have to market itself to attract the discretionary income of consumers and corporate sponsorship. In addition to this deliberate policy of under-funding, to further foster this marketisation, both central government and the city council funding commitments were contingent on the museum reaching visitation 'performance targets'. In this policy environment the museum's administrators identified their task as that of 'repositioning' their organisation as part of the entertainment industry.<sup>23</sup> Here Sotheran opined: 'The great private sector institutions of Disneyland and McDonalds have a lot to teach us'.<sup>24</sup> The Museum took these lessons very seriously. A themed architectural environment was commissioned that owed as much to fun-park and shopping mall design as it did to museum architecture.<sup>25</sup> The innovative theme parks, heritage sites and leisure destinations of Europe and North America were toured by senior staff.<sup>26</sup> US Themed Attraction trade shows were attended and UK leisure industry consultants hired. Multi-million dollar themepark-like rides were invested in.<sup>27</sup> Front-of-house staff or 'hosts'—a term borrowed from Disney—were comprehensively trained in the 'customer focused' and 'scripted' manner pioneered by Walt Disney and McDonalds founder, Ray Croc. All of which was to facilitate the 'repositioning' of the museum product, which, while entry was to remain free, delivered customers to numerous 'revenue-generating opportunities'. A 'McDisney' service model, then, was to deliver national identity.<sup>28</sup> In the words of its promotional material, the museum would constitute a product 'different from any other museum ... Playful, imaginative, interactive, bold, even cheeky—Te Papa is quintessentially Kiwi, stunningly high-tech, and seriously fun'.<sup>29</sup>

If Disney, in part at least, provided the inspiration for the repositioning of the museum, it was the exhibition *Te Maori* which provided the catalyst for the 'bedding down' of biculturalism. *Te Maori* opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art New York in 1984 and subsequently toured the US, before returning to A/NZ and touring the main centres in 1985.<sup>30</sup> Famous for its radical aesthetic decontextualisation, *Te Maori* was a complex event: complex in its organisation, reception and effects.<sup>31</sup> It was celebrated by some cosmopolitan academics and criticised by others. For James Clifford, Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine it exemplified museological practices by which an indigenous community was able to represent itself on an international stage.<sup>32</sup> Raymond Corbey read the primitivist reception of the exhibition in the US as uncomfortably repeating elements of colonial displays of alterity,<sup>33</sup> while, Nicholas

Thomas argued that the essentialist elements of Te Maori's primitivism had been used strategically to empowering effect for Maori communities.<sup>34</sup> Locally, the exhibition was contentious among Maori. There were heated debates as to whether taonga—cultural treasures—should tour the US. Communities were divided over the exploitation of taonga as art in a major foreign institution: should taonga remain in a context in which they had mana—power and prestige—and a non-aesthetic function, or should they be used to communicate Maori culture and skills to a wider audience and increase Maori international prestige?<sup>35</sup> The experiences of local museums in organising this exhibition were salutary and led to widespread recognition that such institutions needed to dramatically renegotiate their relationship with their Maori constituencies.<sup>36</sup> On its return tour of A/NZ the collection of taonga, each imbued with complex tribal associations, caused unprecedented issues of protocol for tribal Maori as they negotiated their relationship with each other, the tribal lands in which the taonga were rooted and the whakapapa with which they were invested.<sup>37</sup> For Pakeha, American interest in Te Maori was seminal in generating a large national audience for its return home tour. As columnist Rosemary McLeod glossed it: for a broad public the exhibition 'suddenly showed Maori cultural heritage as art as much as artefact, as unique and as a sleeping asset'.<sup>38</sup> Published at a time when hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders were flocking to see Te Maori, *Nga Taonga o Te Motu: Treasures of the Nation*—the report that initiated the Te Papa project—aimed to capitalise on that asset:

The outstanding success of the exhibition Te Maori in the US has demonstrated that the taonga of New Zealand, sensitively presented and appropriately housed, is a potent force in the processes of identifying our culture in all its richness and diversity and enhancing its relevance to all New Zealanders.<sup>39</sup>

In the planning stages of the museum project the processes of 'identifying', 'defining' and 'promoting' 'our culture' saw the development of various mechanisms that would deliver biculturalism.<sup>40</sup> Conceptually the institution was founded on a threefold division based on the relations the Treaty of Waitangi established between tangata whenua (people of the land), tangata tiriti (people of the treaty) and Papatuanuku (the environment).<sup>41</sup> Architecturally this was to be expressed in a biculturally themed structure; 'cleaved'—a drawing apart while pulling together—by the space devoted to the Treaty of Waitangi (see below) which also linked the two major exhibition zones given over to Maori and Pakeha exhibitions.<sup>42</sup> This was to facilitate the exhibitions' articulation in relation to the institution's narrative of bicultural nationalism. Bilingualism was deployed across the institution: Maori language—te reo—alongside English was to be used in all museum labels and signs. However, biculturalism was not to stop at the level of representation. A bicultural organisational structure was implemented, exemplified by the appointment of Cliff Whiting as the museum's kaihautu which

was an institutional position equivalent to that of the CEO. Decision-making processes throughout the planning stages of the project were to involve extensive consultation with iwi on the principle (of Mana Taonga discussed below) that those with cultural objects in the museum should contribute to how they are managed and interpreted. In addition, competency in te reo was set as a performance target for all staff.<sup>43</sup> All of which was to institute 'one of the first public institutions in the country modeled on bicultural commitment'.<sup>44</sup>

Sensibly, then, recent analyses of the museum project position it as an 'alternance between neoliberal wisdom and the postmodern vision of Aotearoa/New Zealand's biculturalism ... that has characterised the country in the last two decades'.<sup>45</sup> However, it is interesting to recall that the position of the museum project's relationship to the broader structural and discursive re-alignments that the country was experiencing was confused in early commentary. While for some it did exemplify a paradigmatic shift in cultural policy contingent on those forces, for others it appeared to embrace an inappropriate nostalgia for the public policies of the protectionist era. For those inclined to read it as harking back to older, superseded policy initiatives, some emphasised its resonances with economic policies of the domestic defense tradition, while others emphasised its affinity with social policies of assimilation.

For some commentators the construction of a state sponsored multi-million dollar theme-park devoted to national identity had resonances with the discredited 'Think Big' policies, which had promoted projects like the hydropower scheme at Clyde that had been the last gasp of the 'domestic defense' tradition.<sup>46</sup> That the public face of the new museum project was Wallace Rowling, a former Labour leader from the protectionist era, further encouraged the reading of the proposed Museum as a public policy anachronism. Certainly, in his efforts to enlist support for the project, Rowling did express discontent with the current policy direction, stating: 'a country needs more than monetary policy to weld its people together and create a sense of identity'.<sup>47</sup> When the finalised plans of the new building were released for public perusal (to a less than warm reception) and details of government expenditure on the project were disclosed (to a scandalised media), the national press ran editorials whose headlines rang with the alarm of a certain *deja vu*: the *Sunday Star* warned 'Another Grandiose Monument to Insanity', while the *New Zealand Herald* feared 'Think Big Reincarnate'.<sup>48</sup> For these commentators the project looked like an unwarranted turning away from the tight fiscal policy that two terms of a Labour government had told New Zealanders was the tough medicine that would ultimately be good for them. The hydro-power scheme, which was (finally) plugged into the National Grid the week the Museum project was given the go ahead, was years behind on its projected completion schedule and vastly over budget. Characterising the Museum as a massively expensive 'job creation' scheme, commentators declared the 'taxpayer' could not afford a 'Cultural Clyde Dam'.<sup>49</sup>

Other commentators, less concerned with the museum's apparent nostalgia for superceded economic policy, found it to be a social policy anachronism. A number of commentators were suspicious of the Museum's conceptual architecture and its totalising thrust, which they felt threatened to flatten out cultural difference in a mode that disconcertingly appeared to mimic the ambitions of mid-century social policy. Apirana T. Mahuika, architect of the policy—*Mana Taonga*—governing the Museum's relation to Maori material culture, *iwi* (tribe) and other cultural artifacts, appeared to explicitly articulate this agenda.<sup>50</sup> Mahuika argued, with 'the Papa Tongarewa concept many Maori tribes have paused a while [with their calls for Maori nationhood] to see what cultural recognition will result from the proposed Museum'. 'Maori disquiet', he continued, 'can be calmed only by a program such as that proposed by Te Papa Tongarewa'.<sup>51</sup> Unsurprisingly, the protocol that Mahuika designed has been controversial among tribal Maori.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, Te Arawa scholar and museum curator, Paul Tapsell has argued that the passing over of the customary lore of local *iwi*, Te Ati Awa and Ngati Toa, inherent in the *Mana Taonga* concept, abrogates the Museum's obligations to *tangata whenua* under the Treaty.<sup>53</sup> In this way the nationalised *taonga* of Te Papa repeated the colonial injustices experienced by the *tangata whenua* of the Wellington region.<sup>54</sup> Luit Bieringa, former director of the National Gallery, found the Te Papa concept to be 'an out-dated piece of assimilatory nationalism'. He argued:

in confusing [cultural] unity with similarity [it] represents an order reminiscent of 1950s and 1960s assimilation. Not only does it speak of centralised bureaucracy of the kind being demolished by the present Government, but it is also out of step and shows an insensitivity to the aspirations of ... [Maori] communities.<sup>55</sup>

Cultural critic, and Te Papa curator to be, Ian Wedde, was to argue along similar lines. The Museum's concept, he contended, 'runs absolutely counter to Maori culture's fundamental base in tribal regionalism' and was 'surely an anachronism at the turn of the century'.<sup>56</sup>

However, unsurprisingly, when in July 1994 Jim Bolger, then the conservative Prime Minister, unveiled the foundation stone for the new institution with Maori elder, Te Ru Wharehoka, he represented the museum not as an anachronism but as the very symbol of the success of the country's programme of structural adjustment and cultural realignment. Addressing his audience, Bolger congratulated himself on his foresight in giving the project the 'go-ahead' in those 'dark days' of the 1992 recession. For him the museum not only announced a new national 'cultural maturity' and 'celebrated,' as the inscription on the foundation stone read, 'the many journeys and identities of all the communities and peoples of New Zealand', but it also stood as 'a symbol of the economic recovery' after a long period of decline.<sup>57</sup> In Bolger's estimation, then, the museum looked to symbolise the cultural and economic reorientation the nation required to successfully compete in the global market place.<sup>58</sup>



Providing some analytical co-ordinates for Bolger's proposition in an early analysis of the project, cultural policy analyst and former director of the National Museum, Michael Volkerling, argued that the museum represented a paradigmatic shift: as the 'key institution' for 'New Zealand cultural policy' reorientation, the museum marked the 'transition from Fordist to Post-Fordist forms of economic and social organisation'.<sup>59</sup> Exemplifying the 'fondness for spectacle' shared by New Right regimes in periods of economic austerity, Volkerling contended, the project's bicultural 'exotic hybrid' provided the cultural emblem for, and a marketing strategy deployed internationally by, 'New Zealand's post-Fordist state'.<sup>60</sup> While, anticipating Te Papa's CEO's entrepreneurial characterisation of the country's citizenry as 'energetic, can-do, determined progressive risk takers',<sup>61</sup> Volkerling contended that the museum's hailing of the national subject provided 'an ideological sanction of the methodological individualism which underpins its economic strategies'.<sup>62</sup>

If its early commentators were confused with regard to the museum's policy orientation, this perplexity was mirrored by the disorientation of the museum's first visitors. Despite a tense relationship with its public while under development, there can be little doubt that the museum was enthusiastically received in the immediate period after its opening.<sup>63</sup> In the first nine weeks after Te Papa opened in February, 1998, it had already received two thirds of its projected annual visitation of 750 000 (which had been considered by some as hopelessly optimistic). By its first birthday it had exceeded two million visitors. And, if quantitative measures were impressive, so too were its qualitative evaluations, the overwhelming majority of visitors (ninety-three percent) reporting satisfaction with their 'experience'.<sup>64</sup> Sotheran had achieved her themepark audience. Yet, while Te Papa's McDisney template sought to deliver for its visitors predictability via an architecture, design environment and corporate culture that solicits 'the recurrence of reassurance', being physically perplexed and cognitively confused became a frequent, if not the experience for many of the museum's early visitors.<sup>65</sup> Swiss architect Mario Botta, for example, found Te Papa's interior cluttered and confused.<sup>66</sup> He opined: 'It's a labyrinth, not a space ... life is already complicated—why do we have to make it more confused'.<sup>67</sup> A post-occupation evaluation of 'the museum experience', conducted several months after opening, indicated that the failure to successfully deliver a coherent space that could be readily negotiated both cognitively and physically was causing distress among visitors.<sup>68</sup> Overwhelmed by the Museum's indeterminate narrative and pedestrian flows, these visitors complained they had little choice but to be thrown into an itinerary of 'drifting'.<sup>69</sup> Echoing this experience, the recently elected Labour Prime Minister, Helen Clark, reported finding the museum's interior 'jumbled and incoherent'.<sup>70</sup>

The perplexity of many of the visitors to a museum intended to designate 'Our Place in the World',<sup>71</sup> might support Hamish McDonald's speculation in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He contended that Te Papa emphasised the predicament of New Zealanders—Pakeha at

least—who ‘fear they are globalising themselves out of existence’.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps, then, like Fredric Jameson’s Bonventure Hotel, Te Papa might stand as a ‘symbol and analogue of that even sharper dilemma which is the incapacity of our minds, at least at present, to map the great global multinational and decentred communicational network in which we find ourselves caught as individual subjects’.<sup>73</sup>

While in recent commentaries on Te Papa this line of analysis hasn’t been rigorously pursued, considerable criticism has been leveled at the museum’s embrace of aesthetic practices that have been designated postmodern. Here the strategies of mockery, irony, and bricolage deployed by the museum are read by its critics as imported rhetoric that ‘lampoons’ the sincerity of national feeling;<sup>74</sup> pastiches that undermine the seriousness of high culture;<sup>75</sup> a frivolity that diminishes the importance of ‘disinterested knowledge’;<sup>76</sup> or, ‘an endless circulation of simulacra’ that ‘deny the traumas of the past’.<sup>77</sup> While these arguments do highlight important issues to be debated, there is a tendency to read the museum’s aesthetics as derivative of certain discourses and practices—the linguistic turn<sup>78</sup> or ‘the new museology’, for example.<sup>79</sup> This risks missing what might be the novelty of Te Papa’s exhibitions as a particular response to the scapes in which the museum is located. In using these strategies the museum is not simply a local representative of the cultural dominant of late capitalism,<sup>80</sup> nor, while certainly indebted, is it simply derivative of broader intellectual orientations and institutional practices. Rather, I think, its embrace of mockery, irony and bricolage might be the articulation of a distinctive camp style associated with a locally inflected set of cultural practices reflecting the experience of an antipodean modernity.

#### — CAMP

Te Papa’s opening exhibitions, which were devoted to the culture of the settler heirs, positively, revelled in their own artifice. As their titles suggest, the exhibitions flaunt a camp sensibility whose fabrications, I contend, are explicit exercises in both putting on, while pointing out, the manufactured-ness of national culture and identity. These include the ironic distancing of ‘Exhibiting Ourselves’, the irreverent bricolage of ‘Parade’, the nostalgic montage of ‘Golden Days’, and the ambivalent play of ‘Signs of a Nation’.

Jock Phillips, the curator of Exhibiting Ourselves, contended that this exhibition was ‘about the Disneylands of our past’.<sup>81</sup> This observation was not intended to establish Te Papa as heir to the theme park and the ensuing charge of McDisneyization, which has seen others declare that the museum is the ‘cultural equivalent to [the] fast-food outlet’.<sup>82</sup> Rather, the intention of the exhibition was to focus ‘upon the history of the idea of national identity ... [as] a construction’.<sup>83</sup> The interpretative device for exploring this idea was the recreation of A/NZ’s displays at four international exhibitions—the 1851 Great Exhibition, the 1906 Christchurch International Exhibition, the 1940 Centennial Exhibition in Wellington and

the 1992 Seville Exposition. For Margaret Jolly 'a mock imperial pomp and attitude to the past that lurches between guilt and laughter' marked these devices.<sup>84</sup> However, Phillips' intentions lay elsewhere. Exhibiting Ourselves, he wrote, was to make it:

obvious how such projections of New Zealand identity were constructions ... [and] clearly puffery and propaganda to sell goods and attract immigrants and foreign investment. Identity, it is implied is a self-serving projection, which is captured by certain groups at certain times for particular ends ... [The 1940 exhibition, for example] proclaimed New Zealand as an economically progressive welfare state because the Labour government wished to announce its success in pulling New Zealand out of the depression. In 1992 New Zealand projected itself as a go-getting nation of entrepreneurs living in a green and beautiful land because some of the major investors in Expo wished to sell their wine and apples to European markets.<sup>85</sup>

Here, then, Exhibiting Ourselves deployed a critical irony in its juxtapositions of the historic fabrications of national identity. This might look like a subversive gesture in the context of an institution apparently given over precisely to the task of national identity formation. If, as Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett has argued, Te Papa follows in the present-future orientation of 'the expo tradition', Exhibiting Ourselves might be read as supplying a critical history from which to reflect on Te Papa's own national showcase mandate.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, James Gore has celebrated the exhibition as 'a unique approach to addressing the issue of national identity ... [which] forced visitors to question their own pre-conceptions of what it was to be New Zealanders'.<sup>87</sup> Tempering this celebration, Anna Neill contends 'these acts of critical engagement' operate more as an invitation to 'consumer self-fashioning'. '[V]isitors are invited, not just to read cultural history', she continues, 'but also to create their own cultural and historical identities'.<sup>88</sup> It seems to me, however, the significance of Exhibiting Ourselves' approach doesn't lie in its embrace of the active consumer variously celebrated by proponents of new museology and advanced liberalism.<sup>89</sup> Nor, for that matter does it lie, in the fact of the deconstruction of national identity, which is increasingly a widespread practice for sites of public culture.<sup>90</sup> Rather, its significance rests in the particular style by which it engages with the construction of identity—a style whose distinctiveness resonates across the institution.

Phillips perhaps over-plays the critical impulse of the content of his exhibition. While it pointed out the fabricated nature of national identity, it continued to hail visitors in national terms. For in this exhibition of exhibitions, the national 'our' invoked by its title was self-consciously solicited and ironically deployed as the display actively sought to demonstrate that national identity is a cultural artifice, historically contingent on social, political and economic expediencies. It encouraged an ironic distancing with regard to the public production of national culture and identity, which proceeded through strategies that 'de-throned

the serious' through a self-mockery that, nevertheless, asserted the national sign.<sup>91</sup> In so doing it shared in a cultural sensibility which Nick Perry has diagnosed as antipodean camp.<sup>92</sup> 'The Antipodean versions of camp', he writes, work 'to call up nationalist sentiments through cultural images that are constructed in accordance with bricoleur tactics, placed in quotation marks by the signalling of their own fabrication and asserted through self mockery'.<sup>93</sup> What is distinctive for Perry in the generation of antipodean camp is the sheer matter-of-fact knowingness with which the fabricated nature of national identity is approached. In identifying these characteristics he isolates a sensibility which 'walk[s] a line between camp as constitutive (of frivolity) and camp as camouflage (for seriousness)'.<sup>94</sup> It is this knowingness about their national fabrications that seems to be the pervasive sensibility informing Te Papa's other exhibitions on the culture of the settler heirs. I contend this dual operation of putting on, while pointing out, the fabrications of culture and identity is the mode of operation of the museum more generally.

Housed in a gaudy shopping-mall-like environment, Parade was a cultural history exhibition on the artistic, design and media production of A/NZ. Curated by Wedde the self-described 'bricoleur, plagiarist and eclectic',<sup>95</sup> this exhibition revelled in juxtaposing the canonic and the mundane, exhibiting art alongside, as one of its detractors put it, 'household detritus of modern NZ'.<sup>96</sup> It is now locally (in)famous for its display of Colin McCahon's 1958 Northland Panels beside a Kelvinator refrigerator manufactured in the same period and a display on the arrival of television to New Zealand. In the controversy that ensued, Parade's critics took issue with the reduction of art to mere signifiers of national identity and culture.<sup>97</sup> This complaint was perhaps a little disingenuous as the issue was not that art operated as a national sign, since, arguably, a cultural nationalism shadows the art historical discourse on local artists.<sup>98</sup> Rather, the issue was the particular style in which art came to signify nation, one which Jenny Harper dismissed as 'superficially "feel-good" but ultimately debilitating[ly] ... anti-intellectual'.<sup>99</sup> However, this characterisation misses the subtleties of Parade as an exercise in antipodean camp.<sup>100</sup> It at once 'dethroned the serious', much to the consternation of art critics, with an irreverence toward the national canon which it purportedly shared with A/NZ popular culture.<sup>101</sup> Yet, simultaneously, this served as camouflage for an intellectual commitment—which has been ironically cast as 'its own strand of intellectual elitism'<sup>102</sup>—to cultural narratives that can hold local conversations between, for example, high modernism and mass culture as modes to interrogate the construction of national identity.<sup>103</sup> Thus, while putting on the national sign—deploying art as one of its signifiers—Parade worked, simultaneously, to point out the fabrications of national identity. It knowingly articulated art alongside other cultural objects as the 'shreds and patches'<sup>104</sup> around which national communion has historically come to be imagined.<sup>105</sup> To the irritation of its critics, Parade sought to disarticulate art from its internationalist frame, which, in

the case of McCahon's painting, aimed to playfully outflank the metropolitan 'hoax ... called "modern art"',<sup>106</sup>

The exhibition *Golden Days*, produced by film-maker Steve La Hood, is an object theatre staged in the mock-up of a junk store which is accompanied by a nostalgic cinematic montage that thematically spliced fragments of the nation's visual archive on war and sport, disaster and love, work and play. Publicity for the exhibition stated: 'Golden Days is a glorious junk shop of culture's defining moments, pungent, tantalising, and as fleeting as the memory of a dream ... It's a speeded-up collage of memories and events, glorious achievements, dark days'.<sup>107</sup> While for some, these images rushed forward as coherently as 'Aunt Daisy on Ecstasy',<sup>108</sup> La Hood understood his project as letting New Zealanders 'feel their history rather than intellectualize about it'.<sup>109</sup> Critics have identified a frivolity in *Golden Days*' 'superficial pastiche' that 'appears to give up on history as a disciplinary system of organization'.<sup>110</sup> For Gore this risks undermining the 'other Pakeha history exhibitions, within which it is positioned, that seek to seriously question ideas of national identity'.<sup>111</sup> Paul Williams turns this relation around, arguing that *Golden Days*' 'playful, ironic' approach to the more orthodox material of national history that is otherwise absent from Te Papa 'means that historic allegiances to Empire, the Church, the Monarchy and the Military are never examined as serious phenomena'.<sup>112</sup> Thus the exhibition 'deliberately downplays its own importance and implicitly marks off this well trod past as lacking the vital new perspectives that might inform a newer postcolonial national identity'.<sup>113</sup> Notwithstanding the differences in its generation and organisation,<sup>114</sup> bracketing *Golden Days* in this manner misses the continuities of its aesthetic with its companion displays. It is the rhetoricalisation of national narrative—feeling national history—exemplified by *Golden Days* that does inform 'a newer postcolonial national identity' that the museum embraces more widely. Indeed, as its critics note, what *Golden Days* shares in its rhetoricalisation with Te Papa's other exhibitions is a refusal to engage directly—earnestly and seriously—with questions of imperialism or indigenous anti-colonial insurgencies which would seem to be the historical pre-conditions for the museum's bicultural expression of national identity. However, what goes unanswered in those analyses that suggest that these are simply strategies imposed by populist "post-modern" scholarship', is their particular saliency and operation under local conditions.<sup>115</sup> Drawing the threads of his analysis together, Perry writes:

Viewed historically, antipodean camp is explicable as a 'post-colonial' aesthetic for the beneficiaries of colonialism. In its classic form it signals the attempt to outflank the cultural categories and control of metropolitan powers without, however, directly confronting either the historical conditions of its own possibility or the counter narratives which the historical pattern continues to generate.<sup>116</sup>

As exercises in putting on, while pointing out, the fabrications of national identity, which steadfastly avoid any direct confrontation with imperialism and its legacies, Te Papa's opening exhibitions on settler culture share in this aesthetic.

This is exemplified again in Te Papa's exhibition devoted to the Treaty of Waitangi, *Signs of a Nation*. This exhibition mediates between the Pakeha and Maori sections of the building and is posited by one of its curators as a 'liminal space between two worlds'.<sup>117</sup> This 'cathedral like space' is flanked by two large veneered panels carrying the full text of the Treaty—one a Maori version, the other in English—while a huge suspended glass relief forms its centrepiece.<sup>118</sup> This is composed of enlarged facsimiles of fragments of the Treaty, indexing the document's fraught history. As the exhibit's architect explains: 'The front layer contains all the signatures of the Waitangi document, while the rear layer represents, in moulded and coloured surfaces, the parchment as ravaged by ill treatment and hungry rats'.<sup>119</sup> Seemingly illustrating Susan Stewart's contention that 'Aesthetic size cannot be divorced from social function and social values',<sup>120</sup> this display was designed to demonstrate that the Treaty is 'historical, monumental, awe inspiring, troublesome ... [and] relevant'.<sup>121</sup> Put succinctly, this 'monumental treatment' sought to 'convey a sense of wonder'.<sup>122</sup>

While, Foucault has observed, 'history is that which transforms documents into monuments',<sup>123</sup> what has been at stake for critics of *Signs of a Nation* is the waning of historicity that monumentalising entails. While this treatment might aim to evoke wonder at the historical significance and the contemporary ambiguities 'that abound in the current deployment of the treaty', for Paul Walker and Justine Clarke, wonder dissolves into the depthless-ness of distraction.<sup>124</sup> 'In the space of Jameson's paradigmatic Bonaventure or the reality of an interior like Te Papa's', they write, 'everyone is distracted, no one is looking'.<sup>125</sup> For Walker and Clarke, then, *Signs of a Nation* ironically hails less the citizenry subject of the post-colonial nation-space, and more the distracted subject of the postmodern. Similarly, for others, the exhibition's wonder fails to give way to historical resonance. For them, *Signs of a Nation* signalled a vacuous-ness in which the originary violence and the continuing trauma of settler colonialism are voided in the interests of the expediencies of the national present.<sup>126</sup> It seems, then, for these critics, *Signs of a Nation* as an exercise in wonder—of feeling history—shares in the processes that Benjamin has characterised as the aestheticising of politics and which Jameson up-dates as the hysterical sublime.<sup>127</sup> No doubt these are useful coordinates for reading the exhibition as symptomatic of the transforming scapes in which Te Papa's citizens/consumers are located. Yet, for all this, wonder here perhaps shades less into distraction and more into the self-mockery of antipodean camp. How else to read an exhibition that seeks to aggrandise the inelegant bureaucratic prose of the Treaty's articles, which decidedly lack any of the grandiloquence of, say, the Declaration of Independence that is immortalised in stone in the Washington Memorial? Or, for that matter, an exhibition

that seeks to monumentalise, with gigantic simulations of the Treaty fragments, artifacts that will forever lack the aura of the originals that is dramatised with low light and high security at the National Archives. Wonder fails here, not because everyone is distracted, although that might be so, but because of a sensibility that could only enter into wonder in bad faith. It is this insincerity in the face of wonder, not distraction, which makes it the target of attentive critics' complaints that it has avoided a direct confrontation with colonial history and its trauma. If it was sincere the implication seems to be that the pathos of violence and trauma would demand that wonder give way to historical resonance; antipodean camp would—as it hasn't in this exhibition—slide into 'the New Zealand sublime' that has been diagnosed by Jonathan Lamb.<sup>128</sup>

Perry reads the aesthetic practices with which he is concerned as 'Antipodean permutations on the angel of history allegory'.<sup>129</sup> However, the sensibility of these practices shades not into a Germanic melancholy but toward an antipodean camp. This is because cultural identity here, Perry contends, 'is not seen as shaped and limited by the restraining givenness of the ruins [of modernity that Benjamin's angel famously surveys], but as derived from the prospects that such debris opens up for future scavenging and bricolage'.<sup>130</sup> Te Papa's critics have inadvertently acknowledged a quasi-Benjaminian 'trash aesthetic', as Denis Dutton does, when he disparages the museum's resemblance to a 'junkshop', and as other commentators have done when they deride Te Papa for its postmodern populism.<sup>131</sup> What is unacknowledged, however, when it is read simply as a derivative site or an 'obstinately provincial place', is the complexity of the patterning of the sensibility informing Te Papa.<sup>132</sup> This is one that is decisively marked by a Pakeha futurism which fabricates a national identity from the detritus of the global culture industry and the ruins of colonialism. The museum's opening exhibitions, I think, are more adequately understood as a monument to this sensibility, whose complexity is perhaps best comprehended as antipodean camp.

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1. These approaches are taken respectively by: Paul Williams, 'Te Papa: New Zealand's Identity Complex,' *New Zealand Journal of Art History*, 2003, no. 24, pp. 11–24; Senka Božić-Vrbančić, 'One Nation, Two Peoples, Many Cultures: Exhibiting Identity at Te Papa Tongarewa', *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 2003, vol. 112, no. 3, pp. 295–24; Anna Neill, 'National Culture and the New Museology,' in Anna Smith and Lydia Wevers (eds) *On Display: New Essays in Cultural Studies*, Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2004, pp. 180–96; and, Amiria Henare, 'Rewriting The Script: Te Papa Tongarewa the Museum of New Zealand', *Social Analysis*, 2004, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 55–63. Similar formulations have frequently characterised comparative

- analyses of Te Papa. See James Michael Gore, 'Representations of Non-Indigenous History and Identity in the National Museum of Australia and Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa', *The Electronic Journal of Australian and New Zealand History*, 2003 <<http://www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/articles/gore.htm>> accessed 28 October 2003; Lorenzo Veracini and Adrian Muckle, 'Reflections of Indigenous History inside the National Museums of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand and outside of New Caledonia's Centre Culturel Jean-Marie Tjibaou', *The Electronic Journal of Australian and New Zealand History*, 2002, <[http://www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/articles/veracini\\_muckle.htm](http://www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/articles/veracini_muckle.htm)> accessed 17 October, 2003. And Kylie Message, 'Representing Cultural Diversity in a Global Context: The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and The National Museum of Australia', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2005, Volume 8, no. 4, pp. 465–85.
2. See Ben Dibley, 'The Museum's Redemption: contact zones, government, and the limits of reform', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2005, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 5–27.
  3. For two different perspectives see Peter Beilharz *Imaging the Antipodes: Culture, Theory and the Visual in the Work of Bernard Smith*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997; J.G.A. Pocock, 'The Antipodean Perception' in *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005, pp. 3–23.
  4. Nick Perry, 'Antipodean Camp' in *Hyperreality and Global Culture*, Routledge, London and New York, 1998, pp. 4–23.
  5. The appellation 'Aotearoa/New Zealand' is caught in processes of transliteration and mistranslation that characterise postcolonial exchanges. It is not the country's officially sanctioned title. Formally it remains New Zealand, the translation of the Dutch *Nieuw Zeeland*, the name given to it by Dutch geographers in the seventeenth century to correct Abel Tasman's 1642 assumption that it was part of the great southern continent, *Staten Landt*. In Maori Aotearoa refers strictly to the North Island excluding Te Wai Pounamu, the South Island. A/NZ is increasingly used by the country's socially liberal to designate (a desire for) an emerging bicultural national condition. See Paul Spoonley, 'Constructing Ourselves: The Post-colonial Politics of Pakeha', in M. Wilson, and A. Yeatman, (eds), *Justice and Identity: Antipodean Practices*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1995, pp. 96–115. A/NZ, while perhaps signalling a desire for a settled bicultural nationalism, indicates a problematic identity whose contours are shaped and reshaped through ongoing political struggle. For good reasons, then, George Pavlich employs the appellation A/NZ under Derridean erasure, registering the limits of the political and cultural rationales underlying its prominent formulations. See George Pavlich, 'Political Logic, Colonial Law and the Land of the Long White Cloud,' *Law and Critique*, 1998, vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 175–206.
  6. For accounts of these processes see Jane Kelsey, *The New Zealand Experiment: A World Model for Structural Adjustment*, Auckland University Press and Bridget Williams Books, Auckland, 1997; Colin James, *The Quiet Revolution: Turbulence and Transition in Contemporary New Zealand*, Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1986; Brian Easton, *The Commercialisation of New Zealand*, Auckland University Press, Auckland Press, 1997. Nick Perry, 'Upside Down or Downside Up? Sectoral Interests, Structural Change and Public Policy', in John Deeks and Nick Perry (eds), *Controlling Interests: Business, the State and Society in New Zealand*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1992, pp. 36–56.
  7. Kelsey.
  8. Simon During, 'Postcolonialism and Globalization: Towards a Historicization of their Inter-relation', *Cultural Studies*, 2000, vol. 14, no. 3/4, p. 391.
  9. Cited in Kelsey, p. 327.
  10. See Kelsey. Also see Easton.
  11. J.K. Hunn, *Report on the Department of Maori Affairs*, Government Printer, Wellington, 1960.
  12. See Ranginui Walker, *Struggle Without End: Ka whawhai tonu matou*, Penguin, Auckland, 1990.
  13. There is a substantial literature on this process. For a recent collection of essays see Michael Belgrave, Merata Kawharu and David Williams (eds.), *Waitangi Revisited: Perspectives on the Treaty of Waitangi*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2004.
  14. See David Bedgood, *Rich and Poor in New Zealand: a Critique of Class, Politics, and Ideology*, Allen & Unwin, Auckland, 1980. Donald Denoon, *Settler Capitalism: The Dynamics of Dependent Development in the Southern Hemisphere*, Clarendon Press, New York, 1983.
  15. The term biculturalism was introduced into the country's academic discourse by Eric Schwimmer, *The Maori People in the Nineteen Sixties*, Blackwood, Auckland, 1968. See Jeffrey Sissons, 'Tall Trees Need Deep Roots: Biculturalism, Bureaucracy and Tribal Democracy in Aotearoa/New Zealand', *Cultural Studies*, 1995, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 61–73.
  16. Donna Awatere's essentialist indigenous critique set the agenda for 'race relations' debate in late twentieth century A/NZ. See Donna Awatere,



- Maori Sovereignty*, Broadsheet Auckland, 1984. Over this period numerous 'Treaty-oriented' histories have discursively reorganised the country's past-present alignments. Particularly important was the work of Anne Salmond, whose narratives sought to articulate early encounters from both sides of the colonial divide and accord with officially sanctioned definitions of bicultural parity. Anne Salmond, *Two Worlds: First Meetings between Maori and Europeans*, Viking, Auckland, 1991. Anne Salmond, *Between Worlds: Early Exchanges between Maori and Europeans, 1773–1815*, Viking, Auckland, 1997. See Anne Maxwell, 'Revisionist Histories and Settler Colonial Societies', *Southern Review*, 1994, no. 27, p. 395. Other important works of the period include those of James Belich and Judith Binney. James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1986. Judith Binney *Redemption Songs: A Life of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1995. Belich re-figured the colonial conflicts not as the 'land wars' but as the 'New Zealand Wars', investing them, as Benedict Anderson has put it, as 'the reassuring fratricide' central to national imaginings. Cited in Simon During, 'What Was the West? Some Relations Between Modernity, Colonisation and Writing', *Meanjin*, 1989, vol. 48, no. 4, p. 772. Binney's biography of Te Kooti casts the late nineteenth century Maori resistance poet and syncretic prophet in the mould of Robin Hood or Ned Kelly, whose surrender without compromise, while embracing the Law, seems, as During argued, to provide an allegory for the legal accommodations of the 1980s and 1990s. During, 'Postcolonialism and Globalization', p. 390. In works more directly concerned with the contemporary there has been much anguishing over the meaning of the identity of the settler heirs inaugurated by Michael King, *Being Pakeha: An encounter with New Zealand and the Maori Renaissance*, Hodder and Stoughton, Auckland, 1985.
17. See Spoonley, 'Constructing Ourselves'; Aril Bell, 'Authenticity and the project of settler identity in New Zealand', *Social Analysis*, 1999, vol. 43, no. 3, pp. 122–145.
  18. Wendy Larner and Paul Spoonley, 'Post-Colonial Politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand', in Daiva Stasiulis and Nira Yuval-Davis (eds), *Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class*, Sage, London, 1995, p. 61.
  19. Mark Williams, 'How Many Cultures Make a Culture?', *New Zealand Books*, October, 1996, p. 12.
  20. See *Museum of New Zealand—Te Papa Tongarewa Act*, Government Printers, Wellington, 1992.
  21. Simon Collins, 'Big Bangs for "Disneyland"', *City Voice*, 10 June 1992.
  22. See *Museum of New Zealand—Te Papa Tongarewa Act*.
  23. Cheryll Sotheran and Cliff Whiting, 'The Positioning of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa,' in *Museums: A Forum for Museums, Stakeholder Representatives and Marketing Support Agencies: conference proceedings*, Waikato Museum, Hamilton, 1995, October 1–3.
  24. Cited in Collins. Also see Paul MacLennan, 'Museum Scene Shrugs off Disney Image', *Leisure Manager*, 1995 autumn, p. 6.
  25. Pete Bossley, *Te Papa: An Architectural Adventure*, Te Papa Press, Wellington, 1998.
  26. Ken Gorbey, *Report on an Investigatory Trip to Europe and the United States of America*, The Museum of New Zealand—Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, 1994.
  27. Details are reported in 'Themed Attractions Project: Report for the period 1 February 1997 to 28 February 1997,' *Themed Attractions: Concept and Design Documentation* vol. 1, File Number TH35-05, Museum of New Zealand, Wellington.
  28. George Ritzer, *The McDonaldisation of Society: An Investigation into the Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life*, revised edition, Pine Forge Press, Thousand Oaks 1996. George Ritzer and Allan Liska ' "McDisneyization" and "Post-tourism": complementary perspectives on contemporary tourism', in Chris Rojek and John Urry (eds), *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, pp. 96–109.
  29. *Te Papa: Redefining the Word Museum: Tourism Trade Manual 1998–99*, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, n.p.
  30. Sidney Moko Mead, *Te Maori, Maori Art from New Zealand Collections*, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1984.
  31. For different contemporary perspectives see those of Maori scholar Sidney Moko Mead 'Concepts and Models for Maori Museums and Central Centres', *AGMANZ Journal*, 1985, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 3–5; and American curator Carol O'Biso, *First Light*, Hienemann, Auckland, 1987.
  32. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1988, pp. 209–10; Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, 'Introduction: Museums and Multiculturalism', in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (eds.), *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1991, p. 2.

33. Raymond Corbey, 'Ethnographic Showcases, 1870–1930,' in J Nadreveen and B Parekh (eds), *The Decolonization of the Imagination: Culture, Knowledge and Power*, Zed Books, Atlantic Highlands New Jersey, London 1995, p. 71.
34. Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel, Government*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994, p. 184. Stephen Turner offers an important corrective to Thomas' position when he writes: 'Informed Maori ... would not accept that the exhibition made up a properly integrated whole ... [For them] the cut-and-paste of the exhibition is transparent, as transparent as self-conscious references to other artworks might be to spectators of postmodern art'. Stephen Turner, 'Sovereignty, Or The Art of Being Native', *Cultural Critique*, 2002, no. 51, pp. 81–82.
35. During, 'What Was the West?', p. 769. Clifford, pp. 209–10.
36. Te Maori corresponded with the advent of trenchant anti-colonial activism that deemed Maori the only adequate interlocutors for their taonga, radically questioning the legitimacy of Pakeha scholarship. See Walker. The complexities of negotiating new relationships between museums and Maori under a broadly bicultural mandate have been the stuff of much professional reflection, policy scrutiny and iwi consultation and have been widely commented upon. Cf., for example, Paul Tapsell, *Taonga: A Tribal Response to Museums*, D.Phil., School of Museum Ethnology, Oxford University, Oxford, 1998; Paul Tapsell, 'From the Sideline: Tikanga, Treaty Values and Te Papa', in Michael Belgrave et. al., pp. 266–82. Ngapine Allen, 'Maori Vision and the Imperialist Gaze', in Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn (eds), *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum*, Routledge, New York, 1998, pp. 144–52.
37. Tapsell defines whakapapa as: 'a systematic framework ordering descendants under common ancestors; genealogical descent lines connecting gods with all things living'. Paul Tapsell, 'The Flight of Pareraututu: an Investigation of Taonga from a Tribal Perspective', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 1997, vol. 106, no. 4, p. 326.
38. Rosemary McLeod, 'The mighty MoNZ: Artless at Heart?', *North and South*, October, 1994, p. 76.
39. *Nga Taonga o Te Motu: Treasures of the Nation: National Museum of New Zealand: Te Marae Taonga o Aotearoa: A Plan for Development*, Report of the Project Development Team, Wellington, November 1985, p. 7. Here, on the one hand, a 'nationalised' Maoriness, exemplified for Pakeha in Te Maori and vindicated by American consumption, looked to provide a suitable export image for a cosmopolitan gaze and one around which a renovated settler nationalism could cohere, instituted in the form of a bicultural museum. On the other hand, such Maoriness gave indigenous communities unprecedented access to an international stage for self-representation and a certain cultural capital to exploit in Pakeha New Zealand.
40. *Museum of New Zealand—Te Papa Tongarewa: Report on the Interviews*, 22 September 1988, p. 9.
41. *A Concept for the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, adopted by the Project Development Board at its meeting held on 4 April 1989, Wellington. For early commentary on the museum's conceptual architecture see Luit Bieringa, 'Managing Change Towards What?: A Response to the Museum of New Zealand Concept,' *AGMANZ Journal*, 1989, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 12–13, 32; Ian Wedde 'Museum of New Zealand: Te Papa Tongarewa', *Artlink*, 1992, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 42–3. For an analysis see Ben Dibley, 'Museum, Nation, Narration', *Culture and Policy*, 1997, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 97–118.
42. Bossley, *Te Papa: an Architectural Adventure*. Pete Bossley, 'The Treaty,' *Architecture New Zealand*, 1998, February, pp. 64–7.
43. See *Te Papa: Annual Report*, 1 July 1997–30 June 1998, Museum of New Zealand, Wellington.
44. Sotheran cited in Dibley, 'Museum, Nation, Narration', p. 105.
45. Veracini and Muckle. Also see Neill, and Williams.
46. Designed to buffer the national economy from further shocks in the supply of energy, policy makers sought to interest trans-nationals in the possibility of producing or using energy at state-subsidised prices. See Perry, 'Upside Down or Downside Up?' In this context it is not incidental that Mobil Oil, which was in negotiation with the New Zealand government on the construction of a natural gas conversion plant, was the major sponsor of Te Maori.
47. Cited in 'Time to Delay Museum Plans', *The Evening Post*, 28 February 1991.
48. Brian Rudman, 'Another Grandiose Monument to Insanity', *Sunday Star*, 31 May 1992; 'Think Big Reincarnate' *The New Zealand Herald*, 29 May 1992.
49. Rudman.
50. Apirana Mahuika, 'Maori Culture and the New Museum', *Museum Anthropology*, 1992, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 9–11. See also Ken Gorbey, 'The Challenge of Creating a Bicultural Museum', *Museum Anthropology*, 1992, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 9–11.
51. Mahuika, pp. 9, 11.

52. In a detailed analysis Tapsell argues that this policy developed directly from the ad hoc protocol that had emerged to contend with the demands of the Te Maori national tour of 1985. See Tapsell, *Taonga*, pp. 156–217.
53. Tapsell, *Taonga*, p. 179.
54. Both Te Ati Awa and Ngati Toa had claims before the Waitangi Tribunal, which argued 'that the aboriginal title to Wellington's reclaimed harbour-front [on which the Museum stands] has never been extinguished by the Crown and that it continues to belong to the tangata whenua', Tapsell, *Taonga*, p. 179.
55. Bieringa, pp. 11–2.
56. Wedde, 'Museum of New Zealand: Te Papa Tongarewa', p. 43.
57. Bolger cited in *The Evening Post*, 27 July 1994.
58. To muted response, Bolger had suggested New Zealand should become a Republic (moving further away from Britain), and, that New Zealanders should re-orient their ethnicity (moving them closer to Asia). To this end he announced over the course of 1994, to some confusion, that he was Asian and tangata whenua (indigenous) and a republican. For some commentators Bolger's utterances reflected the cultural schizophrenia and fragmented subjectivities of a postmodern world. Aril Bell and Gregor McLennan, 'National Identities: From the General to the Pacific', *Sites*, 1995, no. 30, p. 5. But perhaps more convincingly they articulate the historical predicament of Meaghan Morris' 'Dominion subject': 'Dubiously postcolonial, prematurely postmodern, constitutively multicultural but still predominantly white,' these subjects, she writes, 'oscillate historically between identities as coloniser and colonised'. Meaghan Morris, 'Afterthoughts on "Australianism"', *Cultural Studies*, 1992, vol. 6, no. 3, p. 471.
59. Micheal Volkerling, *The First Fifty Years: the State, Leisure and the Arts in New Zealand since 1945*, Auckland University Winter Lecture Series, unpublished manuscript, 1995, pp. 5, 4. Also see Michael Volkerling, 'Death or Transfiguration: the Future for Cultural Policy in New Zealand', *Culture and Policy*, 1994, no. 6, pp. 7–28. Stephen Page, 'Urban Heritage Tourism in New Zealand: the Wellington Waterfront Development', in C. Michael Hall and Simon McArthur (eds), *Heritage Management in Australia and New Zealand: the Human Dimension*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, p. 281.
60. Volkerling, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 13.
61. Sotheran cited in *Newsletter: Museums Association of Aotearoa New Zealand*, Te Ropa Hanga Kaupapa Taonga, 1997, vol. 6, no. 2, n.p.
62. Volkerling, *The First Fifty Years*, p. 13.
63. Routinely, in a press deeply antagonistic to the new project, the acronym MoNZ was wilfully and playfully corrupted. Capturing the media hostility and, perhaps, public fear toward the project it was sardonically baptised 'the MoNZter' or as being a 'Monztrosity'. See Rudman; Gordon McLauchlan, *New Zealand Herald*, 17 January 1998, p. A17; Barry Hawkins, 'Te Papa: A National Treasure Chest', *Evening Post*, 14 February 1998, pp. 11, 13; Warren Gamble, 'Inside the MoNZter', *New Zealand Herald*, 24 January, 1998, p. G3. A new brand and corporate image developed for the museum by Saatchi and Saatchi in the months leading up to the February 1998 opening took a direct offensive. The new name, Te Papa, and its new positioning statement, *Our Place*, were deployed because Te Papa, while still anchored in the official Maori name had, according to front end evaluations, friendly warm connotations for all ethnicities, while, *Our Place*, with its resonances of the vernacular—as in 'come round to our place'—suggested informality, accessibility and popular ownership. See Panui: *News Letter*, The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, 1997, p. 3. For an account of the negotiations between iwi Maori and the museum over what the new museum was to be called, see Tapsell, *Taonga*, pp. 291–98.
64. See Colmar Brunton, *What Keeps Them Coming: Visitor Satisfaction Research Quantitative Report*, Museum of New Zealand, Wellington, 1998. For qualitative findings see Lisa McCauley, *Customer Satisfaction: Findings from the Qualitative Research Conducted at Te Papa—May 1998*, The Museum of New Zealand, Wellington, 1998.
65. The phrase belongs to Chris Rojek. Chris Rojek, *Ways of Escape: Modern Transformations in Leisure and Travel*, MacMillan, London, 1993, p. 205. On the architecture of reassurance see Ann Marling Karnel (ed), *Designing Disney Theme Parks: the Architecture of Reassurance*, Montreal: Centre canadien d'architecture/Canadian centre for architecture, 1997.
66. *The Dominion*, 20 August 1998.
67. 'Te Papa like Supermarket, says Swiss architect', *West Coast Times*, 13 August 1998.
68. See Chris Watson, *Te Papa Post Occupancy Evaluation for the Visitor Communications Group*, C. Watson Consultancy, Wellington, 1998. True to the strategy of the 'reoccurrence of reassurance', the Report recommended that, as a means to alleviate anxieties associated with being lost, Te Papa should create positive expectations of bewilderment. It suggested 'actively generating

- expectations consistent with customers' experiences' by promoting the museum with 'a challenge to Lose Yourself in New Zealand's Treasures at Te Papa'. Watson, p. 131.
69. Watson, p. 131. Nathalie Hienich's analysis of the *Georges Pompidou Centre* reflects on the relation between drifting and anxiety. Natalie Heinrich, 'The Pompidou Centre and its Public: the Limits of a Utopian Site', in Robert Lumley (ed), *The Museums Time Machine*, Routledge, London, 1988, pp. 199–212. On 'drifting' in the shopping mall see Rob Shields 'The Logic of the Mall,' in S. H. Riggins (ed), *The Socialness of Things: Essays on the Socio-Semiotics of Objects*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin and New York, 1994, pp. 203–29.
70. Jenny Forsyth, 'Te Papa "a Terrible Warning to World"', *New Zealand Herald*, 3 March 2000.
71. Ian Wedde, 'Our Place in the World', *The New Zealand Listener*, 14 February 1998, p. 26.
72. Hamish McDonald, 'Playing with History,' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 July 1998, p. 7.
73. Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,' *New Left Review*, 1984, no. 146, p. 84.
74. Henare, p. 60.
75. Jenny Harper, 'For the Sake of Your Art', *The Dominion*, 2 June 1998, p. 10.
76. Williams, p. 21.
77. Božić-Vrbančić, pp. 312, 313.
78. Henare, p. 59.
79. Neill, pp. 183–85; Božić-Vrbančić, p. 313.
80. Paul Walker and Justine Clark, 'Museum and Archive: Framing the Treaty', in Anna Smith and Lydia Wevers (eds), *On Display: New Essays in Cultural Studies*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2004, pp. 163–79.
81. Jock Phillips, 'Our History, Our Selves: the Historian and National Identity', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 1997, vol. 30, no. 2, p. 116.
82. Hamish Keith, 'Let's Have More Museum and less McDonalds', *New Zealand Herald*, 31 Jan 2000, p. A19.
83. Phillips, p. 115.
84. Margaret Jolly, 'On the Edge? Deserts, Oceans, Islands', *The Contemporary Pacific*, 2001, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 445–47.
85. Phillips, p. 116.
86. Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, 'Te Papa: Successful New Generation Museum' *In Touch with New Zealand*, Radio National, Wellington, 17 August 1998, p. 4 [transcript of interview].
87. Gore.
88. Neill, p. 192.
89. Sharon MacDonald and Roger Silverstone, 'Rewriting the Museums' Fictions: Taxonomies, Stories and Readers', *Cultural Studies*, 1990, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 176–91. Andrew Barry, 'On Interactivity: Consumers, Citizens and Culture', in Sharon Macdonald (ed), *The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture*, Routledge, London and New York, 1998, pp. 98–117.
90. Penelope Harvey, 'Multiculturalism without Responsibility? The Contemporary Universal Exhibition', *Critical Quarterly*, 1996, vol. 38, no. 3, p. 94.
91. Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, Farrar Straw and Giroux, New York, 1966, p. 290.
92. Perry, 'Antipodean Camp'.
93. Perry, 'Antipodean Camp', p. 12. While Perry focuses on contemporary antipodean culture, the practices of bricolage in seeking to cultivate a sense of a Pacific identity among Europeans has a longer history, as Vanessa Smith suggests in her analysis of the beachcomber as bricoleur in nineteenth century literary culture. Vanessa Smith, *Literary Culture and the Pacific: Nineteenth-century Textual Encounters*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.
94. Perry, 'Antipodean Camp', p. 18.
95. Wedde, 'Our Place in the World', p. 26.
96. Theodore Dalrymple, 'An Amusement Arcade Masquerading as a Museum,' *New Statesman*, 12 February 1999, p. 34.
97. Cf., Harper, p. 10. Robert Leonard, 'Papa's Bag,' *Artforum*, 1998, vol. 36, no. 5, p. 42. Critics of Te Papa found an ally in the then recently elected Labour Prime Minister, Helen Clark. She opined that Te Papa was too much of a museum and not enough of a gallery. See Sarah Catherall, 'Te Papa "Too Populist"', *Sunday Star Times*, 2 May 1999. Ultimately, as minister with the portfolio of Culture and Heritage, she commissioned a report on Te Papa's performance whose terms of reference included an assessment of 'whether the national art collection is being presented to the public in the most effective way'. Des Griffin, Chris Saines and T.L. Rodney Wilson, *Ministry for Culture and Heritage Report of Specific Issues relating to the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, Wellington, 2000, p. 5. On this issue the Report was largely in accordance with the criticisms made by art professionals of Parade. Parade was closed in 2001.
98. For analyses of Parade see: Maria Brown, 'Representation the Body of a Nation: the Art Exhibitions of New Zealand's National Museum', *Third Text*, 2002, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 285–94. Michael Goldsmith, "'Our Place" in New Zealand Culture: how the Museum of New Zealand Constructs Biculturalism', *Ethnologies Comparées*, 2003, no. 6, pp. 1–13.
99. Harper, p. 10.

100. For Wedde's take on Perry's formulations in relation to Te Papa see Ian Wedde, 'Complicit Objects, Duplicit Spaces: the Hyperreality of National Identity', in *Making Ends Meet: Essays & Talks 1992–2004*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2005, pp. 107–21.
101. Simon Rees, 'Lively Arts: Te Pakeha', *Metro*, February, 1998, pp. 101–03. Josie McNaught, 'State of the Art', *The Dominion*, 15 May 1999, p. 19.
102. Williams, p. 13.
103. Parade's success in realising this approach is open to debate. See its critics cited above. With some justification and almost certainly with Parade on his mind, Alex Calder, has argued Te Papa has been 'made over by a local, art-oriented cultural studies'. Alex Calder, 'Splat! Kaboom!: Cultural Studies in New Zealand', in Anna Smith and Lydia Wevers (eds), *On Display: New Essays in Cultural Studies*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, p. 107.
104. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1983, p. 56.
105. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1991.
106. Ian Wedde, 'Information and Entertainment', *Communications Technologies What are their Social and Cultural Implications for New Zealand?* Transcript from paper presented at Humanities Society of New Zealand Communications Seminar Series, no. 3, 16 May 1996, p. 1, cited in Williams, p. 14.
107. Paul Thompson and Bronwyn Labrum, *Golden Day*, Museum of New Zealand, Wellington, n.d. [publicity for the book accompanying the exhibition].
108. McLean, *Evening Post*, 29 July 1998.
109. La Hood cited in Simon Robinson, 'Where the heart is', *Time*, 16 February 1998, pp. 58–59.
110. Williams, pp. 16, 15.
111. Gore.
112. Williams, p. 16.
113. Williams, p. 16.
114. Unlike the other exhibitions discussed here Golden Days was not generated in-house, but rather contracted to Lahood's production company.
115. Henare, p. 60.
116. Perry, 'Antipodean Camp', p. 18.
117. Ann French, 'Setting Standard,' *Architecture New Zealand*, 1998, February, p. 70.
118. Bossley, 'The Treaty', p. 64.
119. Bossley, 'The Treaty', p. 67.
120. Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1993, p. 95.
121. Bossley, 'The Treaty', p. 64.
122. Bossley, 'The Treaty', p. 67.
123. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Routledge, London, 1989, p. 7.
124. Walker and Clarke, p. 172.
125. Walker and Clarke, pp. 169–70.
126. Božić-Vrbanić, p. 313; Williams, p. 21.
127. Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations*, Fontana, London, 1973, p. 234; Jameson, pp. 76–7.
128. See Jonathan Lamb, 'The New Zealand Sublime', *Meanjin*, 1990, vol. 49, no. 4, pp. 663–75. Jonathan Lamb, 'A Sublime Moment off Poverty Bay, 9 October 1769', in G. McGregor and M. Williams (eds) *Dirty Silence: Aspects of Language and Literature in New Zealand*, Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1991, pp. 97–115.
129. Perry, 'Antipodean Camp', p. 13.
130. Perry, 'Antipodean Camp', p. 13. This is also suggested by the title of Chris Healy's book in which he offers his own antipodean permutation on the angel allegory. Chris Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism: History as Social Memory*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997, p. 6.
131. Denis Dutton, 'New National Museum Resembles a Junkshop,' *New Zealand Herald*, 21 May 1998, p. 15.
132. Dutton, p. 15.