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## Constructions of national identity and the nation: the case of New Zealand/Aotearoa

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**Constructions of national identity and the nation:  
The case of New Zealand/ Aotearoa**

A thesis submitted for the degree of  
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## **Abstract**

**This thesis analyses discourses of national identity and the nation, using the case study of New Zealand. The main empirical data are 'ordinary talk', from 41 New Zealanders interviewed in London in late 1994 and early 1995.**

**The thesis investigates the work which is done in participants' talk by constructions of national identity and the nation. The first major focus is how national identity is used in the construction of self-identity. The analysis includes different ways of understanding the 'self', the interpretative resources available for the construction of an identity as a New Zealander, including alternative categories and positive and negative stereotypes, and the way that speakers position themselves in relation to New Zealand and other New Zealanders.**

**A second focus is how constructions of nation and the national do ideological work around contentious issues, that is, work which has implications for relationships of power and authority in a broad socio-economic context and which tends to silence and delegitimise certain voices and identities, especially by establishing and reinforcing certain practices and relationships as 'normal' and therefore invisible and/or uncontentious.**

**Finally the thesis considers how such constructions accommodate changes which are frequently associated with globalization and a decline in the relevance of the nation state. These changes include the reduced state provision of services, resulting from the reduction or abandonment of 'welfare state' policies; challenges from new migrants and from an indigenous minority to the status of the dominant population group; and the opening of national borders to both investment and migration. The analysis shows the continuing salience and ideological relevance of national identity.**

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## **Introduction**

In 1984, ten years before the main research data for this thesis were gathered, New Zealand had elected the first of a series of governments which passed legislation intended to change the economic and social organisation of the country. The Maori were finally permitted to initiate major claims for land and resources which they had lost since the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi established the colony, a few decades after the first British settlement. The national economy was 'opened' to international trade and investment and the state sector was privatised or otherwise opened to competition. Through a series of changes in policy and legislation the state largely dissociated itself from many of its former responsibilities, such as the provision of social services and welfare, the narrowing of income disparities through tax and redistribution, the protection of local industry and the coordination of export production. Migration controls were reduced and migrants were admitted from a wider range of countries.

All of these changes, and others, challenged conventional accounts of the national population and history, the role of the national government and the relations between people and government, the relations between New Zealand and other countries, and expectations for the future of New Zealand. They are not, of course, unique to New Zealand. Similar changes have recently occurred elsewhere; for example, the changes in the economy and the role of the state were part of a general trend towards the adoption of monetarist economic policies and the rejection of Keynesian principles.

These changes focus attention on the nature of the relationship people have with their country: what it is, how they understand it, how important it is to them, and whether such changes affect it. This thesis investigates the social psychology of national identity in an attempt to answer these and other questions. It aims to develop an understanding of the psychological nature of



national identity, its functions and importance for the individual, and the conditions under which it is salient.

The data used for the thesis were collected through interviews with New Zealanders in London. The interviews were in the form of open-ended questions about speakers' own situations, their opinions on contemporary issues, including the status of the Maori and also new migration into New Zealand, and their images of New Zealand. The interviews were transcribed and analysed as a body of discourse, that is, as talk in which speakers do work. Such work is understood to relate to several contexts, including the short-term context of the immediate conversational exchange between the people present, and a longer term of a speaker's project to construct an identity, for example as a certain kind of person.

The thesis approaches 'nation' and the 'national' as discursive constructions. These constructions are implicated in and essential to the economic, administrative and social processes which are the focus of more conventional studies of nations and nationalism in other disciplines, but the concern here is not with structural models or the conventional hierarchies of public (or private) bureaucracies. This analysis focuses on the discursive constructions found in 'lay' people's talk.

Speakers are assumed to draw on a pool or field of social resources containing constructions which are multiple, historical and changing. An individual speaker is positioned by and positions her or himself within the possibilities of these constructions. The images, ideas and meanings of a particular national identity simultaneously do work for and place constraints on the speaker. Within both the immediate conversational context and more enduring aspects of the speaker's life situation, national identity enables and inhibits certain self-constructions; it is therefore an important part of personal identity. To claim a particular national identity, and it is probably difficult to avoid making some such claim, means to see oneself, be seen, and see oneself

being seen, in certain ways.

Furthermore, the constructions are overlapping and contradictory rather than coherent and consistent. The individual is inextricably positioned somewhere within the range of these constructions, which can be taken up, defied, tweaked, edited and embellished but never cleanly abandoned.

From this perspective some of the conventional terms associated with studies of the nation need to be redefined. It is no longer necessary to draw a distinction between 'nation', as a felt entity or self-defining community, and 'nation-state' or 'state', as a unit of political and economic administration, since these are assumed to be interlinked. However discursive constructions may themselves draw on the idea of the distinction between 'nation' and 'state', as part of the pool of discursive resources. Lay constructions of the nation and the national can be expected to have been enriched and influenced by political rhetoric and academic theory.

On the other hand, national identity is not assumed to be equivalent to official "nationality": the latter term refers to a person's official right to live in a certain national territory and carry a passport issued by its government. In these circumstances it can still be a matter of debate, for self and others, what national identity that person has.

These points about terminology are one indication of the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis. Its main concern is with the social psychology of national identity. However any discussion of nation and nation-state must acknowledge the many different fields in which these concepts are used, including politics, history, sociology and development studies. In addition, the discourse-based approach of the thesis provides a connection between social psychology and other disciplinary areas concerned with text and representations, most notably cultural studies and, to a lesser extent, sociolinguistics. Obviously a single thesis cannot 'belong' in the centre of all of these academic traditions or adequately comprehend their different concerns. However the subject of the

thesis requires that they be acknowledged and gives its findings relevance in a wide variety of theoretical areas.

### **Research themes**

This thesis will present three major arguments concerning the nature of national identity. The first is that a claim of national identity does work for the individual as part of the construction of her or his self identity. This is based on an understanding of individual identity derived from social constructionism and discursive psychology (Shotter and Gergen, 1989; Burkitt, 1991; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Edwards and Potter, 1992; Wetherell and Potter, 1995). Identity is not approached as the manifestation of an enduring unique essence but as a construction of self established through discursive work in the multiple contexts in which a speaker is operating and drawing on an ongoing aggregate of the positionings and voices associated with an individual's functioning and delimitation within her or his social environment. The continuity of individual identity occurs partly through embodiment and also through conventions such as narratives of continuity. Accounts of self are therefore important.

The thesis will show that within such accounts national identity can function to position an individual speaker in relation to fellow nationals; 'foreign' nationals; place and time. This is achieved through the use of different categories available around a particular national identity; through discursive resources such as established myths and images of national character, land and history; through more abstract and generalised constructions of the 'nation', for example, as a group united by similarity; through characterisations of the nation as a character and global actor; and through constructions of place and of personal relation to it.

The thesis does not argue that national identity is a necessary category: such an absolute statement is not appropriate, since the research method used cannot investigate all possible situations and subjects and the theoretical

approach adopted does not assume that only a finite number of situations and types of discursive move are possible. However it does suggest that a claim of national identity does useful work for speakers.

The second major argument to be presented here is that constructions of 'nation' and 'the national' are ideological, in the sense that they set up and contest relations of power. This occurs particularly around issues of inclusion and exclusion; access to resources, and the perpetuation of the status quo and challenges to it. Because of their ideological nature, such constructions are not single and monolithic but contradictory and dilemmatic (Billig et al, 1988). They are also constrained. One of the limitations on personal positioning is the dilemma of reconciling self-presentation through a claim of national identity with the perceptions of others. More major constraints derive from the dominant constructions of national identity, which themselves are established and contested over time.

The third major argument derives from the two preceding ones. Because national identity is understood as a discursive construction which draws on a pool or field of social resources, and because it is continually contested and reinforced in competitions around, for example, access to resources, it is sufficiently flexible to accommodate change, and to persist and remain relevant through, for example, situations of increased migration and reorganisation of the 'national' economy. It is argued here that the changes associated with 'globalisation' do not therefore render 'national identity' irrelevant.

A further aim has been to make an empirical and descriptive contribution to future research in the relatively small but growing field of New Zealand/ Pacific Studies and in the larger tradition of studies of nations and nationalism. The thesis uses a significant body of interview data and presents tropes and constructions which were drawn on repeatedly, by different speakers and in different contexts. By investigating not only the theory but the

content of such discursive work, the thesis aims to contribute to a wider understanding and awareness of the constructed and mediated nature of political, historical and social representations associated with the nation-state.

### **The structure of the thesis**

The thesis is divided into two parts. The first section provides the theoretical background to the research, and the second analyses the original data.

In Part 1 of the thesis, **Chapter 1** reviews the understandings of 'nation' and related concepts which have been developed within different theories and theoretical traditions. It then presents the position of this thesis, that 'nation' and 'national' are approached as discursive constructions. The background to the use of 'discourse' will be outlined here, including theories of ideology.

**Chapter 2** reviews theories of identity, particularly those which bring together an understanding of the individual and the social, as the aspects most relevant to the development of a social psychology of national identity. This chapter presents the theoretical background to an understanding of identity in the terms described above, as a discursive construction, and to the discourse analysis perspective adopted here. It also gives a brief overview of previous research relevant to the social psychology of national identity.

**Chapter 3** presents three broad constructions of the New Zealand 'nation' as an overview of the ideas and interpretations presented in various written sources, including national histories; academic and more 'popular' analyses of government policy and social change; and press coverage of specific issues. The aims of this chapter are, firstly, to show how the social and economic changes mentioned above have led to revised descriptions and understandings of the New Zealand nation-state, and secondly, to introduce ideas which are part of the field of discursive resources available to New Zealanders for their own constructions of their nation.

In Part 2, **Chapter 4** describes the methods used to collect and analyse

the research data. The next three chapters analyse this data. As a broad overview, **Chapter 5** examines speakers' constructions of New Zealand as a nation, **Chapter 6** looks at the 'form' and 'content' of speakers' constructions of national identity and the ways national identity functions in the construction of self-identity, and **Chapter 7** examines how speakers use constructions of nation and national identity to do ideological work around contemporary issues which are also associated with globalisation. The final chapter of the thesis, **Chapter 8**, is the Conclusion.

## **Chapter 1 - Theorising 'the nation'**

The main aim of this chapter is to review the ways that 'nation' and associated terms have been differently understood and formulated by a selection of theorists. The focus is on 'the nation' because this has been the starting point for most of the writers discussed here. Understandings of 'state', 'nation-state', 'nationalism' and 'national identity' have generally been derived from this primary concept.

The chapter begins with an exploration of common themes which are associated with 'the nation' and also issues which the concept has been used to address. For example, theories which aim to explain the nation as an entity have considered its defining features and possible functions. Definition and description are also central to theories which consider nations as part of the international political system. Development studies and postcolonial theories have analysed the economic, social and cultural conditions associated with the rise of nations. More recently, theorists focussing on eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have considered nations as survivals from before the communist era, or alternatively as the products of a second 'wave' of development, to be compared with nineteenth century prototypes.

The range of theories is so great that an exhaustive and chronological review of the academic writing on 'the nation' is outside the scope of this thesis. However the work of a selection of writers will be looked at in order to illustrate how 'nation' and associated terms been differently understood and formulated.

The chapter will then summarise key concepts which will be carried forward into the main body of this thesis. These are taken from writers associated with the post-Marxist focus on ideas, culture and ideology, including Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, Edward Said, and Michael J. Shapiro. Their work is briefly described, as are the writings of Michel Foucault,

as a major influence. There is also a summary of recent work by Michael Billig which specifically addresses nationalism as an ideology.

This summary provides the basis for the argument that the concepts of 'nation' and 'national' are ideological. The final section will outline the position of this thesis, that 'nation' and associated terms can usefully be analysed as discursive constructions. Such constructions, both in the academic and political writing drawn on in Chapter 3 and in the 'everyday' talk analysed in Chapters 5-7, incorporate elements from academic theories of the nation, including some of those reviewed here.

### **Conceptualising the nation**

Discussions of the nation frequently begin with references to the French Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789). This states that

"sovereignty resides essentially in the nation: no body of men, no individual, can exercise authority that does not emanate expressly from it."

Here, then, the concept of "the nation" converts a group or multiplicity of people into a single entity, and one which has a positive nature, unlike, for example, a 'mob'. This entity is more than a collective noun because it is more than the individuals who are its component parts. It has sovereignty over the people who comprise it, and can transfer authority to them. It has an abstract, transcendent quality.

A major theme of writings around the nation is the nature of the relationship between this abstract entity, on the one hand, and the bureaucracies and business of economic and political organisation which are located within the corresponding populations and territory. For example, Max Weber, in a piece of early writing which usefully includes many of the key ideas discussed by other and subsequent theorists of the nation, marks the distinction using the terms 'nation' and 'state' :

"In ordinary language, 'nation' is, first of all, not identical with the



'people of a 'state', that is, with the membership of a given polity." (Weber, in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 22)

Membership of the nation is not necessarily based on "common blood" or "a specific common anthropological type". However, Weber continues

"Nevertheless the idea of the 'nation' is apt to include the notions of common descent and of an essential, though frequently indefinite, homogeneity." (22)

He suggests that the idea of the ethnic community is similar, but what distinguishes the idea of the nation is the "prestige interests" that are involved in it:

"the significance of the 'nation' is usually anchored in the superiority, or at least the irreplaceability, of the culture values that are to be preserved and developed only through the cultivation of the peculiarity of the group. It therefore goes without saying that the intellectuals ... are to a specific degree predestined to propagate the 'national idea', just as those who wield power in the polity provide the idea of the state." (25)

These intellectuals are

"a group of men (*sic*) who by virtue of their peculiarity have special access to certain achievements considered to be 'culture values', and who therefore usurp the leadership of a 'culture community'." (25)

Nevertheless

"In so far as there is at all a common object lying behind the obviously ambiguous term 'nation', it is apparently located in the field of politics. One might well define the concept of nation in the following way: a nation is a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own; hence, a nation is a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own." (25)

These extracts from Weber contain a number of concepts which recur in other writers' works. First, there is the distinction made between 'nation' and

'state', which opens up many possible descriptions of the precise relationship between them. Does the nation precede the state, as is often said to have happened in Western Europe, or can the establishment of a state lead to the development of a nation? A 'nationalist' movement can be defined as a group attempting to claim a state for an already existing nation. The term 'nation-state' can imply that both have been achieved. Alternatively, writers who reject the distinction may use 'nation' instead of 'nation-state' (for example, Smith 1991).

Secondly, there is the reference to "homogeneity". To describe a community as having this quality suggests that its members are similar to each other but dissimilar to members of other nations, so able to be distinguished as a unique population. Homogeneity can also imply a lack of differentiation within the national community, which could be seen either as a form of equality, in line with republican ideals, or as oppressive, demanding compliance. When Weber emphasises that this homogeneity is not based in "common descent" and "blood", he anticipates the assumption that the nation has some biological basis.

Next, Weber's expression "culture values" foreshadows other writers' discussions of a reified 'culture'. For example, this concept occurs in writers as diverse as Stalin, Kristeva and Smith, as is shown below. Culture, sometimes described as "ethnicity", can work as an alternative to a biological basis for similarity. Such concepts indicate the abstractness of the 'national' and the associations it has, according to various later writers, with myth, religion, language, memory and historical accounts, tradition, and imagination.

In addition, in the references to the "intellectuals", on the one hand, and the "community" on the other, there is an indication of the issue of whether nationalism is a populist movement, from below, or the creation of an elite.

Another point is that Weber describes the "tendency" of a nation to become a state. More formally, this is known as the concept or principle of

national self-determination, that every nation has a right to be a separate state and, by extension, that the ideal state is one which is founded on a 'natural' nation. Northedge, writing in the field of International Relations, suggests that this principle started with the French revolution and comments:

"The assumption of liberal thought on international relations has been that the attainment of national self-determination is somewhat more than a moral right, though less than a legal right" (Northedge, 1976: 69)

and

"the story of the international system could be related in the form of four acts of a drama: first comes the demand for national self-determination, then the achievement of national self-determination, followed by the pressure of the newly self-determined state against its neighbours, and finally there comes the demand of those neighbours for self-determination against it (206)."

Northedge therefore uses the principle both normatively and descriptively.

Finally, it is interesting that Weber mentions a possible biological basis to the national community in order to deny it, but then immediately restates the importance of the idea. Paul Brass (1979) suggests that scholars of ethnic groups and nations can be divided according to whether they see such groups as "instrumental", that is, as having been consciously created for a purpose, or as 'natural', 'primordial', 'given' communities. Yet few writers do use an unqualified biological or primordial explanation.

Obviously, one intrinsic difficulty with such an explanation must be that most if not all human populations are not static or contained but exist within an ongoing process of recombination through migration, especially when considered on an evolutionary timescale. Within the sociobiological tradition some writers do attempt to explain the nation in these terms. For example, Pierre Van den Berghe presents a coherent argument that "human collectivities" are based at least partly on kinship. The operation of the genetic

mechanism of "kin selection", he claims, encourages solidarity with the in-group and discrimination against any out-group in order to perpetuate the genes held in common by self and family.

"I am definitely not arguing that we have a gene for ethnocentrism, or for recognising kin; rather I am arguing that those societies that institutionalized norms of nepotism and ethnocentrism had a strong selective advantage over those that did not (assuming that any such ever existed), because kin selection has been the basic blueprint for animal sociality." (Van den Berghe in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 99)

However, like Weber, writers of many subsequent accounts and theories raise historical-biological explanations of nation in order to disagree with them, but often in ways which suggest that the premise can never be completely discarded. Anthony Smith (1991), for example, suggests that national identity is based on the identity of the ethnic group, or *ethnie*, which is partly characterised by its "*myth* of common ancestry" (my emphasis). An interesting question, therefore, is why it is felt necessary to repeat the arguments against this position.

Political movements have of course used biological definitions of the national community, with such appalling consequences as the mass killings of Jews and other 'non-Aryans' in Nazi Germany and the recent "ethnic cleansing" in former Yugoslavia. These associations may be one reason why academics repeat the arguments against biological explanations and may also reduce the likelihood that such explanations will be preferred.

A biological definition may be attractive, however, because it would imply that some kind of test of nationality was possible, that the 'real' group could be distinguished from outsiders, through reference to family connections or, more usefully, by immediate recognition of physical "type", in Weber's term. There would be no awkward situation of people claiming a national identity which others did not recognise or acknowledge their right to possess. A

biological definition therefore neatly brings together external and internal views of the nation in a way that is seldom managed by writers using alternative theories.

Theorists who adopt an external perspective have tended to produce taxonomic definitions. For example, Anthony D. Smith defines a nation as:

"a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members" (Smith 1991: 14).

The implication of such a 'checklist' is that a group could claim the status of 'nation' but, if it did not satisfy the above criteria, fail to qualify as one. There could be 'true' and 'false' nations.

In contrast, Benedict Anderson produced an influential 'internal' definition of the nation, as an "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983: 6). This idea suggests that the nation is a self-defined grouping; no outsider can award or dispute its status. However the definition also implies that even the insiders might disagree about the nature and limits of a particular nation. Anderson compares a member of the national community with the reader of a newspaper who "consumes" this daily product alone but

"is well aware that the ceremony he (*sic*) performs (*i.e. reading*) is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion." (35)

This image raises the possibility of illusion, and of the community being imagined quite differently by each solitary reader.

The tendency of different theorists to deny but then return to blood and common descent in their discussions of the nation could therefore be explained as an attempt to resolve a dilemma of identity, that is, to reconcile what a person feels her or himself to be with what that person is seen to be by the world. This point will be returned to in the discussion of interview data in

## Chapter 6.

Biological explanations tend to look to the past, to the origins of the nation. However writings on the nation also draw on the ideas already discussed in order to address more contemporary issues, such as the social changes which accompanied post-World War 2 industrialisation in the West. Some theorists use images from industry and corporate business and propose that 'the nation' is functional in this context. For example, Karl Deutsch (1966) describes a trend in "modern technology" to use a "performance test" rather than "composition specification" and makes this the basis for his definition of a nation. He suggests that increased security and success in the competitive market is experienced by a "people", that is, a group bound by the "communicative efficiency" which results from common concerns and preferences. Individuals

"uprooted by social and technological change, exposed to the risk of economic competition, and taught to hunger for success" (Deutsch, in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 28)

are eager to align themselves in such a group, and the people becomes a nationality, a nation and then nation-state in order to link its members together even more securely, including through the "machinery of compulsion", and then to "fight the claim of other nationalities."

Similarly Ernest Gellner (1964) suggests that literacy, and probably some "technological competence", are necessary for full membership of a modern society. Any education system created to provide these has a certain minimal optimum size for efficient functioning, and this is what ultimately determines the size of the nation. Furthermore, the education system produces individuals who are more or less substitutable for each other, functionally, within the national society, but will not fit into a different system. (There is an echo of another industrial/manufacturing image here, of spare parts which cannot be used in a different brand of the same product, such as a different make of car.)

Therefore separate nations are created:

"Men do not in general become nationalists from sentiment or sentimentality, atavistic or not, well-based or myth-founded: they become nationalists through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognised." (Gellner, 1964 in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 56)

In a more recent example of a functional theory, Michael Hechter (1987), uses assumptions and terminology from a liberal, free market model of the economy: individuals act to maximise personal welfare and they co-operate to obtain jointly produced goods which they cannot obtain alone, including territorial sovereignty and patronage. The latter is significant even in the case of groups which aspire to state power but have not achieved it.

Theories of the nation have also been used to address issues relating to the international or global level, to the world system of nation-states or what Northedge calls "the international political system".

One instance of this is that many writers have discussed the nation in the context of development, simultaneously considering the economic situations of so-called Third World countries, and their status as 'new' nations or nation-states which (in many cases) became independent of colonial rulers in the 50s and 60s. For example, Gellner, whose ideas have already been mentioned, refers to a "tidal wave of modernisation" which has an uneven impact. The benefits of modernisation are not given to all, and as a result, he suggests, the worst-off group in a particular situation is likely to register its discontent as "'national' expression". Led by its intellectuals, the group becomes a new independent nation, in which the intelligentsia now enjoy a "magnificent monopoly" on the positions of power and status, but the working class are likely to be even worse-off. Gellner concludes, therefore, that

"Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist." (62)

Rejai and Enloe (1969), define 'state' as "a political-legal concept" and

'nation' as "primarily psycho-social". They then coin the term "state-nation" to describe those "currently underdeveloped, newly independent" countries which, in their view, were forced to develop a nationalist spirit to legitimise the authority of indigenous rulers over a heterogeneous population and territory whose only previous 'unity' had resulted from the coercion of colonial rule. They suggest that, because there are few "cultural affinities", these countries need to use the political and the economic as "integrative cement", so modernization is crucial to promote nationalism. Ironically, however,

"the very instrumental linkages on which the authority of the new states are wont to rely are those which require nationalism for their product", such as shared language and values and "racial affinity". (Rejai and Enloe, 1969: 45)

Crude divisions of the world into two or three parts, such as the industrialised North and developing South, or the rich First World, the (former) communist Second World and the underdeveloped Third World, are now less common, though the latter expression lingers. However even when these terms were in wider use certain countries did not fit easily into the categories. Theories which address the issue of the nation in the so-called developing countries, including the ideas of Gellner, and Rejai and Enloe referred to above, do not seem relevant to countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand which are former colonies where the indigenous populations are a minority compared with the descendents of former colonisers (and subsequent migrants). An even more complex example is the United States of America, and writers who use taxonomic definitions and categorise nations as, for example, 'old' and 'new' often tend to give the United States a category of its own.

Douglas Cole (1971) refers to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa as "settlement colonies". Using similar definitions of 'nation' and 'state' to Rejai and Enloe, he proposes that for these countries the terms have a



special application. He suggests that in the settlement colonies loyalty to the new state ("patriotism") coexisted with "ethnic" identification with a pan-Britannic Anglo-Saxon nation. This latter feeling was the "nationalism" of these populations, who took pride in their common heritage, culture and "sense of mission", and also in their membership of the "British race", which they were anxious to preserve. Cole suggests that the different loyalties could co-exist without conflict. For example,

"An Australian nationalism, based upon a consciousness of ethnic differentiation, would have been incompatible with an imperial ideology based upon the unity of blood, language, ancestry and tradition. An Australian patriotism, based upon loyalty to state and territory, need not be." (Cole, 1971: 177)

However he suggests that this shared "ethnic identity", based on common language, has prevented or limited the development of "English-speaking Canadian, Australian or New Zealand nationalism".

Cole's theory resembles those which address former Asian and African colonies in the assumption that the status of nation is an achievement, the culmination of a development process which includes the cultural. A quite other view has become common in discussions of the former Soviet bloc and former Yugoslavia. Here the term 'nationalism' is commonly prefixed with 'atavistic': the movement to the nation is depicted as a reversion. For example, Conor Cruise O'Brien wrote in 1993

"The enemy is manic xenophobic nationalism, most manifest today in pre-Enlightenment forms, combining nationalism and religious bigotry, as in the former Yugoslavia and now potentially in Russia" (O'Brien, 1993: 147).

Earlier in the same year, Miroslav Hroch mentioned the image of 'reversion' in order to reject it as simplistic:

"The conventional view that that current turmoil is the result of the

release of irrational forces that were long suppressed - 'deep frozen' as it were - under Communism, and are now in full revival after a lapse of 50 years is evidently superficial" (Hroch, 1993: 14).

He suggests instead that the changes occurring in Eastern Europe are a new example of the same processes by which nations formed there in the nineteenth century. In one sense, therefore, he also resorts to an explanation in terms of a return to the past, even if in more moderate terms.

The theories which have been selected up to this point show the range of issues around which 'the nation' has been invoked. The first two examples, from the Declaration of Rights and from Max Weber, both hypothesise a single and coherent entity in which sovereignty can reside, as the basis of political order. Smith, Deutsch, Anderson and Gellner can all be seen as addressing the problem of the boundaries between such units: how can a clean, undisputed division into separate nations be achieved? Rejai and Enloe, Cole and also Gellner attempt to explain how a stable and self-governing nation can develop to replace the imperial rule by which order had been imposed from above and outside. O'Brien and Hroch are concerned about a different kind of vacuum, after the collapse of so-called 'communist' regimes.

As well as considering the issues addressed by theories of the nation, it is also, of course, possible to point to the major theoretical traditions which underlie the work of certain writers.

One group are psychodynamic theories based in the writings of Sigmund Freud. For example, Walker Connor writes

"the essence of the nation is intangible. This essence is a psychological bond that joins a people and differentiates it, in the subconscious conviction of its members, from all other people in a most vital way."

(Connor, in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 36)

Like many other writers he emphasises the importance of the idea of a "blood" and "kinship" link. However he describes this, following Freud's

emphasis on the nuclear family unit, as an "unstated assumption" that each nation had its own "Adam and Eve" from whom all its people are descended. This belief is an

"intuitive conviction which can give to nations a psychological dimension approximating that of the extended family, i.e. a feeling of common blood lineage." (38)

He suggests that this is completely different to the relationship to a state, which is a "political subdivision" and that most new African and Asian countries consist of states which have been imposed over more than one nation. In his terms there are few true 'nation-states' in the world. (He says that there were only 12 in 1971).

Julia Kristeva (1993) presents a more complex and dynamic analysis based in the same theoretical tradition. Writing with particular reference to the invoking of the 'national' by French political groups opposing (mainly Arab) immigration, she suggests that national identity is currently resorted to because of the failure of other "ideological masks", particularly Marxism. Both a withdrawal into origins, like the nation, and a hatred of origins are part of a crisis over the split between "symbolic identity" and "imaginary identity rooted in the original cell (family, race, biology)". She regards the nation as "a persistent though modifiable entity". It is sufficiently fixed to be threatened by the different values and cultures brought by immigrants. However the basis of this negative response to otherness lies in the unconscious; the difference ultimately exists within the individual. She considers that this difference and the response to it must be confronted. She calls for new "polynational societies" in which "strangeness" is respected. Accepting that this is a "distant ideal", she also suggests that a transitional nation could be developed based on the secular values of the Enlightenment.

Kristeva mentions the "failure" of Marxism. This may be a reference to the fall of the 'Communist' regimes of Eastern Europe, or to the earlier rejection of

Marxist theory by many intellectuals in response to the activities of Soviet leaderships which purported to be guided by it, or, more abstractly, to the development of theories of ideology and power beyond a point at which they could still be described as 'Marxist' (as described, for example, in Barratt, 1991).

The original Marxist position on the nation was that it would eventually disappear. This was firstly because it was assumed that shared class interests, especially the interests of the working class, operated across 'national borders'. For example, Marx and Engels wrote in the Communist Manifesto that "the working class have no country" (quoted in Bottomore et al, 1983: 844). Secondly, the state was seen as the instrument of capitalism, operating to defend the interests of the bourgeoisie; it would therefore be overthrown in the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism and communism.

Later Stalin 'resurrected' the idea of the nation in terms which echo many of the themes already discussed in this chapter:

"A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture." (Stalin, in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994: 20)

His explanation of the importance of possessing territory was that this permits "lengthy and systematic intercourse" for generations. Together with an internal economic bond ("a common economic life, economic cohesion") this interaction creates "a common psychological make-up" or "national character", that is,

"the peculiar psychological make-up which they developed from generation to generation as a result of dissimilar conditions of existence".  
(20)

Later theorists in the Marxist tradition were concerned with national movements as a form of or alternative to class struggle. For example, James

Blaut (1987), addressing the issue of colonial national movements, suggests national struggle, in which he includes the struggle of an existing imperial state against a nationalist movement, is a form of the class struggle for state power. The nation originated in the situation where a ruling class, in a capitalist or pre-capitalist class society, exploited an external producing class, probably in addition to exploiting domestic or internal producers. This situation continues, for example, in the neo-colonial relationship between the United States of America and Puerto Rico:

"the struggle to control the state when it is in the hands of a class which is external (from the point of view of the local producing class) is the specific form of class struggle which in modern times becomes national struggle". (Blaut, 1987: 29)

Blaut suggests that external exploitation can be more intense and more openly coercive than internal exploitation because the rulers are not constrained by

"ways which will ensure the biological and cultural reproduction of the producing class ...(to)... ensure the long-term stability of the system".

(188)

Precisely because they are external the producers are not concerned about whether the 'other' system survives. They can operate outside "a set of social and ideological rules" which maintain stability and continuity within a society. These rules are sustained partly by the fact that, according to Blaut, there is inevitably some interaction and mobility in any class-divided society. There is also shared ideology because

"Only when a social formation has reached the stage of intense, pre-revolutionary contradictions, can we say that the public ideological realm is largely dominated by those beliefs and values which are generated by the ruling class for the purpose purely of mystification and pacification, of generating false consciousness in the producers' minds so that they will

misperceive their class interests and remain quiescent. At all other times, although mystification is always present, the ideological realm as a whole is vastly larger and more complex than that area embracing ruling ideology and its projection as false consciousness." (188)

Having attributed the formation of the nation to class struggle Blaut does not suggest that this necessarily creates stable entities. The new nation's survival will depend on whether it has territory and also

"fortifying, unifying characteristics, such as cultural and social integration, economic potential, size, and spatial coherence". (199)

He therefore allows that culture may have a role as a form of cohesion. However he rejects the idea that a nation can be formed out of a common culture, without reference to the struggle between economically-determined classes.

Another writer who uses a Marxist analysis, Tom Nairn, suggests that it is part of the "mythology" of nationalism to suggest that it meets both social and personal psychological needs by supplying "peoples and persons" with an identity. Other myths are that nationalism is a necessary developmental stage, although it sometimes goes 'wrong' and out of control, and that it is internally determined. According to Nairn, this mythology is neither entirely wrong nor entirely true. He continues:

"It is ideology. This means it is the generally acceptable 'false consciousness' of a social world still in the grip of 'nationalism'. It is a mechanism of adjustment and compensation, a way of living with the reality of those forms of historical development we label 'nationalism'. As such, it is perhaps best regarded as a set of important clues towards whatever these forms are really about." (Nairn, 1977: 334)

Using these "clues", Nairn concludes that such development is not natural or internal but imposed from without. Its real origins are in "the machinery of world political economy" and, in particular, "uneven development". It was

assumed that, the "leading countries" in world capitalist development, the Western European states, were indeed 'leaders' which other areas would copy and catch up with. However this was impossible because of the scale of the dynamic, uncontrolled growth of the forces of production and associated state and military powers.

"For those outside the metropolis (where in unique and unrepeatabe circumstances things had matured slowly) the problem was not to assimilate culture at a reasonable rate: it was to avoid being drowned."

(338)

Huge expectations were set up in these peripheric areas and the elites, and sometimes the masses, drew on the only resources they had,

"inherited *ethnos*, speech, folklore, skin-colour and so on" (341), and developed nationality as the basis for

"a kind of highly 'idealist' political and ideological mobilization".(341)

Both Blaut and Nairn therefore use 'ideology' to mean a set of widely held ideas which operate to obscure the contradictions within capitalist society. Blaut refers to the function of "mystification". (Barratt has suggested this is the distinguishing connotation of the term 'ideology' across its many different uses by different writers.) Nairn, in his discussion of "clues", suggests that the ideology will be approximately the opposite of the actuality; the underlying assumption here is of binaries, of 'truths' and 'untruths' which mirror each other; 'ideology' is false and so its contrary is true. There is the idea and there is the actual situation, and the latter is more or less the opposite of what the former presents it to be.

John Breuilly (1982) offers a theory of nationalist ideology which is less static. He suggests that such ideology initially serves as justification for certain political projects. It is not used with the intention of deceiving but because it is apparently true. Nationalists

"begin with a fund of intellectual assumptions about what society is

and how it is organised. They relate these assumptions to their own political projects. In fact they argue that those political projects are determined by their assumptions: that they are the spokesmen (*sic*) for the nation. However, their precise political projects and the manner in which these are carried through are the product of certain political situations rather than the expression of national needs. " (Breuille, 1982: 343)

Although it appears coherent, nationalist ideology conflates incompatible ideas of the 'nation'. First it assumes that this is a natural unity, a unique language community which has developed over time; this image is associated with authenticity and the need for purity. Secondly, it draws on a distinction between the 'state', which is political, and the 'nation', which is not: this directly contradicts the unity of the first assumption. Finally, it uses the political conception of the nation as a body of citizens. These are three different definitions of 'nation' and Breuille argues that the contradictions between them are not resolved:

"Nationalist ideology never makes a rational connection between the cultural and the political concept of the nation because no such connection is possible. Instead, by a sort of sleight of hand dependent upon using the same term, 'nation', in different ways, it appears to demonstrate the proposition that each nation should have its nation-state. In this way it can superficially appear to have provided an answer to the problem of the relationship between state and society." (342)

However, Breuille says, although ideology begins in this way, it does not remain simply a collection of ideas. It works for the (political) purposes of nationalists because it has popular appeal. For example, it is easily simplified into stereotypes. Therefore for Breuille, ideology is not simply a false account or a reversed mirror-image of reality. It begins as a set of incompatible concepts but these make their own reality:

"The ideology is not ... a gloss upon some pre-existent social reality but



a constituent of that reality." (343)

This is a significant change from ideology as 'false consciousness'. Nairn talked of a "mechanism of adjustment and compensation" but Breuilly describes how ideology produces a form of the situation it describes. The nationalist ideology provides those who subscribe to it with certain aims and with a way of interpreting or explaining a situation.

"In this way nationalist ideology actually brings into being an imitation of its own ideas. In so far as nationalism is successful it appears to be true.

That, of course, is its ultimate form of plausibility." (343)

### **The significance of ideas and ideology**

At this point in the review it is useful to note the range of references to 'ideas', 'beliefs' and 'culture' by the writers who have been discussed. Those outside the Marxist tradition generally depict ideas as functional, usually in binding the national community. Weber describes 'the national idea' being propagated by intellectuals, an instrument intentionally wielded in a contest for "leadership of 'a culture community'". Various writers return to the importance of a belief in shared blood and kinship, even in the obvious absence of biological links. For theorists in the psychoanalytic tradition, ideas either create psychological bonds or threaten the individual with (further) internal conflict. Ideas also function to advance or impede development. For example, Northedge suggests that the formation of the international system has been largely driven by the concept of national self-determination as a right.

Blaut and Nairn, using the Marxist concept of 'false consciousness', give the idea a particular status, that is, as a false screen to an economically-determined reality. However Blaut suggests that the "ideological realm" is less 'neat' than Nairn implies. For Blaut there are many "beliefs and values" in a society and not all of them are ideological. 'False consciousness', meaning those

o ruling class ideas which the working class hold against their own interests, only

becomes dominant at the point when revolution is imminent. Blaut suggests there is another set of ideas, "culture", which unites the interests of different classes and can provide coherence to the nation. This seems similar to the "culture" described by Weber and indeed to the raw material which Nairn's peripheric societies use as the basis for mobilization. Finally, Breuilly suggests that ideology is constitutive: it constructs and brings into being what it purports to describe.

The role of ideas and beliefs is therefore theorized differently. However it is noticeable that within the various traditions the same themes recur. Discussion of nations invokes certain references, such as to 'biological links', 'culture', 'territory' and 'history'. This is the content of 'the national'. The remainder of this chapter will review the main theorists who contribute to the position of this thesis, that 'the nation' and 'the national' are complex aggregates of such concepts and images. These simultaneously represent and constitute social practices, defining, legitimising and interpreting large-scale processes and also the positions of individuals.

### Invented traditions

In "The Invention of Tradition", Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) suggest that the cultures of particular nations are intentionally "invented" and perpetuated. Ideas and images of the kind which Nairn understood as apparently naturally occurring "inherited" resources are shown to have been the creations of those seeking (increased) political power. Furthermore, this applied not just in the periphery but to the 'old' nations of Western Europe. This is a significant challenge to the concept of the naturally occurring nation, which of course underlies the concept of national self-determination, and also to the concept of some pre-national cultural entity, like Anthony D. Smith's *ethnie* (Smith, 1991). It also undermines further the distinction between 'nation' and 'state', or between the cultural as contrasted to the political and economic.

If traditions and cultures are invented or constructed, can the differences and divisions between nations and cultures also be understood as constructed rather than naturally occurring? This concept is developed in the work of Edward Said, most famously in his concept of Orientalism.

### Orientalism

Breuilly cites Said's concept of Orientalism as an example of the constitutive nature of ideology. In the introduction to the book of the same name, Said gives a threefold definition of the term: Orientalism is, firstly, an academic study. The objects, in several senses, of the study are certain foreign populations, their languages and cultures. Studying these peoples becomes a means of reducing them to the status of objects which are possessed by the experts, who know them better than they can know themselves. Secondly, Orientalism is

- "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said, 1978: 2).

Finally, it is

"a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient". (2)

Said's broad argument is that Western culture establishes itself as an entity and reinforces its own dominance partly by constructing an Other (the Orient) and ascribing negative values to it. His concept of Orientalism therefore suggests that the kind of culture and ideas which provide an identity for peoples and places are not naturally arising, as Smith and others imply, but created. The culture and values which the West ascribes to the Orient are, firstly, the feared and also desired opposite of those the West perceives itself to have. For example, Oriental cultures were commonly depicted as being sexually licentious and wanton and in this way unlike the West, but also, in the view of travellers and colonial servants, warranting certain practices which

were forbidden to them in their 'virtuous' home societies.

Secondly, the depictions of the Orient are functional in terms of Western imperialism, justifying certain practices. Said explicitly links Western representations of the Orient with Western dominance. The British Empire is depicted as collecting in knowledge from local agents, then, at its centre, processing this knowledge into power, the better to exert authority outwards through its many branches. In another book, "Covering Islam", Said describes how representations of Islam and the Middle Eastern area are disseminated by the West's cultural apparatus in order to serve the interests of Western multinationals and the United States government and military. Imperialism has been replaced by the neo-colonial project of modernisation but the power relationship is the same.

In both cases the knowledge and representations have some practical use for the powerful, but Said deliberately blurs the relationship between the cultural representations and the power. Orientalism is not

"representative of some nefarious 'Western' imperialist plot to hold down the 'Oriental' world ... it is ... a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather exists and is produced in uneven exchange with various kinds of power". (12)

Finally, the depictions construct both entities, the West and the Orient, Self and Other. Each entity is partly defined by its opposite and brought into being by the definitions. This is similar to Breuilly's constitutive ideology, and the process also recalls a Marxist dialectic: the depiction of the entity warrants practices which create it, and its existence warrants further depictions which lead in turn to further practices. The representation can therefore 'make' the reality.

Said's 'West' and 'Orient' are amorphous and fluid. Michael Shapiro looks at how practices similar to those described by Said construct the precisely

defined and bounded state units which make up the international system.

### The nation as a dominant construction

Shapiro (1988) takes "Guatemala" (sic) as one example of the nation as a "mode of representation" which makes dominance, for example of the United States government over domestic government agencies and of European-descended people over the indigenous Indians, acceptable and invisible. He describes the whole international system of state units as giving rise to a "grammar" which makes these units subject and object, as if they were physical objects or discrete biological organisms for example, and conceals the history and struggles of their formation. To refer to a state by name is to accept the power which constitutes it as an appropriate unit.

Shapiro gives specific examples of how this power works and of its effects. Naturalised representational practices, like maps, obscure disputes, and those who challenge the boundaries of the naturalised space "acquire delegitimised identities". Other representational practices include legitimising devices, such as the claim to represent a wide range of views and so to be non-partisan, and in political writing and discussion the use of grammar and stylistic features which obscure agency and causality. Examples would be the use of the third person and of passive and non-causal forms, as in the statement that a region is "suffering from violence".

Shapiro is particularly interested in "foreign-policy discourse". He says of one example of such discourse, the Kissinger Commission Report on Central America, for example, that this shows

"how it made its subjects, objects and relationships. Ordinarily, this making is not brought into ethical/moral discourse insofar as it is ideologically mystified and passed off as a nonevaluative 'is'." (Shapiro, 1988: 123)

### Discourse and power

Both Said and Shapiro draw on the work of Michel Foucault. Said uses Foucault's notion of "a discourse" in describing texts about the Orient. Such

texts, Said suggests,

"can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe. In time such knowledge and reality produce a tradition, or what Michel Foucault calls a discourse, whose material presence or weight, not the originality of a given author, is really responsible for the texts produced out of it" (Said, 1978: 94).

Foucault's writings emphasise the processes of naming, ordering, knowing and understanding. He challenges what might be summarised as a conventional model of an aware autonomous Subject who uses words and knowledge to 'hold' information about a world of distinct and independently existing Objects. Instead he focuses on this language/ knowledge (discourse) and suggests both Subject and Object are secondary to it, made and positioned by it. Therefore the Subject is not the autonomous author or originator of discourse but is reduced to a kind of conduit through which it flows. (This contentious depiction is usually summarised in the term the 'decentred subject'.) Correspondingly, a field of knowledge, including, for example, accepted factual accounts and academic writings, is not unified through references to some 'out there' Object or set of Objects. The link between the various statements and forms of knowledge which constitute a field is, Foucault suggests, a "discursive formation"; this is

"a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations)"

which operates

"between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices"(Foucault, 1972: 38).

His descriptions of the regularity are complex and not exhaustive, but include, in his example of nineteenth century psychiatric discourse,

"a group of relations established between authorities of emergence, delimitation and specification" (44)

and also rules for "the ordering of objects" (49). Certain people, behaviours and events 'belong' to the field not because of their intrinsic nature or any essential similarities between them, but because, for example, they are spoken of by certain authorities, who are themselves made authorities partly because of the sites they speak from (a hospital) for instance, and the kinds of language they use. The division of objects into categories, or their designation as belonging inside and outside the field, is not a consequence of essential 'qualifying' characteristics which the objects possess but of the status of those who divide or designate them.

The example of psychiatric discourse and the discussion of "authorities" point to another important aspect of Foucault's theory: that this definition and constitution of Objects and positioning of Subjects is associated with power:

"We should admit that power produces knowledge... . That power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute ... power relations."

(Foucault, 1980, quoted by Hall, 1992)

As the examples of Said and Shapiro indicate, this notion of power and Foucault's concept of discourse add to the understanding of culture, ideas and ideology used by the writers discussed earlier in this chapter. Foucault himself rejects the term "ideology" for three reasons. The first is that he considers it implies a division between false and true, as if truth were verifiable or attainable. This distinction underlies traditional science, and its association with ideology is derived from the Marxist concept of false consciousness. Foucault's concern is rather

"in seeing historically how effects of truth are produced within discourses which are in themselves neither true nor false." (Foucault, 1980: 118).

Similarly he rejects the implications which ideology carries of the concept of a subject, and of a secondary status to the material or economic; both of these associations, again, are derived from Marxist theory.

As mentioned, Foucault's work has also been extensively criticised, especially for his account of the subject. Giddens, for example, challenges the lack of agency (Giddens, 1987). However the writings are basic to the academic work associated with cultural studies, poststructuralism and the decentred subject, some of which will be reviewed in more detail below and in Chapter 2. Foucault's work raises questions about the nature of power and the relationship between representations and social change. In addition, with particular interest for social psychology, it has implications for our understanding of the relationship between the social and the individual subject, the nature of such a subject, and also the status and consequences of psychology and related fields of knowledge.

A number of points in the position of this thesis are ultimately derived from Foucault. The first is that ideas about the 'nation' and 'national', and the language in which they are expressed, are not taken to be separate to some 'external reality'. They are neither a neutral 'true' descriptive reference, nor a false 'screen', as in the Marxist conception of ideology as false consciousness. Furthermore, discourse is inescapable because there is no independent access to reality and 'truth'; there are only alternative accounts, connected, as Foucault argues, to power relations. This thesis does not, therefore, aim to produce what I have described as a 'taxonomic' description of the nation, to be verified against reality.

Secondly, language is constitutive. Speakers' accounts of 'the nation' and 'national' will be understood as instrumental, rather than as 'after the event' reports. However language is not individual. Any speaker draws on collective, social linguistic resources. The 'language work' done by individual speakers is approached as fragments of larger-scale discussions and disputes.



Implicated in this language work is the power which derives from naming, defining and positioning, as Foucault describes, and which operates in the contests and challenges around these activities. However it is not wielded arbitrarily by any individual or by hierarchically-organised social structures. To understand power as an instrument in a specific location is to use a static image. Instead there is an assumption here of dynamic ongoing processes and flows. Clegg summarises Foucault's conception of power as

" a network of alliances extended over a shifting terrain of practice and discursively constituted interests" (Clegg, 1989: 148).

This should not be taken to imply a situation of balance or equality. Power is not monolithic, but it is not equally distributed. Certain practices and definitions have been established as the 'normal' and are dominant.

This thesis retains the term 'ideology' in addition to 'discourse' because the former term has certain connotations. The first is the notion that ideology works to make certain practices and relationships 'normal' and invisible. Part of the aim of my analysis is to make the normal visible again, not through any 'special' insight but through procedures of discourse analysis which focus on regularities and variability and generally draw attention to the commonplace. The second and related connotation of ideology is that it is pervasive. This is part of the argument of 'banal nationalism' (Billig, 1995). Practices and relationships are viewed 'through' the framework of the nation. These points are explored in more detail in the analysis of data in Chapters 5 to 7.

### **The nation and the decentred subject**

Some recent writers on the discourses of the nation who are working in a poststructuralist tradition reject the single class basis for positioning postulated by Marxist analyses in favour of a view which sees any individual as occupying multiple subject positions. This derives from the concept of the 'decentred subject' mentioned above in the section on Foucault. Different discourses, understood as associated sets of language and practices, place the

individual simultaneously in different positions. This is an inevitable consequence of the multiplicity of relationships and life situations encountered by any individual.

This form of analysis rejects the secular values of the Enlightenment which Kristeva, as one example, presents as universals. Instead, the concept of multiple subject positions admits the particular views and voices of people who had previously been considered of minority, marginal or 'invisible' status. In a poststructural analysis the 'national' is often seen as parallel or alternative positioning to, for example, 'ethnic' or 'racial' categories; this comparison emphasises the associations of the 'nation' with European imperialism and racism.

In one example of such an analysis, Daiva Stasiulis and Nira Yuval-Davis (1995) define "settler societies" as those in which the descendents of European settlers remain dominant over indigenous peoples; this is essentially an 'updating' of Cole's "settlement colonies". They suggest that all collectivities are "imagined". The term is both a reference to Benedict Anderson and an indication of a discursive approach: the collectivities are to be studied through the language and ideas used in their depiction rather than approached as 'real world' phenomena existing independently of the way they are thought of and defined. Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis suggest that collectivities become labelled as ethnic, racial or national by different agents and/or different historical circumstances. What vary are the distinctive discourses and projects of ethnicity, racism and nationalism:

"Ethnic discourse involves the construction of exclusionary and inclusionary boundaries which draws upon the myths of common origin and/or destiny, providing individuals with a mode of interpreting the world based on shared cultural resources and/or collective positioning *vis-a-vis* other groups. Racial discourse involves modes of exclusion, inferiorization, subordination and exploitation. It constructs signifiers of

collectivity boundaries as immutable and hereditary. These signifiers are frequently arbitrary, though as in the case of skin colour, deeply rooted through association with slavery, colonialism and so on. National discourse involves an explicit political project, a claim for a separate political representation of the collectivity which often takes the form of a claim for a sovereign and autonomous 'nation-state.' All of these discourses are also gendered, assigning specified roles and images to women and men of different collectivities in ethnic, racist and nationalist projects."

This summary necessarily omits details and smooths over complexities. However there is a strong implication in many of the expressions used (for instance, "a mode of interpreting the world", "an explicit political project") that discourses are monolithic and coherent. This would imply, for example, that there is one discourse of the New Zealand nation, one clearly bounded national group, or else several competing discourses each of which presents a neat and total account of New Zealand.

A different conception is proposed by Billig et al (1988), using the term "ideology" rather than "discourse", as above. They propose that ideologies are neither unitary nor consistent. As has been described, Breuilly suggests nationalist ideology incorporates conflicting assumptions, obscured through the imprecise use of the term "nation". Billig et al make a similar point about ideologies in general. These are "dilemmatic" because of the conflicting values contained in common sense knowledge and beliefs:

"socially shared images, representations and values can be seen to conflict" (Billig et al, 1988: 14)

An individual, drawing on social resources of images, beliefs and so on, is likely to encounter dilemma. This means that any position she or he takes up, around a contentious issue for example, is likely to require rhetorical work, such as puzzling out and argument, as the conflicting elements are encountered. Billig et al suggests the dilemmas arise in two ways. Ideologies

are made up of a combination of philosophy, which has passed from formal theory to 'everyday' common sense, in combination with the material of life circumstances, and these two components may be incompatible. Alternatively, the dilemmas may be internal to philosophy.

This argument suggests that if the concepts of 'nation' and 'the national' used in 'ordinary talk' are ideological, as this thesis argues, they will not be coherent and single but inevitably complex, inconsistent and contradictory. This point is further supported by the wide range of ideas available in formal theory, evidenced by the selection in this relatively short review.

### **Banal nationalism**

The final theory to be discussed here considers "nationalism" as

"the ideological means by which nation-states are reproduced". (Billig, 1995: 6)

In "Banal Nationalism" Billig argues against postmodernist theories which, as he summarises, suggest nation-states are disappearing because of globalization, from 'above', and fragmentation, from 'below'. The relevant 'forces' causing their disappearance are, supposedly, increased migration, the internationalization of finance, communications and consumerism, reduced national sovereignty and independence, and the promotion of sub-national identities through both consumerism and the increased awareness of 'minority' identities.

Billig suggests that two psychological assumptions underlie these theories. On the one hand, there is a new "postmodern psyche" "playing with the free market of identities" (134); an example would be Gergen's theory of "multiphrenia" (see Chapter 2). On the other, there is the notion of the return of repressed, emotional and intolerant ethnic "nationalist" identities. (This recalls the theories described in this chapter which address the post-communist situation in Eastern Europe.) Billig cites Kristeva's description of regression to the "common denominators" of nation and religion for shelter,

and also Giddens' suggestion that people seek "regressive forms of object identification" like nationhood and leaders in a reaction against ontological insecurity (see Chapter 2).

Against these claims that the nation is becoming less important, Billig argues that

"the sense of importance of a bounded homeland, together with the distinction between 'us' and 'foreigners' have not disappeared" (139).

He suggests that the nation is continually "flagged" unobtrusively. For example, much press coverage uses the implicit context of a national community within a national territory. The nation is largely invisible precisely because it is normal. (This is similar to Shapiro's account.) The most important example of this occurs in the case of the largest and most powerful nation, the United States of America:

"This is a flagging of hegemony, where the identity of the particular is presented as a universal identity" (150)

Underlying Billig's account is an understanding of discourse as constitutive and ideological. The representations of the nation do work in a similar way to the representations of the Orient described by Said. However in retaining the distinction between 'nation' and 'nation-state' Billig focuses on 'national' governments as central to constructions of the nation.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed a range of academic writings on the nation to indicate some of the approaches to the concept. One assumption is that nations are 'real world' entities which can be described and classified, either discretely or as part of the international system. Following from this, theorists have analysed the economic, cultural and social environment in which such entities arise and persist. A significant theme is the importance of shared ideas, beliefs and culture. This becomes central with Michel Foucault's concept of discourse. Language and knowledge are no longer understood as inert 'after

the object' descriptions but as the primary focus, operating to confer power and constitute objects, including, of course, the nation.

This is the basis of the position of this thesis: 'nation' and 'national' are best approached as discursive constructions. These are ideological, because they are implicated with power; they are constitutive, they legitimate or exclude, they set up subject positions which place the individuals who occupy them in certain relationships to each other and to resources. The relative positionings change but are not infinitely flexible. As Shapiro wrote, a nation-state is a hegemonic construction in which certain identities are dominant while others, "subaltern" identities, are rendered invisible or delegitimised, that is, made irrelevant to the nation and national issues. Barrett (1991) suggests that through the development of Marxist and post-Marxist theory the persistent connotation of the term "ideology" has been that of "mystification". In this context the 'nation' and 'national' work to mystify in that they present certain identities as relevant or irrelevant.

These discursive constructions are, however, more fluid than Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis would imply. There is not one national discourse; this would imply a single political project for a single (bounded?) collectivity, returning the analysis to the definitional problems encountered in taxonomic approaches to the nation. Instead, even a single named nation-state must be treated as a plurality of constructions. Within these constructions there is contradiction and inconsistency, which creates dilemma.

Individuals draw on images specific to the particular situation, in this case New Zealand, as a hegemonic construction of the kind described by Shapiro, and also on theories of nation and nation-state such as those already discussed. Ideas of national self-determination, homogeneity, biological links and recognisable national types do not disappear for having been effectively refuted in academic debate. Instead these remain part of the ever growing repertoire of resources contained in the discourses of the nation.

## **Chapter 2 - Theorising 'national identity'**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapter looked at the concept of the 'nation' as this has been presented in different theories and theoretical traditions. In most of these 'national identity' is a secondary concept, derived from the way nation has been understood. This chapter will focus on theories which consider the nature of identity. Because the term 'national identity' itself links the social or collective concept of the nation to an individual, the chapter will move from approaches which prioritise either the individual or the social, to those which reconcile the two or reconsider the distinction between them.

The first section reviews earlier work on national identity and the underlying theoretical approaches to identity as a quality of a bounded individual. The Culture and Personality school followed the work of Freud. Other research, especially around 'national character', is based on a model of the person described here as 'the monadic individual'.

In contrast, the next section focuses on theories in which identity is transferred 'down' from society to a representative individual. Mead and Vygotsky suggest individual identity and subjectivity develop through the internalisation of the social. The following section reviews Giddens' account of the socially-derived individual within the environment of 'high modernity'.

The next section describes Tajfel and Turner's work on social identity. This is a mainstream social psychological approach which aims to reconcile the individual and the social, but within a relatively static and bounded model of society. The following section moves more into the disciplinary areas of sociology and cultural studies. It reviews the development through structuralism and poststructuralism of the 'decentered subject' and a more dynamic model which emphasises the role of ideology.

The following section describes the approaches of social constructionism and

discourse analysis developed in social psychology in recent years. Social constructionism, in particular, draws on Mead, Vygotsky and some poststructuralist theory to avoid any crude distinction between 'individual' and 'social', offering an understanding of the psychology of 'national identity' which avoids the stereotyping and simplistic uniformity suggested by much of the earlier research. The position of this thesis is outlined, that is, that national identity is understood as a set of subject positions in the discursive and ideological field. This approach focuses on ideology and discourse, and rejects explanations in terms of fixed categories and bounded entities. A speaker who claims a national identity is constrained and partly constituted by the related subject positions and must struggle to reconcile the various interconnected implications which flow from them at social and individual levels.

#### **Early approaches to national identity**

##### **The individual as an example of the 'national character'**

Within the field of psychology there has been relatively little research which has been specifically concerned with national identity. That which has been done is mainly on "national character" and, as that term implies, has generally looked for traits shared by the individual members of a larger population, like the "homogeneity" described by Weber (see Chapter 1).

Alex Inkeles and Daniel Levinson (Inkeles and Levinson, 1969) review the psychological theories and studies around national character developed up to the 1960s. The research described was primarily concerned with the description of existing population groups. Although Inkeles and Levinson use the term "national", they discuss the populations of existing nation-states. This assumes, overconfidently, that all the members of such a population would define themselves, and the rest of the population, as belonging to the same national group.

Inkeles and Levinson emphasise the general lack of data and call for



further research. Implicit in this call is the assumption that 'real' national characters exist to be described. For example, they recommend wider ranging studies to identify the range of "modes", or character types, in different societies. A mode is understood as an indication of potential, not actual, behaviour and the range within a society is thought to affect its members' responses to learning and training, acceptance of social values and sanctions, and performance in required roles, and also partly to determine the social institutions, although the mechanism by which this occurs is not specified.

In postulating multiple modes in a single society Inkeles and Levinson attempt to move away from the simplistic assumption of homogeneity. However there is still a strong implication that the boundaries of any society or population are clearly distinguishable, and the aim of the classification appears to be to predict for the purposes of government which roles and institutions will be most suitable or acceptable for a particular population. The individual is therefore assumed to precede the society, even though the influence of familial and extra-familial social features is acknowledged.

In the studies described, much of the research deals with societies which the researcher regarded as 'Other', such as studies of war-time enemies conducted in the United States (Benedict, 1946; Fromm, 1941) and Western studies of non-Western peoples (DuBois, 1944). Some research aimed to discover how receptive a population would be to the introduction of new education systems or modern agricultural methods. These emphases would partly explain the tendency to treat populations and cultures as largely homogeneous and static in their characteristics, and to focus on exotica and on differences from the researcher's own society.

Some of the same problems can be seen in one of the few recent publications in the area, "National Characteristics" by Dean Peabody (1985) (part of the series "European Monographs in Social Psychology"). Peabody's aim is to assess the accuracy of judgments of national character, of the kind

commonly referred to as "national stereotypes". Like Inkeles and Levinson, who he cites, Peabody begins with the assumption that there is a 'truth' about each country's national character, or range of characters. He then looks for evidence of this character against which to assess the judgments. The ideal data for this purpose, he suggests, would be "representative", "objective" and "comparative"; he cites the kind of statistics produced by public opinion polling as an example. However he was unable to find data of this type and so, as he says,

"Generally one is driven back to judgments by observers - even if relatively expert judgments by relatively informed observers."

Therefore, interestingly, he attempts to assess the validity of judgments about national character by comparing them with other judgments and also with predictions derived from the work of various sociological writers, including Weber, Toennies, Parsons and Lipset.

Peabody discusses the problem of generalising across populations but concludes that to do so is valid. He qualifies this decision as follows:

"National character as so defined should not be confused with the society or nation. It may be possible in principle to specify the individual characteristics that are "required by", or better (so as not to presume that the causal direction is always from the society to the individuals) "congruent with", the nature of the society. However, it should not be assumed that there is an identity between the two. In a stable situation considerable congruency may be expected in the long run, but because of the possibility of change the degree of congruency should be examined empirically and not assumed." (Peabody, 1985:72)

Here Peabody raises the issue of internal and external perspectives which arose in the previous chapter's discussion of theories of the nation. Should an entity be called a nation because it has certain qualifying features which can be noted by an external observer (such as a single government and a

shared religion and language) or can a claim to be a nation only appropriately be made from inside a group which feels and imagines itself to be this kind of community? At an individual level, can someone qualify as a member of the nation, for example by being born in a certain place, or must she or he be accepted by other members as belonging?

Peabody acknowledges that there may be a problem defining the appropriate group in which to look for evidence of national character, because the boundaries of such a national group may be disputed. He also suggests that national character may be expected to change over time. However, again because of the absence of "ideal" data, after acknowledging the problems he reverts to a simple working assumption that official nationality correlates with a homogeneous shared national character. (In the terms used by some of the theorists in Chapter 1, he identifies 'state' and 'nation' as identical.)

### Culture and personality

Peabody is concerned with descriptions of national characteristics. A more coherent attempt to theorise why they should exist underlay the research of the Culture and Personality school of psychological anthropology which began in the late 1930s (Bock, 1980) and was based on Freud's writings.

Freud's original theory suggests that the unique identity of an individual is achieved through the complex and conflictual interaction of biologically determined drives, learned rules and restraints, and the model of behaviour provided for a child by her or his same-sex parent. Even the category of gender is not fully given biologically but must be achieved. The identity or nature of the individual remains divided and awareness of the self is partial; impulses can be unconscious, and knowledge and memories can be repressed.

Freud's theory begins with the instincts of the individual and has been described as "hydraulic" because individual identity is formed as a result of the redirection and repression of biological energies and forces. This takes

place in stages during childhood. The nature of the resulting individual is complex, consisting of the pleasure-seeking Id, which contains physical drives, in opposition to the rational Ego and the repressive Superego. Awareness is only partial. Repression necessarily occurs during development; some but not all the parts of the self which are hidden in the unconscious can be brought back to the individual's awareness through psychoanalysis. The individual is therefore divided and incomplete. Identity as a separate individual is achieved through conflict and in a process which is not inevitably successful.

The Ego is the part closest to 'normal' understanding of active, conscious personal identity. The Ego of the mature individual must be strong enough to control the biological energy and unconscious desires of the Id. The Ego is itself controlled, through guilt, by the Superego, the internalisation in the child of the authority of the parent and therefore of society.

In Freud's original theory social categories are not included as important sources of identity but the social environment intervenes in two ways. The first is through the structure of the family. According to Freud, the crucial process in the formation of the Superego is the Oedipal conflict. In Stephen Frosh's words,

"This is the model for all the individual's encounters with society: desire opposed by authority, authority internalised and made one's own."

The resolution of the "Oedipal" attraction to the opposite sex parent is that the child takes its same sex parent as a model to follow. The Superego is the internalization of the morals, values and rules of the culture, particularly as these are presented to the child by the parents.

This theory can be criticized for its unacknowledged cultural grounding. The family is assumed to be similar to that which was standard in Freud's own social environment, and has been characterized by critics as nuclear, patriarchal and bourgeois. However the conflict can be understood in very broad terms, such as in the quotation from Frosh, as a metaphoric rather than

literal description of the way that the freedom of an individual is curtailed and constrained by society's demands and pressures to conform.

Later developments of psychoanalytic theory reduce this individualism of Freud's account by postulating a basic drive to relate outwards to others. Object Relations theorists, such as Fairbairn, postulate processes by which these interpersonal relationships structure an individual's 'internal world'. Through processes of introjection and identification the social world 'makes' the person.

Freud's theory can provide several possible ways of looking at national identity. The influence of society through the family and the Superego may create similarities between individuals which encourage them to perpetuate groupings above the level of the family, to form nations. Alternatively, the socially-induced repression, through the Superego, may lead to the individuals in a society having the same feelings relegated to the unconscious and therefore to a collective response to certain symbols, images and stories, for example, the narrative of the nation. Thirdly, following Freud's focus on the family and the parents, particularly the father, the nation may be explained as a larger version of the family, with allegiance felt to the national fathers or leaders. This parallel is evident in some of the language commonly used to talk about the nation. A version of this idea is Adorno's theory of the "authoritarian personality", which suggests that certain father-child relationships predispose individuals to accept and re-establish the patterns of, on the one hand, submission to strong authority figures and on the other, oppression and hatred towards certain outsider groups, which are conventionally associated with fascism (Wetherell and Potter, 1992).

Later developments of the theory, as described above, would suggest that ideas of the nation can 'move down' from society to shape individual understanding, for example, of the world as divided into discrete territorial communities. This interpretation of the relationship between the individual

and the social approaches that offered in poststructuralist theory, including Lacan's poststructuralist Freudian theory. These will be described in later sections.

The Culture and Personality school attempted to establish a connection between the cultural institutions of a society and the psychology of its individual members. One of its leading members, Abram Kardiner summarises the theory using a model of a causal chain. According to this, the primary institutions of a society (such as its household and community organisation, and the way its children are trained) result from the society's adaptation to its environment over a long period. These institutions produce a 'basic personality structure'. For example, the Zuni Pueblo have a complex social organisation in which cooperation and peace are based partly on a strong sense of shame. Kardiner relates these features to a strong relationship with the mother and relatively little sibling rivalry, and then from this description of the personality structure explains some of the secondary institutions of the society, such as religion and myth (for example, certain taboos).

The Culture and Personality school were criticised for their failure to obtain data on individuals; the larger features of a society were explained by reference to other larger features, without any experimental study of the individuals who were supposedly the middle link of the causal chain. When studies were done, partly in response to this criticism, there were further criticisms of the small samples and the use of Euro-American tests in non-Western societies (the research focussed on the 'primitive' societies generally studied by Western anthropologists). The most important problem was the assumption of homogeneity; members of a society were assumed to share a single personality type, or, in a later modification, one of a small range of modal personalities.

Philip Bock (1980) suggests the Culture and Personality school was

seriously flawed because of its basic assumptions that societies were uniform, possessing either a single or 'most typical' modal personality; because of the pretence of objectivity and denial of Western biases; because there is no evidence that childhood experiences create an adult personality; and because of the circularity of its cause-effect arguments and the reliance on projective tests (such as the Rorschach inkblot test).

In the approaches summarised so far there is a strong emphasis on the individual. Sampson has criticised psychology for its (typically Western) conception of the contained individual subject (Sampson, 1989). Such a model or notion of the person would place the social as a secondary feature, or extra variable, in the associated tradition of 'scientific' psychology. I will first look in more detail at this 'classic' individual, then at alternative ways of understanding the individual and the social.

### The monadic individual

If national identity is understood as a quality or attribute of an individual person, what is the nature of such a person? The anthropologist Clifford Geertz investigated the idea of a 'self' held by people of different 'cultures', that is, Javanese, Balinese and Moroccan. He looked at the "symbolic forms - words, images, institutions, behaviours" which people in each place used to represent themselves, to others and to themselves. From this study, he concluded that in the different cultures there were very great differences in the notion of self and, relatedly, in the experience of self. Against these findings, he summarised what he understood to be a distinctively Western conception of self:

" The Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively against other such wholes and against its social and natural background is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather

peculiar idea within the context of the world's cultures." (Geertz, 1983, 59)

The 'model' of the person which Geertz identifies as distinctively 'Western' corresponds to that described by other writers as "the Cartesian subject" (e.g. Hall, 1996a) and the "monad" (Burkitt, 1991). The latter term will be used here.

Ian Burkitt uses the term "monad" to describe the model of a self-contained, isolated individual which is the focus of a tradition of theories going back to the rationalist philosophers of the Renaissance. In this tradition the 'individual' and the 'social' are treated as opposite poles. It is a basic premise that identity is in the essence of the individual and is therefore unchanging. This essence is contained in the body, although it may be distinct from the physical. The individual is unique, self-aware and a-social in the sense that she or he precedes society. Therefore social categories cannot create identity; they are entered like a dwelling or put on like clothing by an already existing individual, and indeed these images are close to many common assumptions about how identity is acquired or modified. Although each person is born into a particular sociohistoric situation, this is not seen as a factor which strongly constitutes the formation of identity.

In theories of the monad, the individual is inside a shell, divided from others and also from the external world, both social and material. Her or his perceptions of that world are private and may not correspond to the perceptions of others or indeed to the world which appeared to give rise to them. There may also be internal divisions, between the mind and the physical body, between rational moral thought, based on a priori moral categories, and irrational emotion.

The individual is enduring and has continuity. She or he is autonomous, and controlling rather than controlled by those aspects of the external world which do cross the barrier. These theories do not posit variation in the individual across cultures or historical periods, although



education and environment may be factors which assist or inhibit the realisation of inner potential.

However Norbert Elias suggests that theories of the monad are themselves a product of a particular sociohistoric situation because they were first developed in a society where power was becoming increasingly centralized and behaviour beginning to be controlled by 'internal' rather than external rules and constraints. These "civilisational self-controls" were "experienced in individual self-perception as a division either between 'subject' and 'object' or between one's one 'self' and other people ('society')" (Elias, 1978, quoted in Burkitt, 1991:4).

The monadic individual is relevant here, first, because it is a strong 'common-sense' image, secondly because it also resembles the conventional subject of psychology, as already discussed, and thirdly because of the limited importance it places on 'the social'. The next sections review some alternative theoretical approaches which break down the boundaries of the individual and place a different emphasis on the social.

### **Theorising a socially-derived identity**

G.H.Mead and L.S.Vygotsky both theorise the development of the child as occurring through processes in which the social, in the form of symbolic systems and language, forms and shapes the individual. According to Mead, the child internalises others' views of itself. Subjectivity or self-awareness arises from intersubjectivity: the self is initially perceived as others perceive it.

Mead takes language to be the primary feature of the social context. Using a broadly Darwinian model, he suggests that in order to survive, humans need to relate to each other and to their environments. They have developed the ability to monitor themselves and to assess the appropriacy of their behaviour in order to achieve desired ends; this is self-consciousness or self-awareness. It permits more subtle responses than are possible through purely

instinctive or imitative behaviour. Humans have also developed the ability to communicate, and these symbolic systems are primarily social. Thinking is an internal conversation between different parts of the self, between the subjective observing 'I' and the observed 'me', which is an object to 'I' as it is an object to others. 'Me' represents the values of society, and is conservative and moral but 'I' is future-oriented and dynamic; the differences produce conflict and adaptive change.

The nature of identity for Mead is simultaneously individual and social. It is divided and conflictual, after Freud's model of the self, but for Mead the division generates energy and action, whereas according to Freud the conflict between the Ego, Superego and Id produces neuroses and possibly paralysis.

Burkitt criticises Mead for offering no consistent theory of wider social formations, power, social divisions or historical change. As it stands, Mead's theory therefore cannot account for the nation as a traditional sociological entity. However the central importance which Mead places on language means that this theory is compatible with an understanding of national identity as a discursive construction. This will be discussed in more detail in relation to social constructionism.

The Cultural-Historical school, from the USSR, develop Marxist theory and, like Mead, suggest that social relations are internalized, creating consciousness within an individual. One of the key theorists in the school is Vygotsky, who in his description of the development of the child postulates a dialectical, language-mediated relationship between the social and the individual, again breaking down this polarity. He suggests that the child internalises dialogue and also the cultural connotations of language. Although there are basic biological drives, the child develops new capacities for thought and consciousness through the use of language. Vygotsky emphasises the relational activities and interdependence of the child with adults in the social environment.

These theories add a socio-historical dimension to the notion of a socially produced individual, so that the nature of the individual depends on the society and also the particular phase of development of that society. This raises problems which were also present in Durkheim and Marx: the potential for a more or less explicit 'rating' of societies and their members as primitive or advanced, ultimately implying that some people may be less human than others. However the socio-historical dimension could be argued to be relevant to a study of national identity on the grounds that the idea of the nation itself belongs to a particular period of history: Anthony D. Smith (1991) says

"the nation is a purely modern construct, though ... there is considerable disagreement among 'modernists' as to the period of its emergence in Europe, with some favouring the eighteenth century or earlier and others preferring the late nineteenth and early twentieth century." (44)

The argument could be made, therefore, that national identity is a culturally-produced psychological feature, which exists only in the members of certain societies in certain historical periods.

This comes close to the theory proposed by Norbert Elias, described in Burkitt (1991). Elias suggests the individual is born with the capacity to learn but all other aspects, including motivation, are socially created. Even the emotions are not biological. The distinctions between collective and individual, and public and private are social products which are gradually internalized. The theory concerns not "homo clausus", a self-contained individual, but "homines aperti", people bound together in interdependent social relationships, or figurations. "I" or "we" are only reference points within a figuration.

Elias suggests that the structure of the human personality has changed over history. For example, in Western societies since the Middle Ages, people's 'drives', that is, socially produced feelings and emotions, have been

increasingly restricted by the 'drive controls' as part of the management of self-identity. These micro-level processes are the consequence of macro-level changes in the power structures of society. Psychological theories like Freud's which postulate a compartmentalized personality are similarly the consequence of the power relations operating in the periods in which they arose.

Elias's theory therefore links consciousness and personal identity to the power structures which operate in a society during a particular historical period. This historical focus amounts to an 'external' structuralist view of societies. Using Elias' ideas, it would be possible to understand a claim of national identity as a power claim. The Renaissance aristocrats he describes based their claims to power on personal distinction, that is, on the identity which they projected; modifying their behaviour to comply with new rules of etiquette strengthened this claim. Similarly, the nation could be understood as a social grouping which arose in a certain historical period. Membership of such a grouping involves conscious and unconscious modifications of behaviour and identity, yet the boundaries are not rigid because the socially-formed individual is capable of learning and modifying her behaviour to achieve (socially-created) aims, such as the achievement of power. Elias says that through social communication the individual learns symbols which, in Burkitt's words, become the

"medium of social orientation within the world and within our own selves" (186).

A nation might be one such symbol.

### **The individual in high modernity**

In "Modernity and Self-Identity", Anthony Giddens (1991) offers a theory which considers features of the specific sociohistorical environment which exists in the West today, including the nation-state. Giddens accepts most of Mead's account of the origin of the individual. However Giddens

rejects the 'I/me' distinction as oversimple because some awareness precedes the acquisition of language, arising gradually through the child's interaction with others. The awareness of the separate unique self is also linked to possession of a separate body.

For Giddens, the individual is essentially active, motivated to gratify basic needs, for example, for security. In order to be "ontologically secure" the individual needs to resolve fundamental existential issues, about self-identity and the continuity of the self, for example. This provides the drive to construct an identity, which is done partly through a biographical narrative. An additional means is through the conscious presentation and manipulation of the 'external' self, including behaviour, bodily appearance and the many aspects of contemporary life which constitute "lifestyle". Giddens emphasises that there is no escape from the need to present the self; to make no effort to do so is itself a choice and therefore a kind of 'statement'. Identity is constructed by the individual as part of a continuous reflexive interaction with the environment.

In the environment which Giddens calls "high modernity", the reflexive project of the self is greater than in any other sociohistoric situation because tradition no longer dictates social behaviour in areas of life such as marriage and family relationships. Technological innovation constantly presents new alternatives and possibilities. As a result, security can only be attained through risk management, by calculating risks and also constructing a "protective cocoon" which filters or blocks them out.

Giddens does not suggest that life in high modernity is bad in every respect; for example, medical innovation has reduced the threat of many common illnesses. However the individual is required to make more choices; a traditional lifestyle is itself a choice, since there are now alternatives. Furthermore, in many situations the individual has little or no control over outcomes or even accurate information about risks. This is a consequence of

the global nature of the dangers of nuclear weapons and environmental destruction, for example, and also the complexity of abstract systems of knowledge which cannot be fully comprehended by any one individual.

The pervasiveness of these abstract systems can mean people are separated from important life experiences; for example, the dying are separated from the living; sickness, madness and criminality are institutionalized. The implication is that these experiences are controllable and potentially transformable. The self-referentiality of abstract systems results in the repression of existential questions and moral issues.

Giddens refers to the nation-state as one of the social forms characteristic of modernity. He is mainly interested in the 'state' aspects, that is, control over territory, powers of surveillance, and control of the means of violence, rather than with the nation as a distinct entity (see Chapter 1). However it could be postulated that the active conscious individual he describes might conceivably align her or himself with a national group in order to obtain more security. The theory also draws attention to the work which a claim of national identity can do as part of the construction of a lifestyle, including its link to commodities (since these can mark a certain kind of lifestyle). Giddens discusses the importance of the biographical narrative and the "colonisation of the future": a nation characteristically lays claim to both a history and a heritage. An individual might also present her or himself as a member of a nation in order to obtain the approval of others, as part of a lifestyle and biographical narrative. This would be most likely if membership of the nation offered practical or symbolic advantages, for example, if the nation also had claims to wealth or glory.

#### **A social psychological theory of social identity**

A different theory which also, but ultimately less satisfactorily, brings together the individual and the social, is Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory (e.g. Turner and Giles, 1981; Hogg and Abrams, 1988). This is a social

psychological theory which draws a connection between the cognitive and perceptual processes of the individual and the behaviour of social groups. On the individual level it explains the emotional link between group membership and self-identity. On the social level it offers an explanation for group conflict and change. Applied to national identity, the theory would connect the public face of the nation or nation-state, such as the flags, anthems, passports and celebrations, with strong personal emotions and identifications. It would explain how distinctive qualities and characters are ascribed to members of different national groups, including relatively newly established groups, and how the cognitive operations characteristic of categorisation intensify group divisions.

Tajfel defined social identity as (in Turner's words)

"an individual's knowledge of his or her membership of various social groups together with the emotional significance of that knowledge"

(Turner, 1981: 24).

Turner, more formally, defines it as

"the sum total of a person's social identifications where the latter represent specific social categorizations internalized to become a cognitive component of the self-concept" (24).

In other words, membership of a group operates at both the social and the individual (cognitive and emotional) level.

According to the theory, an individual defines her or himself in terms of social group memberships and seeks a positive identity or self-definition with reference to social groups. Such groups are (initially) likely to be perceived in the light of certain basic mental functionings which tend to distort and simplify the way we perceive the social world. These cognitive operations were demonstrated in a famous experiment by Tajfel and Wilkes. The subjects were shown labelled groups of lines; if people believed the lines belonged to different groups, rather than to a continuum of difference, they perceived the

difference in lengths between the groups to be greater than it actually was (Tajfel and Wilkes, 1963). In other words, there was a

"tendency towards uniformity within individual categories and distinctiveness between them" (Tajfel, 1978:317).

As a matter of basic perception, subjects exaggerate differences between groups and minimise differences within them. A similar kind of distortion or stereotyping is thought to operate in people's understanding of social groups, leading them to categorise and to exaggerate the differences between categories and also the similarities within the categories. The consequence is there is a natural tendency to perceive 'real' items and people as organised into discrete and differing groups.

Some interpretation is involved here. Accentuation only occurs for aspects which are thought to have some relevance to the categories. For example, 'nurturing' would probably produce accentuation by sex but not race. This strengthens perceptions that members of a category or group are similar in some way to each other and different from others.

Furthermore, self-esteem is linked to group membership and the individual is motivated to achieve a positive sense of self-identity. One way she or he does this is to evaluate the 'ingroup' positively and the 'outgroup' negatively. The categorization process therefore has emotional weighting for the individual.

The tendency of an individual to discriminate positively in favour of her or his own group and negatively against an outgroup can be observed even when such 'groups' are simply a form of labelling imposed by the experimenter, without the subject having any direct perception or experience of the groups. However the perceptions have effects. Outside an artificial experimental situation, perceptions of ingroups and outgroups are likely to result in group conflict. Turner describes this phenomenon as follows:

"self-evaluative intergroup comparison led directly to intergroup



competition that was socially motivated and not based on conflicts of interest" (25)

This theory therefore suggests that group formation, the emotional identification of an individual with a group and discrimination against outgroups are all naturally occurring processes and do not depend on the social 'problems' of, for example, groups holding conflicting religious values or being in competition for scarce resources.

The individual is motivated to maximise self-esteem and this influences the processes already described. The in-group tends to be evaluated on the "dimensions" in which it rates most positively in contrast to the out-group. The positive rating of the in-group then in turn leads to a relatively positive self-evaluation. The processes of categorisation and comparison therefore together produce group behaviour, as groups are defined and the differences between them accentuated and given value.

In this approach the person is divided (though to a lesser extent than in Freudian theory):

"the 'I' is cognitive process (largely automatic but occasionally deliberate) and the 'me' is cognitive structure in the form of self-concept. There is a tension or dialectic between 'I' and 'me', in that while 'I' is responsible for constructing 'me', it is constrained and guided in its task by the specific content of the 'me' it has constructed." (Hogg and Abrams, 1988: 24)

The 'me' consists of both social and personal identifications and descriptions. These become salient under different circumstances, as appropriate, and therefore need not be consistent with each other. When a social or group identification becomes salient, group behaviour occurs. What decides which kind of identification will operate? This depends on data available to the individual and, again, on the processes of categorisation and comparison.

In this model therefore the individual identifies herself as a group member and is biased towards a positive assessment of that group. Such an assessment may require ingenuity if the group is subordinate, according to the dominant values and ideology of the society. Its members may attempt to improve its status as a whole, or to reassess it positively using different criteria, or, alternatively, they may subscribe to a belief that it is possible to improve their individual status and attempt to change groups as a consequence, or 'pass' as a member of a higher status group. In a rare situation the subordinate group as a whole may challenge the dominant group (cf. Tajfel, 1981).

Billig (1995) considers that social identity theory is valuable in that it emphasises that categorization, including into nations, is a process of division which creates ingroups and outgroups. However, he and others criticise the theory on a number of grounds.

First, Billig suggests that the theory ignores the sociohistorical distinctiveness of 'nation' as a membership category compared with any other group or category, and similarly, takes no note of any differences between nations. He compares a category in social identity theory to Anderson's "imagined community" (see Chapter 1) and points out that there are different types of community:

*"All these imaginings depend upon wider ideological beliefs. In consequence, grammatically similar statements of identity can have very different meanings." (Billig, 1995: 68)*

Another problem is that the theory does not refer to the periods when the category is not salient; in terms of the category of 'nation', the theory does not recognise the ongoing nature of nationalism:

*"The apparently latent identity is maintained within the daily life of inhabited nations. The 'salient situation' does not suddenly occur, as if out of nothing, for it is part of a wider rhythm of banal life in the world of*

nations. What this means is that national identity is more than an inner psychological state or an individual self-definition: it is a form of life, which is daily lived in the world of nation-states." (69)

More generally, Wetherell and Potter (1992) criticise social identity theory for the sequence which is implicit in the categorisation process: objects and people are encountered, perceived, assessed and then categorised. They point out that this implies a rather detached choice of categories, as if a speaker is an observer rather than a participant:

"a separate, self-contained, sensual but largely silent individual is taken as the starting point for theory" (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 49)

This individual is also apparently contemplating a rather static display. An implicitly visual model of perception underlies this categorisation process and Wetherell and Potter point out that it is inappropriate to apply this to phenomena which are largely unseen and unseeable, that is, socially constructed categories and groups (They suggest, interestingly, that this may be carried over from the tradition of laboratory experiments.)

A further problem is that the process implies a relatively fixed categorization; it does not therefore account for the variability which is observable in people's talk, in which allocation between categories and also the categories themselves are changing (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 77).

Some of these points come together in an earlier criticism, from Potter and Wetherell (1987:120). They suggest there are problems with any social cognition approach to categorization because of the assumptions that the categories are fixed, "preformed and enduring", and the outcome of inevitable and universal processes of distortion and stereotyping. This is part of their larger argument for a discursive approach. It will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

The final point to be made about social identity theory is a criticism of the way that 'meaning' works within the theory. Meanings are ascribed and

attached to relatively fixed bounded entities. Change is possible, but the change is a transition to a new state in which categorisation and comparison establish a new one-to-one relationship between an entity (such as an in-group) and the meanings attached to it. The significant break and move from 'fixed state' model of this kind to post-structuralism involves a change from state to process, static to dynamic, bounded to unbounded, and descriptive to linguistic. To understand this move, which occurred within different theoretical traditions already described, including Marxist and Freudian theory, it is necessary to look at developments in linguistic theory.

### **Decentering the subject**

The above section reviewed a psychological theory which incorporates the social. This section will give an overview of a tradition which developed mainly in sociology and led to a model of the subject which is almost diametrically opposed to the concept of the monadic individual .

### **Structuralism: Saussure and Levi-Strauss**

Structuralism and poststructuralism are two bodies of thought associated with a focus on language and the concept of the decentred subject.

Structuralism attempts to find "idealized systems" in language, in the work of Saussure, and society, in the work of Levi-Strauss (Giddens, 1987). The starting point in any account of Saussure is usually the distinction in language between the 'sign' (word) and the 'signifier' (the concept represented by the word). These form a system which is relatively independent of the 'signified' (the 'out in the world' referent which the signifier represents) and also of the language user. For Saussure, meaning is established within language, through differences; any meaning only exists as a comparison, rather as if it were a colour on a paint chart, only comprehensible and 'placeable' against those on either side of it. The importance of this idea is that meaning does not derive from any 'real world' to which the language might refer, nor does it derive from the mental states (for example, the intention) of the language user.

Meaning is entirely intra-linguistic. As Giddens says, Saussure's theory is

"a critique of object theories of meaning and of theories of ostensive reference" (Giddens, 1987: 81).

This also has the effect of making the language user secondary to the language system:

"Just as the meaning of 'tree' is not the object tree, so the meaning of terms that refer to human subjectivity, most particularly the 'I' of the thinking or acting subject, cannot be the states of consciousness of that subject. Like any other term in the language, 'I' is only constituted as a sign in virtue of its difference from 'you', 'we', 'they' etc. Since the 'I' has sense only in virtue of being an element in an 'anonymous' totality, there can be no question of according it some distinctive philosophical privilege" (87).

Levi-Strauss suggests that when an individual is born into a particular culture she or he is positioned in other kinds of system, for example as part of a kinship or law system. The sociohistorical or cultural environment consists of such structures. By analogy with Saussure's theory of linguistic structures, these structures within society arise from binary oppositions. For example, Levi-Strauss explained these kinship relations by referring to an underlying concept, the incest taboo, which generates every possible kinship system, such as matrilinear or patrilinear; all are based in the exchange of women between families to avoid the mating of opposite sex siblings.

The problem with structuralist theory is to explain why such systems exist. In Burkitt's terms

This raises the questions "exactly what is the source of origin of the structures of signification which order culture and meaning, and where is the source to be found?" (Burkitt, 1991:84)

Levi-Strauss's answer was that these structures of signification are in the pre-given structure of the human mind, in the unconscious.

### Althusser: A structuralist theory of Marxism

Louis Althusser attempted to incorporate structuralist findings into a reinterpretation of Marxist theory. He suggests that Marx was concerned with the structures underlying social totalities. This changes the focus of analysis from the historical forward movement of society to the static structures which underlie and produce it. In this theory, Althusser postulates a concept of ideology which differs from that in Marx's original writings. For Marx, according to Larrain, ideology is a way of seeing that "negates and conceals" (46) the contradictions in the capitalist system:

"Ideology is ... a solution in the mind to contradictions which cannot be solved in practice; it is the necessary projection in consciousness of man's practical inabilities." (Larrain, 1979: 46)

So for Marx, ideology is not a true reflection of reality but is not randomly false. It distorts the contradictions in reality; it contains "deception" and "inversion". However it is still connected to reality and to the material which of course is the basis of Marx's model.

For Althusser, ideology is based in the relationship between people and the material social world. Ideology consists of the representations of the social relations between individuals and the material reality in which people live. Ideology 'positions' individuals by calling them into a socially constructed identity, the process of 'hailing' or 'interpellation'. For example, I am 'made', as a housewife or teacher or whatever, with all the appropriate behaviours and understanding of myself which these identities imply, by the ideological structuring of this way of living. In Burkitt's words:

"within this imaginary, ideological relation to the social structure ... individuals take on a role or a position in social practices which necessitates a certain form of individuation and the construction of a particular identity." (Burkitt, 1991:86)

Therefore identity does not reside in the individual but in the functional role which precedes, positions and creates the individual called into it. People

are made as social components by being positioned.

Althusser's theory has been extensively criticised for its determinism. Barrett suggests it fails to account satisfactorily for subjectivity, which she defines as

"the private sense that individuals make of their experience and how this varies from context to context" (Barrett, 1991: 91).

She also suggests that Althusser assumes some pre-ideological subject ready to recognise and respond to interpellation. Terry Eagleton questions Althusser's account of the process of interpellation, asking why an individual should not be able to resist being 'made' in this way:

"The fact that Louis Althusser's friends apparently never mistook his cheery shout of greeting in the street is offered here as irrefutable evidence that the business of ideological interpellation is invariably successful." (Eagleton, 1991:145)

Althusser attempted to resolve some of these problems and explain the nature of the individual by drawing on the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan. Barrett considers that this is unsuccessful because Althusser exaggerates the extent to which Lacan's account produces subjects that "fit in" with social categories and the Marxist framework.

### Lacan: a poststructuralist Freudian theory

Lacan's psychoanalytic theory departs radically from Freud's model of the development and inter-relationship of the Ego, Id and Superego. According to Lacan, the stages of development from pre-individual (which he calls "hommelette") to post-Oedipal are mainly in relation to culture, language and ideology, rather than biological drives, and the achievement of an individual identity is mainly illusory.

The pre-individual child must go through two significant stages. In the first, the Mirror Phase, the notion of a unified embodied individual (ego) is acquired as an ideal. (This could be understood as the achievement of a

consciousness of 'I' against everything else which is 'not I'.) In the second, more important phase, involving the Castration Complex, a consciousness of self as object is also attained (this seems to parallel in some respects Mead's notion of 'me'). However these phases are not merely stages in individual development, as in Freudian theory, but lead to entry into the Symbolic Order. Frosh says

"the initially 'absent' subject becomes concrete through its positioning in a meaning system which is ontologically prior to it and more extensive than it" (Frosh, 1987: 130).

An essential part of this meaning system is language, though Coward and Ellis also define it as

"the relations governed particularly by the family, perhaps also by the state, religion etc." (Coward and Ellis, 1977:107).

This is therefore a progression from undifferentiated sensory experience [Frosh describes it as "immersion in fragmentary drives" (Frosh, 1987:134)], to narcissistic self awareness, to an understanding of Self existing separately and in contrast to the Other within an elaborate system of social relations. The culmination can be understood as:

"the order of the subject's full constitution as human, ... thus the order under which the subject is positioned as a separate, speaking entity, with its subjectivity organised along specifiable routes, specifically those concerning gender." (Frosh, 1987:134)

Key concepts within Lacan's theory are the Imaginary, the Real and the Other. The Imaginary order is entered by the child in the Mirror Phase. Frosh defines it as

"the level of psychological functioning characterised by concern with the 'imago', the series of false images through which the child perceives her/his identity" (132)

One of these false images is the integrated whole self identity (or ego)



offered to an observer by a mirror reflection. Like such a reflection, the unified self which is taken as an ideal at this stage is only a (culturally constructed) image, not an attainable reality.

Nor is the Symbolic Order, entered through the Oedipal Crisis real; the Real is unattainable:

"the insertion of the human into language depends on an experience of otherness, of absence and lack; it is only by the perception of a boundary between self and other, and hence of the impossibility of total fulfilment, that the child can formulate a communicable notion of the self; hence, in all its experiences in language, the subject is constantly reiterating its division from its integrity. (136)"

The theories described in this section attempt to develop an understanding of an individual which is not fully autonomous and independent of society, as the monad is. Althusser's theory creates a different problem: the subject is ideologically determined. Lacan's theory is a further step towards understanding the individual as decentred, socially constructed and also conscious. However other writers suggest that there is still the problem of how the social, here the Symbolic Order, pre-exists humans. For example, Shames says of structuralist theory generally:

"This theory confuses the obvious fact that each individual enters a pre-existing social world with the absurd notion that the social world, in the form of cultural structures, has some existence apart from living individuals. Cultural structures are seen as having a life of their own, somehow planting illusions in the heads of *homo sapiens* organisms" (Shames, 1984, quoted in Burkitt, p.91)

The complex theories of Althusser and Lacan (and Althusser's Lacan, since some writers see Althusser's interpretation as distorting the original theory) have been extensively used in cultural studies and have many potential applications to national identity. One identity with which the

individual is constructed within the social structure could be the identity of national subject, and this identity would be part of the power relations of the society. The nation, as a whole, could be understood as an 'imago', that is, as part of the Imaginary, an unattainable unified whole. Similarly the individual subject could be constructed as a national subject. The uncertainty and fluidity of national boundaries could be understood as resulting from the constant play and interrelationship of Self and Other.

Stuart Hall points out that one consequence of the work which deconstructs the

"self-sustaining subject as the centre of post-Cartesian western metaphysics" (Hall, 1996a: 1)

is that it presents the essentialist meaning of identity (which I have described as the theory of the monad) as unviable, but does not replace it with any alternative concept. Hall suggest that the question of identity "recurs" at the juncture of subject position and subject, which is the point where Althusser's theory breaks down, and also, in the terms of this review, where the individual meets the social and an 'internal' point of view must be reconciled with an 'external' one.

"I use 'identity' to refer to the meeting point, the point of *suture*, between on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken'. Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive resources construct for us" (Hall, 1996a; 5)

The problem is to understand how this 'suturing' happens. Hall emphasises that it is a process, identification, rather than a 'once for all' event. I have cited Barrett's criticism that Althusser assumes some pre-ideological subject which can responds to being hailed. Hall refers to a similar critique

and suggests that to reject Althusser, on the grounds that Althusser's theory paradoxically assumed a pre-ideological subject ready to recognise itself as a subject, is perhaps over-simple. The mistake is to think of a total sudden constitution of the subject rather than

"the more complex notion of a subject-in-process" (8)

Moreover it is also necessary to understand suturing as a process which is not uni-directional and deterministic, as Althusser suggested, but a mutually constitutive interaction, or 'articulation'.

Hall considers that Foucault's early works

"offer a formal account of the construction of subject positions within discourse while revealing little about why it is that certain individuals occupy some subject positions rather than others. By neglecting to analyse how the social positions of individuals interact with the construction of certain 'empty' discursive subject positions, Foucault reinscribes an antinomy between subject positions and the individuals who occupy them" (10)

However this problem, this failure to explain the suturing process, is partly addressed, Hall suggests, in Foucault's last works which begin to recognise the need to complement

"the account of discursive and disciplinary regulation with an account of the practices of subjective self-constitution." (13)

But this was not achieved and Hall suggests that a total reconciliation of Foucault and psychoanalysis is still needed. In relation to national identity, this would mean a way of understanding how people are constituted and reconstituted as national subjects while also continuing to change the meanings of such an identity, through discursive and other practices and in relation to other identities, in their various interactions.

### **Social constructionism and discourse analysis**

From the poststructuralist approach described above, this thesis retains

the concepts of a social environment which precedes and in part positions the individual. The particular point to be explored is how this positioning works in everyday life, in terms of the social psychology of the individual. The thesis does not aim to present a full theoretical resolution of the problems raised in the previous section. However these are in part dealt with in through the social psychological perspectives of social constructionism and discourse analysis.

Two basic tenets of social constructionism are that all our understanding of the world, including our categorisation, interpretation and discussion of it, is filtered through language, and that it is the nature of language to construct meanings rather than transparently convey them. There is therefore no neutral objective independent access to truth.

"The terms in which the world is understood are social artifacts, products of historically situated interchanges among people" (Gergen, 1985: 267)

In using language we construct meanings and entities, including ourselves and our identities. However, as Gergen emphasises, this is not an 'anything goes' situation. Constructions and interpretations are constrained; the point is that these constraints are historical and cultural rather than, as a conventional analyst might assume, 'factual'. For example, if someone is said to be 'not French' or not able to claim French national identity, the social constructionist position would be not that this person lacks some objectively verifiable quality of 'Frenchness' but that she is being excluded by cultural and historical-established conventions, though this does not mean that the consequences are necessarily insignificant.

Furthermore, the statement (about being 'not French') would need to be understood as part of an interaction:

"everything we do, we make sense of - either before, during, or after its execution - from within an intralinguistic, socially negotiated, and constructed reality of one kind of another" (Shotter, 1992: 8)

In other words, knowledge and meaning is constructed within contexts, and those contexts set up constraints. In addition, the contexts are explicitly or implicitly "dialogic", in Shotter's term.

One meaning of this is that language use is likely to involve at least two speakers, either in the immediate situation, as in a conversation, or in a more extended sense, as in a text which is written towards an imagined audience. Meanings are therefore constructed in the ongoing or anticipated interaction between two or more language users.

A consequence of this, and a second possible meaning of "dialogic", is that language use is, as Billig says, "rhetorical". It is shaped by an argumentative context of the known and anticipated counter-positions around a topic. Claims are shaped in response to and anticipation of counter-claims. The understanding of language here, then, is that it is performative, inter-individual, and always operating within the context of an interaction, however drawn-out. Shotter summarises the difference between this position and that of de Saussure, as follows:

"people's linguistic task is not in any way like that depicted in Saussure's (1960) classic paradigmatic account of the communicative situation, in which an immaterial idea or concept in the "mind" of one person (a speaker or writer) is *sent* into the mind of another, essentially similar person (but now in the role of a listener or reader) by the use of material signs such as vibrations in the air or inkmarks on paper. It is a process in which people, who occupy different "positions" in a discourse, attempt to influence each other's behaviour in some way." (Shotter, 1992:12)

This quotation raises several points of interest for an understanding of nation and national identity. The first concerns the nature of the 'other' in any analysis of people's talk or writing around national identity. The sense of the Other derived from Lacan is of contrast; part of the unattainability of the Real

is that the subject can only form an understanding of her or himself with reference to an Other who is what she or he is not. This can lead to a crude analysis of identity claims, for example, in terms of absolute contrasts with what is feared, desired or whatever. However the idea of the 'other' as the (possibly hypothetical) proponent of a counter-position in an argument permits an analysis of language work which is both more subtle and also more responsive to a range of interconnected sociohistorical contexts. (A simple example would be the variety of possible 'other' positions addressed by a claim to be British: not Welsh? not English? not white? not European?)

A second issue raised by the quotation is the meaning of the term "discourse". This is used very broadly and has different meanings across a range of disciplines. It originally derives from the work of Michel Foucault and from that context carries associations with power, and with the relationships and practices which make up people's social environment. Stuart Hall defines discourse in Foucauldian terms as

"a group of statements which provide a language for talking about - i.e. a way of representing - a particular kind of knowledge about a topic." (Hall, 1992: 291)

A discourse therefore produces and simultaneously limits meaning, and also positions the speaker (or language user). Hall gives the example of the discourse of 'the West and the rest' and suggests it forces anyone using it to speak as if the West were superior. The point could also be made, of course, that it establishes these (the West, the rest) as the two relevant entities and forces the speaker to position herself as belonging to one or the other.

The term "discourse", therefore, can be associated with ideas of positioning and power. The issue of power is also raised by Shotter's references to speakers' attempts to influence each other's behaviour. It is important to note that "dialogic" does not mean that the sides are equally weighted. As Hall points out, language, knowledge and power are intimately

linked. Social constructionism would approach 'truth', for example, as claims which are socially sanctioned and authorised. It is impossible, as has been noted, for there to be any independent, neutral verification of a truth claim. "Self-evident" truths are likely to be those authorised by widespread consensus and possibly also by their usefulness for certain applications. (The latter point applies to the laws of physics, for instance, but even these, of course, are not universal; the usual example cited is that Newtonian physics holds good in a wide variety of practical contexts but is superseded by Einstein's theories under certain conditions.)

This thesis is concerned with "discourse" as it is understood in social psychology, although there are variants and alternatives here, with ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and poststructuralism as influences, as will be discussed.

An initial exposition of principles is offered by Potter and Wetherell in "Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour" (1987). They emphasise, first, the importance of understanding function, that is, of looking at what people do with language, in context. Secondly, they suggest, discourse should be analysed as constructions (as opposed to representations); language is used to produce versions of the social world. This process is not wholly within the control of any individual language user because the constructions, like meaning, emerge within interactions. Thirdly, discourse exhibits variation. Many factors contribute to this but the underlying reason that discourse is not 'consistent' is that it is not a representation of a given, 'out there' world.

Part of Potter and Wetherell's purpose is to challenge conventional approaches within psychology, in particular to attitudes, categories and the subject. Following the principles described above, these are not approached as pre-existent phenomena or entities to be 'discovered' and analysed. Instead, the analyst looks at how they are produced within discourse.

Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995) suggest that within social psychology there are now two main traditions of discourse analysis, partly bridged by "Mapping the Language of Racism" by Wetherell and Potter (1992). They suggest that one strand, which they use Ian Parker's work to exemplify, is concerned mainly with sociopolitical meanings and actions. They refer to

"Parker claims that language is structured to reflect power relations and inequalities in society. Thus he argues that discourses support some institutions in society, and have ideological effects. There is, then, a link between social structural conditions and discourses, and this has important implications for analytic work." (Widdicombe and Wooffitt, 1995: 60)

Widdicombe and Wooffitt consider that their own work lies within a second strand of social psychological discourse analysis which is partly influenced by Conversation Analysis and ethnomethodology.

Conversation Analysis is a 'fine-grained' system of analysis which focuses on the immediate interactive context of language use and, in particular, on how speakers observe, or depart from, conventional sequences of 'turns' within a conversation; certain types of 'turn', such as an apology, conventionally 'expect' one of a limited range of possible acknowledgements. Ethnomethodology is a branch of sociology based in the work of Garfinkel which looks at the ongoing production of social life, in contrast to earlier approaches which, implicitly, assumed the existence of established and classifiable practices and entities.

Widdicombe and Wooffitt disagree with Parker's "political" and "ideological" focus and also his broad definition of "texts" as, in their words,

"any events, objects or processes which are imbued with meaning and subject to interpretation" (61).

(That definition is in the broad tradition of poststructuralist and semiotic studies.) In contrast, they present themselves as interested in the nature of "everyday language", political or not, and in language as a form of social



action:

"we will not assume the relevance of wider political issues unless we can assert that in their behaviour speakers themselves are orienting to the significance of such issues for the trajectory of their verbal interaction"

(69)

They suggest that social identities need to be understood as "resources" rather than "vehicles" for social action; claims of identity and membership categories are not extra-linguistic (as might be assumed in an analysis concerned primarily with sociopolitical issues) but are resources which can be used to 'do work'. This argument follows Edwards and Potter (1992).

Widdicombe and Wooffitt's distinction between different strands of discourse analysis encapsulates a number of contentious issues around discourse analysis and identity, including national identity. The first is around what constitutes appropriate material for analysis.

Conversation Analysis (CA) is characterised by a focus on relatively short sections of transcript; a very detailed form of transcription notation (which is likely to limit the quantities of both transcription and analysis which can be carried out, especially on a project where the material is being gathered, transcribed and analysed by a single researcher, or even two); a concern primarily with the meanings established and 'work done' within the immediate context of the interaction, and analysis partly with reference to turn-taking conventions established by Sacks (partly through his work on the analysis of transcripts of phone conversations). CA also tends to focus on 'everyday talk'.

It can be seen that these features are interrelated. The fine-grained transcription means that long stretches of recorded talk are likely to produce unmanageably large quantities of transcript. The use of small sections of talk, on the other hand, is likely to make it difficult to analyse certain kinds of topics and discussions. However these are 'tendencies', not absolute constraints. A

more important issue, especially for the topic of this thesis, national identity, is how far analysis should be restricted to what happens within the (transcribed) interaction. This relates to a second issue, namely, the extent to which meanings are established within a text.

An approach, like that favoured by Widdicombe and Wooffitt, which focuses on meanings established within a text, would understand a national identity term, like 'New Zealander', to have a potentially different meaning each time it is used, depending on context. This in turn would imply that generalisations across texts and uses were (potentially) invalid since in each case 'New Zealander' has different meanings and is used to do different work. In looking for common meanings across different contexts, and also in attempting to make some comparison between this and other national identity terms (such as 'Australian') the analyst would be both missing the meanings established and distorting the data to create connections where none exist.

There is indeed a danger of circularity if the researcher approaches research material with pre-conceptions and looks for data to support them. However, the opposite extreme is a kind of 'neo-positivism' which aims to 'let the data speak for itself'. In the case of CA this tendency may be encouraged by the complex transcription conventions, which can be seen as an almost technical methodology, and the reference to turn-taking conventions which can be given a status akin to scientific laws. Furthermore if turn-taking is acknowledged to be an observable social convention, such that deviation from the sequence of turns is comment-worthy and can be analysed as a meaningful action by a speaker, how does the analytical use of this kind of extra-contextual prior knowledge (*of the social conventions of turn-taking*) differ from the analytical use of extra-contextual knowledge of, say, recent political controversy, or of public figures or local foods or the associations attached to certain terms, or any other kind of extra-contextual reference used by an analyst?

This leads to a third problem, namely, around the 'political' and 'ideological' as suitable or unsuitable categories of material and research area. Widdicombe and Wooffitt seem to acknowledge these as recognisable distinct categories which can be either selected or else treated as they 'come up' within an interaction and which speakers may or may not choose to orient to. This in turn seems to acknowledge a broader context than that of the immediate interaction, in which meanings have been established, such as that certain points are 'ideological' or 'political'.

Discourse analysis is a qualitative methodology in which analysis involves interpretation and, inevitably, implicit or explicit reference to meanings and situations outside the interaction being analysed. Without such reference, the analyst would be, for a start, unable to understand the language spoken. Interpretation therefore must involve reference to both pre-existing (non-finite) meanings and to meanings which are established within the immediate context. The pre-existing meanings are the cultural associations around the research area and the situations of the research subjects, and part of the researcher's responsibility must be to investigate these associations and explicitly acknowledge her or his situation insofar as this narrows or widens the 'gap' across which, as Shotter puts it, all dialogue occurs.

The overall point to be made here is that the issues around which Widdicombe and Wooffitt have distinguished two different strands of (social psychological) discourse analysis do not admit of 'either/or' distinctions but only differences of degree. It is a basic premise of social constructionism that language neither determines social reality nor reflects it but is in an ongoing dynamic, interactive and dialectical relationship with it. To attempt a form of discourse analysis which situates meaning in a limited incomplete context and denies the analyst's own, after-the-event interaction as an active interpreter, is both theoretically and analytically simplistic.

A final point to be noted here concerns the status of the 'discourse', in

the meaning of the language and talk being analysed. National character researchers, like those described at the beginning of the chapter, would treat discourse about national character as fact. Social identifications theorists treat it in two ways; it can be fact about the real world, because objective knowledge is assumed possible, and, paradoxically, it can also be a distorted and simplified version of that knowledge, as a result of the perceptual and categorizing processes which take place to establish identifications. In this thesis discourse is approached as a resource. It is not, of course, the objective 'reflection' of reality but is produced through processes of construction and negotiation. It is socially derived but not passively 'taken up': the production of discourse also involves resistance and contest.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the theories of identity and the individual and the social which have contributed to the position adopted in this thesis. It has attempted to develop an alternative understanding of identity to the model of the monadic individual which has characterised much of the psychological research into national identity. In this thesis, following from social constructionism and discourse analysis, as discussed, identity will be approached as a form of discursive positioning which draws on resources, including words, ideas, images, stories and models of causality, from the social 'pool' or 'field'. This positioning takes place in relation to the Other, in both the Lacanian sense and also Shotter's meaning of the partner other of the dialogic interaction. The identity constructions occur in overlapping and interlinked contexts, including immediate 'face-to-face' and longer-term, larger scale social interactions and one of the speaker's dilemmas is to reconcile these interconnected positionings.

Following Hall, the taking up of an identity is understood as an act of imagination possible under certain circumstances at certain times (Hall, 1988a) but also an inevitably incomplete process in which closure is never

achieved (Hall,1996a). This thesis will not attempt to resolve the problem which he defines, of reconciling theories from psychoanalysis and Foucault. It will approach the self, following Wetherell and Potter (1992) and Potter and Wetherell (1987) as a construction achieved through discursive work and positionings. Finally, it will assume that since

"Identity is formed at the unstable point where the 'unspeakable' stories of subjectivity meet the narratives of history, of a culture." (Hall, 1988a)

there is intrinsic to it the dilemma which occurs at the point of articulation of the social and the psychic, the never-achievable reconciliation of positioning and presenting oneself for others as one sees and wants to see oneself. These points will form the basis of the analysis of the research data.

## **Chapter 3 - New Zealand in the 1990s**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapters have considered theories of the nation and the concepts associated with these, then different ways of theorising identity. As discussed, the approach adopted in this thesis will focus on discourse. This chapter provides background for the chosen case study, New Zealand, and in doing so explores some of the discursive resources available to the research participants to draw on in their talk about the New Zealand nation and New Zealand national identity.

The chapter reviews the constructions of New Zealand nation and national identity found in a range of written material including academic texts, more 'popular' discussions of history and society and newspaper and magazine articles.

In terms of the aims of the thesis as a whole, this chapter draws on the written material described to indicate the contents of the 'pool' or 'field' of discursive resources available to speakers discussing issues around New Zealand national identity and the nation in late 1994/early 1995 when the main research reported in this thesis was conducted. In doing so it shows how alternative constructions of the New Zealand nation in the material analysed here reflects ongoing ideological contests around dominant constructions, of the kind described by Shapiro (1988) (see Chapter 1). In addition, the chapter shows how within the material analysed here constructions of the nation and the national adapt and persist, accommodating the changes of the kind which some postmodern theorists have predicted would render the nation irrelevant. Billig has summarised these changes as globalization, from 'above', and fragmentation, from 'below' (see Chapter 1). They include reorganisation of the national economy in order to 'open' it to international market forces; redefinition of the national community to acknowledge the claims of sub-

national minority groups; and increased migration.

The chapter outlines three broad constructions of New Zealand: as a former British colony, settled mainly in the nineteenth century; as the Maori or bicultural nation of Aotearoa, and as a largely deregulated state which is open to the flows of people, capital and trade occurring within the global economy. The alternative constructions, including historical narratives and constructions of place, emphasise or minimise the significance of different events and interests. The chapter examines how these constructions accommodate different economic and social relationships and foci, and also different understandings of land and other 'national' resources. The concepts of 'nation' can be seen to persist and change across the three constructions.

As was noted in the introduction to the thesis, many of the recent changes which have occurred in New Zealand have also taken place in other countries. These include the negotiation of new defence and trade links creating different international relationships and dependencies; the reassessment of the relationships between different groups within the nation, including indigenous and settler populations, and new migrant groups; different utilisation and valuing of land and other natural resources as a result of changes in economic activity; the reorganisation of the economy and state administration in line with liberal economics and free market principles, including new policies to promote privatisation, deregulation and the 'opening' of the national borders to trade and migration; increased foreign investment and ownership, and the reorganisation and reduction of the former welfare state. These changes have affected most or all of the defining features of the nation-state. The persistence, renegotiation or failure of constructions of nation and national identity during the period of these changes in the New Zealand context is therefore relevant to other nation-states in the postmodern globalised environment.

In the context of such change, how are understandings of 'nation' and

'national' maintained or adjusted? There is a loose sequence to the emergence of the three different constructions of New Zealand considered here; each can be understood in part as reacting to and contesting the previous one, without fully superseding or replacing it. All three continue to provide ways of understanding New Zealand in national terms.

### **The population and peoples**

In 1951 92% of the population of New Zealand were of British descent. By 1981 82% identified themselves as belonging to the broader category of "European descent", 9% were of Maori ancestry and 3% from the Pacific Islands (James 1992: 37). A 1990 publication estimated that

"The Maori population of New Zealand, including many people of part-Maori, part-European descent, now numbers about 13% of the total population." (Macdonald, 1990).

The total population is approximately 3 million (3,175,737 according to Zodgekar 1994) and immigration is low. Recent migration statistics are distorted by the relatively large numbers of New Zealand citizens arriving and leaving, for example to join 'pools' of New Zealanders living in Australia and other countries. However between 1981 and 1986 there were only about 50,000 new migrants, and about a third of these were from the United Kingdom and Europe, a third from the Pacific Island nations, and a fifth from Asia, including 2200 refugees from Kampuchea.

In the second half of the 1980s there was much more immigration from both the Pacific and from Asia, especially China, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Philippines, Taiwan and India. However the net gain was still only 63,000 (New Zealand Planning Council, 1991). In 1992 Asians were 52.5% of total migrants but still only 1.1% of the total population (Listener, 29/5/93). From mid-1993 to March 1994 the five main single sources of migrants were Britain, South Africa, S. Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong (Herald 11/4/94).

These statistics can be drawn on to support different constructions of New



Zealand national identity. One is of New Zealand as a former British colony in which the population is predominantly white and English-speaking, and the political and cultural institutions and much of the everyday culture are still derived from Britain.

A second construction is of New Zealand as Aotearoa, the nation of its indigenous people, the Maori. The use of this construction instead of the first would focus on the growth of the Maori population as a partial and belated redress of the dominance of the group descended from British settlers. The two constructions would place different significance on the Treaty of Waitangi, which was signed by Maori chiefs and representatives of Queen Victoria in 1840. In the first construction it is the founding document of New Zealand and an approximate marker of the beginning of white settlement and New Zealand history. However in the second construction, the Treaty is important because it recognised and guaranteed the sovereignty (*rangatiratanga*) of the indigenous people over the territories and resources of New Zealand/Aotearoa. In this view, during most of the subsequent development of New Zealand this sovereignty and the extensive and original rights of the Maori over New Zealand have been ignored so the Treaty has been betrayed.

A third construction of New Zealand, as a modern multicultural Pacific Rim nation, would take the increasing Asian migration as evidence of New Zealand's 'natural' Asian identity, because of its location on the globe and within the global economy.

These three broad constructions can be further divided and each encompasses variations. They are used here as a loose organisational structure for the different interpretations of New Zealand which have prevailed in approximately the last thirty years, and also the associated different understandings of various features of the New Zealand nation or nation-state: the role of the government and state administration; the organisation of the economy; the uses and control of the national territory and natural resources;

the historical narratives, and the relationship between the different groups and cultures within the population. This chapter will explore the constructions and the work they do.

### **The first construction: New Zealand as the former British colony**

Accounts of New Zealand as a former British colony focus on how it developed a separate and distinctive identity from England or Britain. One related view is that

"The difficulty of defining and consciously feeling an ethnic unity distinct from the rest of the English-speaking world has been the key difficulty of the formation of English-speaking Canadian, Australian or New Zealand nationalism" (Cole, 1971)

As described in Chapter 1, this writer, Douglas Cole, suggests that 19th century British settlers in these places developed a double identity of patriotism to the new territorial state co-existing without conflict with a pan-British ethnic identity. In the late 19th century there was also some idea of new 'races' developing in the colonies:

"At this time ... expressions of superior geographic-climatic evolution were being made in New Zealand. New Zealanders, formed by a rigorous climate, a cold wind, and island insularity, would develop a superior national type."

Jock Phillips suggests that such an evolution was cited as the explanation for New Zealand's rugby victories over Britain on tours early in the twentieth century (Phillips, 1987).

The assumption that the original British identity gradually transformed to a new and distinctive New Zealand identity recurs in much of the writing about New Zealand. This is an account of the nation which draws heavily on images of a growing child: New Zealand develops, matures, breaks away from the parent or mother country, and becomes independent.

### **Developing a distinctive identity**

In the 1990 Hocken lecture about New Zealand, the historian Keith Sinclair described such a development in terms which suggest it is universal and inevitable:

"A nation is a people most of whom think that they are a nation. Usually they have a country and sometimes, but not always, their own language. Usually they have, to some degree, their own distinctive culture. A people becomes a nation when it grows aware that its existence differs from that of other peoples and comes to feel, as it were, set apart. It is a social process, history, that leads to this sense of identity." (Sinclair, 1988)

Sinclair depicts this process of nation development as involving migration, the creation of new kinship ties, the "breaking in" of the land and development of infrastructure, and particularly the experiences of war and participation in sport. In his book on New Zealand national identity, he suggests that the soldiers who fought abroad developed a sense of a separate New Zealand identity from the community and comradeship between them and their difference from, and to some extent antagonism towards, the British (Sinclair, 1986). Phillips describes the elements of this (male) identity:

"the official mythology of the New Zealand troops in the Great War remained largely that which had emerged out of the Boer War. Our boys were gentlemen of the bush, men who upheld the finest traditions of the pioneer spirit; but had replaced the footloose irresponsibility of the frontier culture with a modest chivalry." (Phillips, 1987: 169)

Later, writers and painters, predominantly male, also "taught us how to see ourselves" (Sinclair, 1988).

### The changing international context

This construction of New Zealand is also associated with a linear and teleological view of history. Certain events and changes in New Zealand's trade and defence relationship are generally interpreted as indicative of the 'breaking away' of the young nation described by Sinclair.

Although it officially ceased to be a Dominion in 1947, New Zealand continued to be economically dependent on trade with Britain because its whole economy was organised around exports of agricultural products for the British market. When Britain entered the Common Market (later the European Economic Community and then the European Union) this was seen as both an act of (family) betrayal and a severing of the umbilical cord. For example, Colin James says:

"A usual marker for New Zealand's economic decolonisation is Britain's entry into the European Community (EC) in 1972. Thenceforth New Zealand was on notice that its agricultural exports to Britain were to be phased down to negligible levels, that is, its status as farm to Britain's industrial cities was at an end. New Zealand was also on notice that selling agricultural produce to other markets would become more difficult, once British farmers expanded output in response to EC subsidies." (James 1992: 47)

In terms of defence, the breaking away was more complex. New Zealand's links with Britain led it to send troops halfway across the world to fight in the Boer War and two European wars. In World War 1 over 10 per cent of the population served in the armed forces at home and abroad and the casualties were enormous.

"Nearly 17,000 men - one in sixty-five of the population - did not return from battle. This death-roll was greater than that of Belgium, which had six times the population and was a battlefield." (Sinclair 1984: 232)

In World War 2 casualties were again severe, although fewer (11,600 dead and 15,700 wounded) (Sinclair 1984: 284). However this time New Zealand experienced the threat of invasion, from Japan, at a point when its forces were away supporting Britain in the Middle East. Subsequently, at the time of the Korean War, when the United States of America wanted a peace treaty with Japan, New Zealand and Australia were worried by the possibility of renewed Japanese militarism and asked for a Pacific Pact. The US agreed, partly as a

response to the danger of Asian Communism, and the ANZUS Treaty was signed in 1951. All three countries were also parties, with Britain and others, to the South East Asia Treaty Organisation so the link with Britain continued but the US was now more important for New Zealand's security (Sinclair 1984)

It was therefore regarded as highly significant that the 1984 Labour government effectively refused admission to the US Navy by banning nuclear-armed and nuclear-powered ships from entering New Zealand waters. This was interpreted as defiance of ANZUS and led to protests and (minor) sanctions from the US. Writing several years later about continuing public support for the policy, the Prime Minister of the 84 Labour government, David Lange describes the banning in terms of the model of parent-child-independence:

" The country had weaned itself from the idea that we were inevitably a dependent of the United States; we had effectively cut the cord without doing ourselves any substantial injury. In fact, our assertion of independence had lifted our spirits as a country. Our nuclear-free policy was becoming part of our national identity." (Lange 1990:201)

Colin James suggests that the reasons for the huge public support for the ban were more complex: it was interpreted as a gesture of independence of the United States but also as an act of pacifism and a 'green' measure to protect the environment. Moreover, despite the ban, the Labour government continued to support the USA in most other areas, especially in negotiations in the Uruguay Round of GATT:

"the New Zealand government applied an antidote to its breach with the United States by explicitly intensifying its defence relationship with Australia" (James 1992: 115)

Kelsey (1995: 303) suggests that the antinuclear stance helped Labour get re-elected in 1987 because it

"offered a valuable diversion from economic issues".

Although the significance of events such as the nuclear ban and of

Britain's entry into the Common Market can be reinterpreted and disputed, the interest for this thesis is the overall construction of the nation as a former British colony which grows into independence and distinctiveness, and the understandings of other issues which follow from this construction. For example, such a view can suggest that the past, the time before maturity and wisdom, is less relevant than the present. The construction of New Zealand as primarily British also of course relegates other non-British-descended peoples to secondary status. Both of these points affect the importance attributed to the Maori people.

### The position of the Maori

Joe Williams describes how an 1877 legal decision reduced Maori from the status ascribed to them by the Treaty of Waitangi, that is, of the Maori tribes as independent nations, to the status of barbarians:

'Chief Justice Prendergast rejected Treaty imagery and terminology and imposed his own:

"On the foundation of this colony, the Aborigines were found without any kind of civil government or any settled systems of law. There is no doubt that during a series of years the British government desired and endeavoured to recognise the independent nationality of New Zealand. But the thing neither existed nor at the time could be established. Maori tribes were incapable of performing the duties and therefore assuming the rights of a civilised community."

With the stroke of a pen, the history of first contact was rewritten. Having established that the Maori were uncivilised, it was a simple enough step to conclude that the Treaty of Waitangi was a nullity' (Williams, 1990: 16)

Williams suggests that recent references to the Maori as Treaty 'partners' continue to deny them the status given in 1840.

In a similar reduction, in the 1990 Hocken lecture quoted above, Keith

Sinclair suggests that the Maori are not a national but a "racial" group:

"Some Maoris have aspired and do aspire to become a nation, but at present one could perhaps best describe the Maoris as a submerged nationality, imperfectly integrated into a predominantly European nation."

He also mentions the Maori as source of distinctiveness, that is, as one of the ways that the 'new' nation can mark itself off from the British parent:

"Our bi-cultural heritage is what is most distinctive about us. I imagine that few people would disagree with me in believing that the most distinctive elements in our culture, for instance in the arts, are Maori"

However he then looks to a future New Zealand society which is not bicultural but multicultural as a result of (limited) Asian migration. In this understanding, the Maori are not only the second race or culture in New Zealand, they have a similar status to non-British migrants. Such assumptions underlay the former official policy of "assimilation", by which Maori people were expected to take on 'New Zealand' identity and effectively disappear. Challenges to this policy and these assumptions resulted in a second important construction of nation and national identity in New Zealand, centred on the Maori and the Treaty of Waitangi.

#### **The second construction: New Zealand as Aotearoa**

A second broad construction which can be identified is that of New Zealand as Aotearoa, a nation in which the indigenous people, the Maori, are acknowledged as having at least equal importance to the (descendants of) settlers. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi is essential to this construction. It can be understood either as an acknowledgement that the rightful population of New Zealand is the Maori, or else that the nation belongs to the descendants of the two sets of signatories to the Treaty and is therefore 'bicultural'.

The Treaty was signed by Maori chiefs and representatives of Queen Victoria. There were, however, significant differences between the English language version and the (various copies of the) Maori version and recent

historians have suggested that the two parties understood its purposes and terms very differently (Orange, 1988).

### The Maori renaissance

After the signing in 1840, the Treaty was then largely ignored by governments and most of the white population, until a series of events and changes over the last 40 years led to a gradual reassessment of both its importance and the status of the Maori population.

The first of these was that in the 1950s there was a major migration of Maori people from rural to urban areas, largely in response to new demands from industry for labour (Spoonley 1994: 87). In 1945 75% of Maori lived in rural areas; by 1966, this had fallen to 38%, and in the 1970s to 25%. (Larner and Spoonley, 1995).

Although for most of the earlier part of this century contact between Maori and non-Maori had been quite limited, a strong element of accounts of the New Zealand nation, or one of its myths, was that there was equality and harmony between the races. This was often challenged, particularly by observers from other countries (see Archer 1975) but still persisted. As part of the official policy of assimilation, for example, schools discouraged or punished the use of the Maori language. It was widely assumed that the Maori would be integrated, through intermarriage and the taking on of 'European' customs, and would gradually disappear as a separate group.

However in the 1970s particularly, a separate Maori identity began to be reasserted, in what is now referred to as the "Maori renaissance". This included a revival of interest in Maori language, culture and arts, and the establishment of a separate Maori political party, Mana Motuhake. There was a series of protests, marches and key occupations to claim back Maori land, including the extended occupation at Bastion Point in the centre of Auckland. Most accounts suggest that a younger generation of Maori rebelled against the non-confrontational, conciliatory approach which their elders had taken



towards land disputes. Hauraki Greenland suggests that this change of attitude was accompanied by and partly due to a change in self-definition.

"The late sixties and early seventies had seen a largely uncritical assimilation of the rhetoric and example of black power in the U.S.A. ... But by the mid-seventies there were clear signs of a significant shift away from the conceptual framework inspired by the ideology of black power to one closer to the liberation movements of the third and especially the fourth world." (Greenland, 1984: 96)

Such a change has enormous implications. It rejects the position for the Maori of a 'second' or 'Other' race displaced into a society in which they may be uncomfortable and unwelcome. It marks indigeneity as vital and positions the white population as colonial and imperialist outsiders, from elsewhere who, by extension, can perhaps to be sent away. The new conceptual framework can also imply two views of the past. One is that the past pervades the present, through tradition and belief for example, because time is non-linear. The second, from models of Third World development, could suggest a similar evolution to that contained in the first construction of New Zealand, that is, that time is forward-moving and there is a need to develop distinctively New Zealand institutions and ways of operating by drawing on Maori tradition.

In the initial period of "Maori renaissance", perhaps because of this perceived possibility, there was a new awareness among white New Zealanders of things Maori, including the Maori language, art and artefacts. New published histories, including "The New Zealand Wars" by James Belich (1986) and "The Treaty of Waitangi" by Claudia Orange (1988), were widely read and led to increasing acceptance that Maori accounts had been neglected and the Treaty had been betrayed and should be honoured, although what this might entail practically was generally not specified. There were moves to revive Maori language use, for example through 'kindergarten' level groups

called *kohanga reo* and also the establishment of bilingual units in secondary schools. Government documents and job advertisements were printed in both English and Maori. The assumption that New Zealand was bicultural became widespread.

Paul McHugh suggests that there has been a parallel development in constitutional law in New Zealand. The initial understanding of the state as a top-down, monolithic authority derived from the English law brought by settlers. However, he suggests, more recently Court of Appeal decisions related to Treaty claims have expressed a notion of biculturalism and participation which effectively replaces omniscient sovereignty with an obligation on the state's part to work together with the Maori. McHugh suggests this amounts to a new indigenous form of constitutionalism (McHugh, forthcoming).

### The return to the Treaty

The attempt to settle Treaty claims legally began in 1975 when the government set up the Waitangi Tribunal to investigate (a limited range of the) land claims. The historian, W.H.Oliver, describes the Tribunal in terms which acknowledge an alternative historical narrative to the 'child of Britain' described above. He uses the Maori word "pakeha" to refer to non-Maori New Zealanders:

"The Waitangi Tribunal came into existence after a long period of 135 years during which the treaty that it was charged to apply to Maori grievances had already had a dual history. On the Maori side the Treaty had been consistently invoked and appealed to; on the Pakeha side it had been forgotten or ignored. In the mid-20th century these two traditions began to converge as, at length, the Maori viewpoint made an impact upon Pakeha awareness: (Oliver 1991:3)

However Oliver suggests that the Tribunal had limited impact until its first Maori Chairperson, E.T.J. Durie, was appointed in 1981. Durie arranged for the Tribunal to meet in a Maori context, on a marae belonging to a tribe which

was party to a claim:

"This was more than a symbolic gesture: it informed the whole spirit of the subsequent proceedings and the report. The issue of the claim was the pollution of traditional fishing grounds and, although the Tribunal did not neglect scientific evidence, it insisted vigorously on the equal validity of Maori insights" (Oliver 1991: 10)

In 1984 the newly-elected Labour government expanded the Tribunal and extended its remit to cover disputes dating back to 1840. Oliver describes the criticisms of opposition National Party MPs:

"Their arguments remain a fair summary of Pakeha misgivings then and since. The provision for a Maori majority on the Tribunal was seen as racist. Allowing claims against actions which dated back to 1840 would revive memories of bad times that were best forgotten. The potential cost of settling claims would be prohibitive: as a result false hopes among Maori would be raised and provoke a Pakeha backlash. The claims and the hearings would deflect attention away from the 'real' problems of Maori." (Oliver 1991: 12)

These criticisms are interesting because, as Oliver points out, they are representative of a wider response, and also because they indicate some of the conflicts between the two broad constructions which I have identified. For example, in the former British colony where the liberal ideals of democracy and impartiality prevail, any special treatment of one group, Maori or otherwise, is discriminatory or unfair. Against this, in the second construction the Maori can be understood to have a natural right to authority as the original, wrongfully dispossessed people of the nation, and also a legal authority acknowledged in the Treaty. Looking back to disputes since 1840 not only complicates potential settlements, in the teleological view of history associated with the first construction, it also seems to deny all subsequent growth, maturing and progress. But in the second construction the past is

relevant and part of the present, the intervening years have not represented progress for the Maori, and the 1840 Treaty does not represent the beginning of New Zealand but remains as a correct statement of the original situation in Aotearoa when the Maori held authority. In the first construction, the "real problems" of the Maori are related to their failure to assimilate; in the second, their problems are the consequence of being dispossessed and oppressed.

As a result of the Tribunal's extended remit, and other decisions, more claims were heard and settlements made. However these came into increasing conflict with new policies of deregulation and privatisation which were introduced by Labour and National governments from 1984 onwards as part of a large-scale reorganisation of the national economy in line with liberal and monetarist theory. For instance, Jane Kelsey describes how the transformation of the Post Office, Ministry of Energy, Railways, Forest and Land corporations into State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) led to conflicts with Treaty provisions concerning land, lakes, rivers and sea fishing. Some concessions were made; for example, a "memorial" was placed on disputed lands that were the subject of Tribunal investigation in an attempt to prevent them from being 'sold on'. However this was not a total solution (Kelsey 1990).

Many of the claims were obviously not going to be resolved easily. One such case was that of fishing rights. According to the New Zealand Maori Council

"The Treaty of Waitangi maintains ownership of the fisheries of NZ to be the sole domain of the Maori" (Kelsey 1990: 40)

In a later book Kelsey gives the following description of what was intended to be

"a purported full and final settlement of Maori fisheries claims in 1992".

The account is detailed and illustrates a number of interesting points:

"The government funded certain Maori interests into a joint-venture

purchase of the Sealord fishing company, which owned 22 per cent of the privatised quota rights over fish. In return, all tribes' treaty rights to the fisheries were rendered unenforceable at law and placed beyond the Waitangi Tribunal's jurisdiction. The traditional relationship of Maori to the fisheries had been spiritual, collective, reciprocal, perpetual and sustainable. Their claims over the resource had been partly a reassertion of that relationship, and largely an attempt to restore tribal members' rights to fish. What they received was a financial interest in a commercial undertaking, jointly owned with a trans-national investment corporation (BIL), which sought to maximise profit from the exploitation of commodity rights in fish. The resulting controversy and inter-tribal division spread from the domestic courts to the United Nations. The Sealord experience should have convinced any sensible government that lasting settlements would not be achieved by negotiating with an elite of Maori entrepreneurs and imposing market economic models on Maori economic development." (Kelsey1995: 320)

Kelsey's analysis can be criticised. It is written in an uncompromising style and at times is weighted towards conspiracy. [For example, the theme of her 1995 book is that New Zealand has been the unwitting subject of a deliberate economic experiment in structural adjustment and "pure neo-liberal economic theory" (1)]. However it shows, firstly, the different terms of reference, including legal, economic, spiritual and political, which have been invoked in the negotiations themselves or in discussion of the Tribunal's decisions. These terms are related to different understandings of 'value', including those embraced by Maori who are "entrepreneurs", others who want personal access to fishing areas, and those concerned about spiritual issues.

Secondly, Kelsey's account refers to the way that disputes and settlements have been complicated by the Maori concept of collective ownership, so that, for example, "an elite" are an inappropriate and non-representative party to

an agreement. Kelsey also indicates the difficulty of achieving a single and final settlement (Oliver describes the process of protracted discussion which occurs in *marae*-based Tribunal hearings in order to achieve consensus). She shows how claims have variously involved the Tribunal, the main courts and other bodies and forums. Finally, her account makes clear the difference and incompatibility of constructions of New Zealand or parts of New Zealand, as, variously, traditional spiritual heritage; commercially exploitable economic resources under public or private ownership; a legal-political entity belonging to the United Nations, and traditional economic resources whose value lies in their direct use by (tribal) owners.

### Challenges to Aotearoa

After a period of enthusiasm and optimism about both Maori culture and the 'honouring' of the Treaty, there seems to have been the backlash that the 1984 Opposition MPs had predicted. According to Larner and Spoonley,

"By the late 1980s there was a noticeable cooling in the sympathy of the government to Maori aspirations." (Larner and Spoonley, 1995: 51)

Kelsey dates this to 1988 and the Muriwhenua fisheries report, in which

"the conclusion talked of the right of *tangata whenua* to control access to their fisheries and the onus on the Crown to negotiate a user right"

(Kelsey 1990: 226)

This conclusion was widely quoted and criticised and it is possible that it contributed to resentment of the claims themselves and a belief that a final settlement of Treaty is not achievable. The quotation takes the second construction of New Zealand to its extreme, that is, as a nation in which the indigenous Maori people, the *tangata whenua*, are of central importance, and the descendents of British settlers and later migrants have a lesser claim. This position is sometimes expressed by the use of the term *tau iwi* to group all non-Maori together, allowing the descendents of settlers no more importance than later-comers together.

The Australian writer Meaghan Morris has suggested that white Eastern Australians share a collective amnesia; their history seems irrelevant to their present life, which can make them unsympathetic to Aboriginal concerns of ancestry, tradition or dispossession (Morris, 1992). Similar comments might have been made about white New Zealanders, but subsequent to the Maori renaissance and, it seems likely, in reaction to this new construction of the Maori nation, white New Zealanders began to explore and claim alternative identities. It became commonplace to trace family trees back to Britain or other countries; this may also have been a response to the importance of *whakapapa* or genealogy to the Maori. Differences within New Zealand society were also explored. One example, indicating both the interest and what it is responding to, is a collection called "Identity and Involvement: Auckland Jewry, Past and Present", published in 1990. It includes an article titled "Judaism and Maoridom: Some Interfaces" (Laurie Gluckman) and another that begins with a reference to "Judaism in bicultural New Zealand" (Simms).

Another response, implicit in the term 'bicultural', was the attempt to establish 'pakeha' as an indigenous non-Maori identity. A key writer on this was Michael King. He had become interested in Maoritanga and fluent in the language well before the Maori renaissance made this 'fashionable'. He made a television series and wrote several biographies about Maori, and was subsequently embroiled in disputes over his right as a non-Maori to do this. His autobiography, "Being Pakeha", explores his own background, including British family connections (King 1985). A later essay, with the same title, opens with a sentence which has been widely quoted:

"In the beginning we were all immigrants to these islands, our ancestors boat people who arrived by waka, ship or aeroplane." (King 1991:9)

As Avril Bell says,

"This works well as a nationalist claim in its equalising rhetoric" (A.Bell

1995: 9)

It establishes an equal status and claim for non-Maori and Maori, who by legend arrived by canoe (waka) from Polynesia.

The special status of the Maori is also challenged by the widespread belief that when they arrived, they encountered a pre-Maori people, the Moriori, and either conquered or eradicated them. (However recent archaeological labelling, for example, in New Zealand museums, refers to different periods of Maori settlement rather than two distinct peoples).

A. Bell suggests that

"historic violence and discord is forgotten in the cause of a fictive unity today. The continuing existence of Pakeha and Maori identities (and also iwi and hapu identities) represents the limits of the ability of ... attempts to construct the 'New Zealander' as a fictive and unifying ethnicity/nationality. Within white New Zealand 'Pakeha' at least represents the limits of the ability to forget the difference between them and Maori." (A. Bell, 1995b: 9)

The term 'pakeha' also operates as a challenge to the interpretation of Aotearoa as a Maori nation. The same challenge or contest operates, as has been suggested, in the term "bicultural".

A stronger challenge, and part of the backlash, has been the gradual move to the third construction of New Zealand, as "multicultural". In part this can be seen as following the Australian official policy of multiculturalism. It is also an acknowledgement of other groups than Maori and white New Zealanders, such as Pacific Islanders and Chinese and other Asians. Finally it links with the policy of admitting more migrants from Asia, which itself is related to the changes in the economy and administration introduced, in the main, from 1984 onwards.

The first construction of New Zealand, as essentially British or European, situates it in the affluent 'First World'. The second construction, emphasising



the status of the indigenous people and the colonial past, draws, as Greenland points out in the passage quoted earlier, on the experiences of the 'Third' and 'Fourth' worlds. The change in 'imagined geography', from "offshore from Europe", as James put it in a passage quoted below, to the Pacific was similarly a movement from the developed to the developing world. The third construction 'moves' New Zealand again, to the areas of South-East Asia which were until recently 'Third World' but have experienced an economic miracle of export-led growth in manufactured goods.

The importance of these differences is not, of course, that they imply actual movements but that each carries certain associations. The first construction refers to relations between New Zealand and Britain. The second construction is largely concerned with the interactions which take place on New Zealand territory, between the indigenous population and later arrivals. The third construction relates to New Zealand's role in the global economy. It focuses on export markets, on multinational corporations based in South East Asia, and the movements of production and finance associated with these. Also, because the success of that region is associated with free market economic policy, despite distinct variations in the political and economic circumstances in which the different countries have launched and maintained growth in their economies, this construction validates the recent introduction of free market policies by New Zealand governments. It therefore provides a way of understanding New Zealand in both national and global terms.

#### **The third construction: New Zealand as a multicultural Pacific Rim nation**

As with the first and second constructions, accounts of New Zealand based on the third construction focus on certain key events and transitions. The weakening of trade links with Europe and defence links with the USA contributed to the first change in 'imagined geography'. For example, a commentator from the New Zealand Embassy in Jakarta said:

"There are few who would now argue that the geographic fact of New Zealand's South Pacific location should not be central to the way in which we approach the world." (Parkinson: 1988)

Colin James suggests that the change had begun with earlier events, namely the Vietnam war and the period of increased migration from the Pacific Islands:

"There were several dimensions to the impact of Vietnam on New Zealand.

"It anchored New Zealand psychologically where it was factually - to the south-east of Asia, not just offshore from Europe... The growing Pacific Island component of New Zealand's population had a similar effect of anchoring New Zealand in the South Pacific. ...And the growing unavailability of dealing direct with Australia, both on economic issues and over defence concerns as Britain withdrew and Anzus became the only operative defence mechanism, anchored New Zealand in the Tasman. After a century and a quarter of geographical split personality, New Zealanders were at last inescapably home at the bottom of the South Pacific, beside Australia and on the fringe of Asia." (James 1992:45)

In 1993 the Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, on a visit to Tokyo, referred to himself as "an Asian leader", apparently relocating New Zealand again. Bolger's comment was, of course, a reference to New Zealand's changing international trading links.

### The changing international context

By the 1990s, New Zealand's major trading partners were Australia and Asia. In 1983 the Closer Economic Relations Agreement (CER) was established between New Zealand and Australia. This has promoted the movement of goods, capital and people across the Tasman, easing restrictions on investment and migration and establishing a 'common' market (Robinson 1996). Between 1980 and 1993 the share of New Zealand's exports going to Australia

increased from 12.6% to almost 20% (Kelsey 1995: 248)

In 1989 the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) Group was established, with New Zealand as one of its founder members. In 1994 it agreed on a programme to reduce trade barriers. The Asian share of New Zealand's export revenues had increased from 2.9% in 1960 and 15.6% in 1970, before Britain joined the Common Market, to 31.1% in 1980. In the same period Britain's share had fallen from 53% to 14.2%; in 1993 it was only 6.4%. (Kelsey 1995:248) In that year Bolger, visiting China on his Asian tour, said that South Korea, China and Japan provided 30% of New Zealand's export market and this was growing rapidly (Dominion 18/5/93).

Not only the markets but also the products themselves and the sources of revenue had been gradually changing:

"(in 1993-1994) Services (especially tourism), niche manufactures and forest products began to challenge agricultural and horticultural commodities as the country's dominant export-earners." (Kelsey 1995: 248)

There was also increased foreign investment in New Zealand. More than half was from Australia and 11% from Asian countries, with Japan the largest single investor among them (Herald, 18/5/93).

### An open economy

The adoption of free market monetarist policies in the 1980s led to major changes in the organisation of the domestic economy and also affected the export market and foreign investment. Many of the changes were, of course, similar to those introduced elsewhere. They were in the direction of a reduction of the state and the public sector, a movement from direct to indirect taxation, a reduction in government spending and welfare mechanisms to redistribute income, and increased privatisation and deregulation to order to free market forces.

However these changes seemed particularly drastic in New Zealand, in

both their extent and effects. The first reason was the extent of the previous levels of government centralisation and intervention. For most of the post-war period the New Zealand economy had been tightly regulated. It was organised around agricultural exports, with high taxes and subsidies, and stringent import controls (James 1992).

Secondly, the tradition of the welfare state was very strong. James has suggested that its main premise was a guarantee of the right to work. Unemployment was certainly extremely low in comparison with most other countries. For example, Keith Sinclair says

"For over twenty years after the Second World War the number of registered unemployed was so small - a few hundred - that it was jokingly said that they were all known by name to the Prime Minister." (Sinclair 1984:298)

A third issue was the change in income distribution. During the late 1980s income distribution in New Zealand became less equal, partly because of increased unemployment; this impacted disproportionately on Maori households. (NZPC, 1990). Kelsey reviews various studies which suggest that in the 1980s and early 90s the share of the national income received by top ten or twenty percent of households increased significantly while the share for the bottom ten or twenty percent was cut (Kelsey, 1995: 258)

A fourth point was the speed of change. This may have been exacerbated by the fact that many of the measures were introduced by the 1984 and 1987 Labour governments, so there was less opposition from traditional Labour supporters than might have been expected. Another point was probably that the term of government in New Zealand is only three years, so measures have to be introduced quickly and there may not be time to assess their impact and respond with 'fine tuning'. Opposition to the changes was probably also limited because there had been a relatively long period in which the previous closed economy-welfare state system had gradually unravelled, for

complex reasons.

The New Zealand welfare state was established earlier than in most other countries, with the introduction of (small) old age pensions in 1898. The main social security legislation was introduced in the 1930s and 40s. James suggests that there was minimal provision based on 'need' rather than 'right'. However in 1972 there was a change of policy emphasis: the state took on the responsibility for the full participation, dignity and quality of life of its citizens:

"The state was no longer a guarantor of security against unforeseen or unavoidable misfortunes. It became an agency for the promotion of the welfare of every one of its citizens." (James 1992: 73-74)

When unemployment started to rise in the 1970s and early 80s, this placed a huge burden of support on the state, exacerbated by the agriculturally based 'closed system' of tax and subsidies which created an interdependent relationship between different sectors of the economy:

"Farm earnings in effect subsidised jobs, but workers in those jobs were taxed to subsidise farmers to keep farm output and earnings up. As the squeeze went on farm earnings, this threatened to develop another vicious circle. In addition, each person subsidised many others' jobs through paying higher prices than would have been the case for comparable imported products." (James 1992: 59)

The 1984 Labour government increased public spending and expanded social services, while devolving some responsibility for welfare provision. However it was widely perceived to be cutting provision. This was probably because it introduced some user charges. There were also the problems that the economy was stagnant and tax revenue was not increasing; and a lot of the increased spending went on wages and other costs. Through the 80s and early 90s the welfare system was widely criticised as overexpensive and inefficient.

In 1991 the new National government introduced a new social policy which

was said to be based on fairness, self-reliance, efficiency and greater personal choice. Other principles were realism (sustainability) and change management. There was a (return of the) focus on needs more than rights.

"Critics from the 'left' say this is a return to the 'charity' state the 1938 Social Security Act aimed to leave behind as a relic of Victorianism."

(James and McRobie 1993: 55)

Underlying this debate is the wider issue of the nature of the relationship between the national population and the state institutions.

### People and state

In his study of the formative concepts and ideals in early New Zealand society, Miles Fairburn suggests that contrasting attitudes to the state co-existed in the second half of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, there was an assumption that New Zealand was "Arcadia", that

"the natural abundance of New Zealand allowed individuals to rise in the world unaided by any organisation or collective except the immediate family." (Fairburn, 1989: 240)

This assumption combined with a "ruling ideology of extreme individualism" (192), a strong work ethic and a "phobia" against vagrancy, suggesting that New Zealanders would not have looked to the state or its institutions for support or intervention.

However, and despite the "atomised" nature of early New Zealand society, Fairburn suggests

"In reality .... a great deal of 'getting on' was promoted and facilitated by the state - a large-scale organisation, a social contrivance. Its massive public works schemes generated jobs; its provision of roads and railways allowed settlers to make capital gains from the rising value of their land; its assisted immigration schemes brought thousands of people to Arcadia in the first place; its energetic activity as New Zealand's largest landlord, landowner, land-agent was a crucial factor in making proprietorship

possible." (Fairburn, 1989: 241)

In the later period of the welfare state and centralised economic administration which have already been described, there was obviously an expectation that the state should and would intervene in people's lives. It could also be understood as a necessary feature of the nation-state that a population is organised within a national economy which is at least partly controlled by the national government. The fear that globalisation is undermining the nation-state derives from the supposedly reduced power of national governments.

The new social policies introduced in 1991 "rolled back" the strong interventionist state and promoted individualism. James and McRobie (1993) suggest these changes were actually prompted less by the existing inefficiency than by a wish to change social values, to increase self-reliance and return responsibility to the family. These are, of course, ideas basic to the politics of the 'New Right' which was associated with the revival of liberal economics, particularly in the United States. [A further measure which promoted individual responsibility was the 1991 Employment Contracts Act which reduced the power of trade unions and introduced the negotiation of individual employment contracts between each employee and employer.]

The welfare changes which were introduced included charging for overnight stays in hospitals; charging university fees (with means-tested rebates) and the introduction of student loans, and complex changes to superannuation and pensions which led to the formation of Grey Power protest groups and the accusation by Jane Kelsey (1995) that

"The elderly suffered as much from uncertainty as from poverty" (287)

Some commentators perceived these changes as necessary and within the tradition of the New Zealand state. This view draws, consciously or unconsciously, on the ideals of individualism and earning one's way which Fairburn describes. For example, Shirley says:

"The reshaping of the welfare state in New Zealand was supposedly designed to shift responsibility for social welfare from government to 'the family', in line with the concept of a minimalist state. The aim was to provide a 'modest safety net' for those in 'need', and while this general proposition does not differ radically from the selectivist approach to welfare traditionally pursued in New Zealand, it has been implemented at a time when the corner-stone of the welfare state (namely employment and income security) is no longer a reality for an increasing proportion of the population" (Shirley 1994: 143)

In contrast, Kelsey sees the changes as a breakdown of the "social contract" between people and state, and a threat to social order:

"The citizen became a customer, buying a range of services from a public or private provider which were once their entitlements under the (albeit fictional and often dysfunctional) social contract with the state. Responsibility for social well-being was individualised, privatised, neutralised. The wealthy were relieved of the burden of social responsibility and ethical human behaviour by imposing greater hardships on those who already had less.

"Responsibility for the fallout was likewise individualised and privatised...

"The 'crime wave' was popularly blamed on growing moral decay, a lack of community standards, bad parenting and the failure of schools to maintain discipline." (Kelsey 1995: 294)

Underlying this debate is the question of the extent to which the state administration can be reduced. If levels of employment, distribution of income and wealth, and access to services like health and education are regulated by the market rather than the (institutions of) the national government, and if that market is understood to operate across national borders, does the 'national' become irrelevant?



The national boundaries seemed to be further threatened, or blurred, by changes in migration policy which were linked to the economic re-organisation, even though there was a long history of connections between the two policy areas. According to the New Zealand Planning Council

"There has probably been more public debate about immigration policy during the 1980s than in any other decade since the Second World War." (NZPC 1991: 52)

A number of events influenced this debate, including a court case about the citizenship of Western Samoans; a "short-lived experiment with visa-free entry from Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa"; political unrest in Fiji in 1987, and, most importantly, the introduction of a new "business immigration scheme to attract investors" from Asia. In general, the issue was not migration from the Pacific Islands, but from Asia. Much of the earlier policy and legislation had been intended to prevent such migration.

Sean Brawley says:

"The fact is that for much of the postwar period New Zealand maintained a policy which can be most conveniently labelled the 'White New Zealand' policy, but sought to hide this fact from the international community through a variety of techniques" (Brawley 1993)

These techniques included a requirement that would-be migrants who were not "of British birth and parentage" obtain entry permits. However these were seldom issued to non-Europeans, and shipping companies and travel agents were advised not to sell passages to people who did not already have such permits. At certain times extra permits were issued, for example in response to complaints from other governments. However Brawley suggests that the policy was not changed until 1975, and not finally abolished until 1986, although it had started to break down earlier partly as a result of mass air travel and also because it became increasingly difficult to conceal. Ironically, however, the government was partly shielded from criticism by New

Zealand's reputation for 'good' race relations.

### Pacific Island migration

The 1975 issue which had focused attention on immigration policy was related to the one non-white group which had been admitted in fairly significant numbers, the Pacific Islanders. Brawley says

"In contrast to its Asian policy, the government had been generous in permitting the arrival of a considerable number of Pacific Islanders. Such liberalization was considered inescapable for a number of reasons, including the fact that many of migrants came from New Zealand's dependencies in Polynesia and were technically New Zealand citizens, while the economy was experiencing a labour shortage and the Pacific Islanders were an available source of unskilled migrants. Once again, however, the government used lack of discrimination against one group as grounds for exclusion of another." (Brawley, 1993)

New Zealand increased its ties with the Pacific Island nations in the 60s and 70s as many of them became independent (Sinclair 1984). This was also a period of major immigration from the Pacific. People from Niue, Tokelau and the Cook Islands are New Zealand citizens and therefore of course entitled to enter without hindrance. Other Pacific nationalities also entered in search of work, providing a second wave of unskilled and semi-skilled labour for New Zealand industry after the Maori had come to the cities in the 1950s. In 1976 there were 61,000 Pacific Island migrants and, according to government estimates, up to 10,000 'over-stayers' who had entered on a system of three-month work permits. Although these permits had been widely criticized for placing people in unstable economic, social and domestic situations, the response to the 'overstayer problem' was extreme:

"In 1976 many 'overstayers' were deported. The police handled the problem very roughly and the dawn raids and random street checks of anyone who looked Polynesian reminded people of the South African police

state." (Sinclair 1984: 320)

This episode probably led to increased sympathy for Pacific Islanders, as also did the raised 'cultural' awareness which resulted from the "Maori renaissance". In addition, in 1981 there was enormous controversy and protest around a tour of New Zealand by the South African rugby team, the Springboks. There were large-scale demonstrations by anti-apartheid protesters, violent reactions by pro-tour demonstrators and an extreme police response. In the few weeks which the tour lasted the New Zealand police force used for the first time not only full riot gear, including shields, but also water cannon. Macdonald (1990) says of the tour:

"The clashes between demonstrators and police and rugby supporters brought unprecedented violence to quiet suburban streets. In rallying white liberals and others to protest about overseas racism, the tour also helped to focus on New Zealand's domestic variety which was something successive governments played down." (17)

By 1991, there were 167,000 'Pacific Islanders' in New Zealand, less than half of whom had been born in the Pacific. 67% were resident in the Auckland area (Spoonley in NZ Society). The continued use of the term 'Pacific Islanders' can therefore be criticised for grouping together under a single 'outsider' identity migrants from several different countries and people whose home has always been New Zealand. This exclusion can be seen as a corollary of the construction of New Zealanders as a population descended from British settlers or alternately, following the second construction, as either a Maori nation or a bicultural nation created by the Treaty of Waitangi.

Other migration debate is centred on two similar 'umbrella' terms: 'Chinese' and 'Asian'.

### The Chinese and 'Asians'

The first migrants from China came to New Zealand in the 1860s, invited by businessmen during the goldrushes. They immediately encountered

prejudice and hostility.

"While the opposition was vociferous and seemingly capable of eradicating a Chinese minority, it was never sufficiently organised or institutionalized to effect total exclusion." (Sedgwick: 44)

This anti-Asian feeling was common to all the Pacific Rim countries settled mainly by Europeans: New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States of America. Avner Offner suggests that these societies believed that they had to exclude people from China, South East Asia and the Indian subcontinent in order to protect their labour markets from excessive competition:

"European settlement was thin and prosperous, while the Asian peasantry was overcrowded and poor." (Offner 1988)

Where such labourers were employed, they were kept separate and paid a lower wage. Legislation limited further Asian migration and discriminated against those who were already there. In New Zealand the numbers were relatively small, but the measures adopted were severe:

"1881 saw the beginning of legislation designed to restrict Chinese immigration into New Zealand. In the same year, the number of Chinese allowed entry was restricted per ship and a poll tax of 10 pounds imposed on every Chinese admitted. This was increased to 100 pounds in 1896. In 1907, the Chinese were subject to a reading test in English before they were allowed in New Zealand. They lost their right to naturalisation the following year and for 44 years thereafter no Chinese in New Zealand was naturalised. In 1920 an entry permit system was instituted which effectively cut off further Asiatic immigration with the exception of wives and families of Chinese already naturalised or born in New Zealand." (Fee Lian 1988: 513)

Later in the 1920s there was opposition to intermarriage between Chinese and Maori women in new market gardening areas, apparently because this might lead to an increase in the 'Asian' population (Sedgwick 52). The

resident Chinese population remained small.

In the 1980s the "business immigration scheme" to attract Asian entrepreneurs became a major issue:

"This was especially so when it was found that many of the new migrants were investing money in residential property rather than productive enterprises, and merely establishing a base for residence at some stage in the future." (NZPC 1991: 53)

Jane Kelsey gives a similar account:

"Both Labour and National enthusiastically promoted Asian immigration, but failed to establish effective settlement programmes. Wealthy business migrants and their families were accused of making excessive demands on scarce school places and resources, while their investments remained passive and short-term." (Kelsey 1995: 339)

Prime Minister Jim Bolger's 1993 trip to Asia and his claim, quoted above, that he was an Asian leader, were widely criticised back in New Zealand. For example, Findlay Macdonald, in the Listener, referring to

"The hitherto stolidly Caucasian Bolger" suggested that a new Asia 2000 programme by Bolger's National government was mainly motivated by

"its perception of the previous administration's South Pacific-centred foreign policy" (New Zealand Listener 29/5/93).

Macdonald then dismissed both positions, citing the importance of Australian, US and European markets (although he identifies Japan as New Zealand's second largest trading partner).

Other newspaper stories around this time indicate the continuing hostility towards 'Asians', often in terms and around issues similar to those invoked earlier in the century. There were disputes about Asian immigration and 'white fright' which was supposedly prompting people to move out of certain areas. A month before Bolger's visit, in April 1993, local Auckland newspapers

had run a story headlined "The Inv-Asian". This led to protests from Asian community groups and submissions to the race relations conciliator. Later in the year, Asian business people took out a newspaper advertisement to raise awareness of racism against Asians, partly in response to stories of "Asian-bashing" in Auckland (The Press 7-6-93).

Yet at the Auckland conference for Bolger's own party, National, remits were put forward demanding that minimum language requirements be introduced for, respectively, children coming into New Zealand schools, and prospective residents in New Zealand. A Wellington newspaper reported:

"the issue gained momentum this week after claims that Asian immigrants were prone to carry tuberculosis, as well as a call from Maori academic Ranginui Walker for New Zealand to stop taking migrants altogether." (Dominion, 8/5/93)

In August, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, McKinnon, said

"I don't expect us to become an Asian state per se. WE have our own identity, and we do have some social norms and values which do not always match those of others" and "We fool no one - least of all Asia - if we pretend to be something we are not. We are not Asians, but we are part of the Asia-Pacific community, and we share comon history and a common heritage." (Herald 2/8/93)

A year after Bolger's visit, in April, 1994 the Herald reported that Auckland Chinese organisations were afraid of a "backlash" against all Asians. Racial tension was said to be high, with incidents of harassment in the street and anti-Asian graffiti in the University.

The third construction of the New Zealand nation, as multicultural, can therefore be seen to be strongly contested. 'Asian' and 'Chinese' are used as generic umbrella terms, grouping together refugees, permanent migrants and visiting investors from a number of different countries and language and cultural groups. The arguments against them include accusations first made in

the 19th century. In 1871 a government report had concluded that the Chinese would eventually return home and recommended that they should not be excluded. However

"a growing anti-Chinese argument ...essentially took all the previous positive characteristics listed in the 1871 report including industriousness, frugality, morality, ability to adapt and their inevitable repatriation, and turned them on their head. Thus Chinese were undesirable because they were industrious, unfairly competitive, because they were adaptable, or of questionable morality with too much ability, and now apparently were not going back to China as formerly anticipated."  
(Sedgwick 49)

The arguments of the 1990s are uncomfortably similar, just as the National Party Conference remits recall the 1907 proposal to make passing an English test a condition for entry into the country.

The construction of New Zealand as "multicultural" was specifically contested by some Maori, as the above reference in the Dominion article (to Maori academic Ranginui Walker) makes clear. The NZPC suggests that increased immigration threatens Maori employment opportunities (unemployment is disproportionately high among the Maori). However

"A deeper issue is the extent to which "multi-culturalism" is now seen to be a much more appropriate basis for planning and immigration policy prescription in New Zealand than "bi-culturalism". Maori have good cause for unease in this regard." (NZPC 1991: 54)

and

"clearly the Treaty of Waitangi has important implications for immigration policy - policy which has a direct impact on the size and composition of the tauwi component and the balance between tangata whenua and tauwi within New Zealand." (NZPC 1991: 55)

The different negative responses outlined in this section can be

understood as resulting from conflicts between the three perspectives. Whether New Zealand is defined as British-descended, Maori or bicultural, other peoples are not included. Also, the 'Asian' migrants are associated with the global movements of trade, finance and people which can themselves be seen as challenges to the contained nation or nation-state of the first two constructions.

Another view is that the second and third constructions identified here combine to render the first construction obsolete; this is suggested by Wendy Larner and Paul Spoonley:

"The internationalization of the New Zealand economy, together with the ongoing political and economic struggles of Maori and more recent attempts by Pakeha to consider the specificity of their identity, all serve to problematize the notion that Aotearoa/ New Zealand can be usefully classified as a 'white settler society' in the 1990s." (Larner and Spoonley, 1995: 40)

This could suggest that the second and third constructions are not necessarily opposed, and in support of this there is some evidence that the reorganisation of the economy has made new positions and identities available for Maori. Kelsey refers above to "Maori entrepreneurs" and certain businesses have been established (often owned by traditional collectives of *iwi* or tribes) through the commodification and marketing of Maori 'culture': examples of such commodities include clothes decorated with traditional symbols; dance performances, and marae visits. Donna Awatere Huata describes how at economic "summits" held by tribes in 1984, plans were put forward for tribes to administer directly funds which had previously been spent by "officials in Wellington". She describes these plans in terms which fit into both the second and third constructions described here; the Maori will be empowered through the rejection of state support in favour of business schemes run by accountable local boards:



"We said: give us the resources for a limited period and we'll fix the problem our way. Give us what you spend on Maori failing in schools, in welfare, in prisons and we will educate them, rehabilitate them, look after them ourselves...a vision of Maoridom emerged with Maori being economically powerful, natural business people taking care of the needs of their people on a tribal basis... it was believed that access should not be administered by bureaucracies but by local groups run by elected locals - and you could vote people on and off these boards" (Awatere Huata, 1996: 83)

In contrast to this optimism, Lerner and Spoonley conclude that multiculturalism, a feature of my third construction, amounts to an evasion of the full implications of recognising New Zealand as a bicultural society: it is

"a soft option whose advocates might pay homage to diversity and tolerance, but do not seek any substantive redistribution of resources, nor an effective anti-racist, anti-colonialist politics. Biculturalism, in comparison, is identified with the issues of social justice, cultural integrity and the redistribution of resources." (52)

The final section of the chapter will examine how the perceived threat from the market is, interestingly, partly countered by new interpretations of one of the most fundamental aspects of nationhood, by any definition, the national territory, the land and its resources.

#### **New understandings of land and resources**

In the first construction of New Zealand discussed in this chapter, land was a primary resource, for agriculture. Through the process of "breaking in" the land, mentioned by Sinclair, settlers made it their own.

Obviously, Maori land claims have challenged much of this 'ownership', not only in terms of rights over the land but also in terms of 'value'. For example, the concept of *wahi tapu*, or sacred places, such as burial grounds, refers to a completely different set of values from land assessed for agricultural

use. Hauraki Greenland suggested in 1984 that for Maori attempting to forge a new political and cultural movement, land had become a link:

"The key symbol between past and future in the present context is land." (Greenland, 1874: 88)

The third construction has raised different issues again. With economic changes, there have been changes in land use. Agriculture, and especially agriculture based on family-owned farms, has given way, in part, to horticulture and agribusiness. Fishing rights have been privatised and in many cases sold to foreign businesses.

The increasing importance of tourism has led to a different commodification of land and sea. There has also been an interesting commodification of conservation (C.Bell 1996: 51), evidenced in the slogan 'Clean and Green' and, implicitly or explicitly, linked with the anti-nuclear policy. Things like fresh air which were once described as "impossible to buy" are now being sold! For example, in a 1993 article, Kliskey and Kearsley discuss the pressure which tourism is now placing on "wilderness" areas:

"As numbers have increased, so too has the focus of tourist activity changed. While the majority of visitors were once happy to observe scenery from the comfort and security of an organised tour, today's visitors seek far more involvement and adventure in the natural world. So-called 'green' and 'anti' tourists, in particular, seek out natural environments and wild places and, as their numbers have grown, so too has pressure upon wilderness resources. Added to this, there appears to be a greater involvement among New Zealanders, too, to experience the country's natural heritage." (Kliskey and Kearsley 1993: 203)

Their solution to this pressure is a form of classification of 'wilderness' which approaches it as a commodity for which market research can be done and which can be graded according to the demands of different customers:

"wilderness is not necessarily a fixed and objective concept but one

that is formed on the basis of individual perceptions, expectations and cultural values, and ... because for many people wilderness can be found where others would not recognise it, a series of 'wildernesses' can be identified. These 'multiple perceptions of wilderness' ... can be collected, organized and mapped ... This will provide natural resource managers with a tool that will allow them, should they wish, to spread the impacts of tourism and recreation more widely, away from sensitive sites, while still preserving the values and experiences that are sought. (204)"

In a further extension of 'green' tourism, there is also commodification of the Maori as the indigenous people, literally the *tangata whenua* or 'people of the land'. This can be seen, for example, in the 1994 brochure for Whale Watch, a highly successful operation in Kaikoura, in the South Island:

"Winner of the N.Z.'s Tourism and Conservation awards for excellence, Whale Watch Kaikoura Limited is a community trust owned by the Maori people of Kaikoura in partnership with their affiliated tribal people, the Ngai Tahu."

It is highly significant that, as Kliskey and Kearsley mention, these forms of commodification are not merely for the consumption of visitors to New Zealand. C.Bell suggests that 63% of tourist spending comes from New Zealanders (C.Bell 1996:40). Therefore in much of the tourist advertising we see New Zealand being presented for New Zealanders.

This is not a new phenomenon. For example, on television it is done through telethons, government promotions and commercial advertising (Perry 1994). Scenic calendars and fiction based on rural life were common products which presented the first construction described here. The popular 'Te maori' exhibition presented the second construction and the film "The Piano", might be seen as part of the 'pakeha' reaction.

The interest here is that the construction of New Zealand as a commodity, or series of commodities, on a global market, rather than dissolving its national

identity, seems to be re-establishing it in a different way. One way of explaining this is that the 'use' of a natural resource, such as land, now derives from its beauty or interest for the spectator rather than its agricultural productiveness; therefore, in 'consuming' New Zealand as tourists its population are simply using the national resources in a parallel manner to using the land to produce food for themselves.

However a different, more complex relationship may be beginning to appear. New Zealanders appear to be establishing a link with 'their' national territory by seeking out its beauties and amenities. By visiting, viewing and appreciating these, they are actively 'consuming' their own country, as a product. This gives strange new meanings to 'patriotism', 'national pride' and 'love for one's home country', akin to brand and product loyalty and also, more traditionally, the pride of the owner. ('National pride' has always been linked to affluence and commercial achievement.) This new 'national' feeling does not, of course, supersede more conventional loyalties. The point for this analysis is that the third construction, co-existing with the first and second, continues to work as a construction of the nation: the end of the welfare state and the freeing of 'international' market forces have not necessarily made the 'national' irrelevant or unimaginable.

## **Conclusion**

By reviewing recent representations of New Zealand as falling into three broad constructions I have indicated some of the points of conflict between different groups and interests in New Zealand.

First there is the construction of New Zealand as a former British colony with a predominantly white population; Maori and Asian groups are relegated to a secondary status. In the second construction the Maori are more significant. They are either equal partners, as co-signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi, or they have a special status as the indigenous people of New Zealand. However this construction itself contains a contest: is New Zealand

'really' Maori or bicultural? This is partly reflected in the recent development of pakeha identity as a claim of an indigenous non-Maori New Zealand identity equivalent in status to Maori identity.

The third construction is of New Zealand as multicultural. Again there are various ways that this can be understood. It can suggest that all non-white groups, including Maori, are elevated to equal partner status with the majority white New Zealand population, or, as Larner and Spoonley (1995) argue, it can deny the special status and unresolved claims of the Maori people.

This chapter has also indicated the different understandings of land and resources which follow from the different constructions, a point which is highly relevant to the recent economic changes in New Zealand. The first construction emphasises New Zealand's history as an agricultural producer for (mainly British) export markets. The second focuses on internal contests between Maori and non-Maori for ownership of resources and involves alternative understandings of ownership and of value.

The third construction emphasises the linking of the national into the global economy not only through production for export but also through foreign investment and the reduction of the barriers which formerly marked off the New Zealand economy as a discrete entity. It raises issues around the sale of assets and also the 'consumption' of New Zealand by foreign tourists.

Neither the constructions themselves nor the points of difference between them are fixed. However this review provides a way of understanding some of the contests and dilemmas which emerge in the talk of the participants interviewed for this research.

## Chapter 4 - Data collection and analysis

### Introduction

This chapter will describe the methods used to collect and analyse the original data for this thesis, and will show how these methods and the data produced are appropriate to the aims of the thesis as a whole.

My overall interest as a researcher was to investigate the use of constructions of the 'nation' and 'national' in the talk of New Zealanders. More specifically, my aims were to investigate

(a) the importance of constructions of 'nation' and 'national identity' in the construction of personal identity

(b) the flexibility of constructions of 'nation' and 'the national' and, in particular, how far they can accommodate major political, economic and social change, such as has occurred in New Zealand in recent years (see Chapter 3)

(c) the ideological work done by such constructions.

Some different uses and meanings of 'ideology' and 'ideological' are explored in Chapters 1 and 2. In this analysis ideological work is taken to be discursive work which has implications for relationships of power and authority in a broad socio-economic context; which establishes and reinforces certain practices and relationships as 'normal' and therefore invisible and/or uncontentious; or which tends to silence and delegitimise certain voices and identities.

The investigation and the thesis are therefore in themselves challenges to the ideological. My aim is to draw attention to such ideological work and its functions and by doing so to reduce its potential effects. The analysis reconsiders what is normal and established and focuses on what commonly passes as uncontentious. In doing this, it attempts to 'demystify' certain processes and relationships, following Barrett's emphasis on the association between ideology and mystification, and perhaps also draw attention to

certain alternative voices and interpretations (Barrett, 1991). However I must acknowledge the contradictions in the last-mentioned point; I cannot give other individuals or groups a voice by speaking for them. Hopefully the extracts used in the following chapters do allow the participants in this project to be 'heard'; but as the author, I have, of course, the dominant voice in this document, and the final interpretation and shape imposed on the whole are my own.

## **The formation of the project**

### **Background to the research decisions**

My interest in New Zealand national identity arose initially from my undergraduate work in politics, economics and development studies. In most, if not all, existing countries or nation-states, constructions of a single unitary national identity can be challenged. My home country, New Zealand, seemed to be potentially a particularly interesting case study because the challenges there derive from features associated with different kinds of nation-states.

In terms of modernisation theories which tend to distinguish 'developed' and 'developing' countries, New Zealand is developed but has experienced obstacles to forming a distinctive identity which are more usually associated with the Third World. For example, it is a former colony which, until the 1970s at least, retained strong links to its nineteenth century coloniser, Britain. At the time of writing, it still has in common with Britain its main language, head of state (the British monarch) and many broad features of its legal, political and educational systems (although the first election under a new proportional representation system will take place at the end of 1996). These links are probably stronger than in many former imperial possessions because, like Australia and Canada, New Zealand is a 'settler' colony, that is, the indigenous population is a minority; the (white) majority group consists of the descendents of the former colonists and also later migrants from the former colonising power. The majority population of New Zealand until recently

described itself as 'European', although, of course it is not geographically located anywhere near Europe.

As is described in Chapter 3, the dominance of this majority has recently been strongly challenged by the indigenous Maori minority. This has led to attempts to redefine New Zealand as a Maori or bicultural nation. New Zealand can therefore be seen to have several 'pulls' to different identifications, based on the culture of the colonisers, the geographical location and the indigenous culture.

A different challenge to a hypothetical single identity derives from New Zealand's recent economic policies. These have been similar to those pursued by governments in many developed economies but the effect has been more marked in New Zealand. In a short period it has been changed from an extreme example of welfare state and economy run on Keynesian principles, to an extreme example of a deregulated economy run on the free market principles associated with monetarism (James, 1992; Kelsey, 1995; see Chapter 3). As a result, firstly, the distribution of income and wealth across the population has suddenly become much less equal, and secondly, access to certain goods and services, such as medical treatment and education, now depends on the ability to pay rather than on an individual's official status as 'a New Zealander'. The situations of individual New Zealanders have therefore become more dissimilar and they must compete with non-nationals, on the basis of ability to pay, for access to goods and services, such as medical treatment and education, which were previously provided on the basis of citizenship. These changes would suggest that there may be a lessening of any unity which derived from equality or similarity of circumstance.

These features of New Zealand led me to think about the nature of its national identity. Around the same time, the late 1980s, I became aware that New Zealand's image and identity had become an important issue for other New Zealanders, inside and outside the country. One reason was that there



were a number of official events at which a New Zealand identity was presented. These included the celebrations for the New Zealand sesquicentenary (1990) and the opening of the Commonwealth Games which were held in Auckland in the same year. Another factor was the publicity and controversy surrounding the Australian bicentenary and proposals that Australia should become a republic; the latter debate, in particular, overflowed to include New Zealand. Within New Zealand there was also increased interest in national history and heritage, partly for the reasons described in Chapter 3.

### The selection of data sources

My initial intention was to study depictions of New Zealand in its own newspapers and those in Britain, and also in promotional and publicity material from governmental and commercial sources. I was particularly interested in accounts of certain key events, including Britain's entry to the (then) Common Market in 1972 (which meant Britain would cease to provide New Zealand's main export market); the 1981 Springbok Tour (which caused major civil unrest within New Zealand and challenged its 'familial' links with the white South African apartheid regime), and the 1990 Commonwealth Games. My aim was to investigate how far these depictions reflected the ambiguous developed/developing position described above; how far the former colonial status was still reflected; and the extent to which images had changed.

However after some initial investigations I then decided to change the focus of my investigations from media and other depictions to the lay talk of New Zealanders. This was a decision to look not at possible sources of representations and constructions but which representations are actually used in ordinary talk, and how they are used. In particular, I decided to look at how national identity is used in individual sensemaking and constructions of self identity. Underlying this decision is the assumption that such talk will include 'successful' representations from the media and other sources, that is, those

which are accepted and taken up by their intended audience.

The lay talk which is analysed is from interviews conducted and recorded by the researcher. Some alternatives would have been to record more spontaneous interactions, for example, between people gathered for other purposes, such as social occasions or meetings of community groups, or to look at talk recorded for other reasons, for example, examples of political speechmaking and debate. However the latter is not 'ordinary talk'; for example, it is likely to be fully or partly scripted. The reasons for choosing to use interview material rather than recording naturally occurring interactions were practical, theoretical and ethical.

From a practical point of view, interviewing allowed me more control over the sample of participants. It also permitted me to focus the talk through questions. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) point out

"interviews have the virtue of allowing the researcher room for active intervention. In particular, they enable the researcher to deliberately question an entire sample of people on the same issues, giving greater comparability in responses, and increased simplicity in initial coding" (Potter and Wetherell, 1987: 163).

This was obviously relevant to the analysis, which will be described in more detail below. Briefly, since I am interested in the discursive work people do around dilemmas and questions, it was logical to use interview questions to set these up, within reasonable limits (see Potter and Wetherell, 1987: 164). Also, I wanted to obtain people's accounts of themselves, and an interview, whether therapeutic, journalistic or, as here, research-oriented, is a situation in which such 'speechwork' is usual and unsurprising. Finally, and importantly, interviewing eliminated certain ethical problems, discussed below, and produced a more manageable quantity of material.

A more complex reason for using interviews was control of context. Talk from 'naturalistic' sources would necessarily belong to different contexts:

professional, social, personal etc. Interviews of course included work related to these (for example, participants present themselves as professional achievers, pleasant people etc) but still smoothed some of the differences across the different interactions. All the participants received similar information about the research and the researcher. All were aware that other people would be interviewed for the same project and asked the same questions; in fact participants frequently referred to this. The interviews therefore established not only a similar but a shared context for all participants, that of the research project itself. One starting point for this research was Benedict Anderson's concept of the nation as an "imagined community" (or "communities" see Taylor and Wetherell, 1995) and the interviews invited participants to talk as members of such a community.

It can be argued that the interviews led to distortion: people 'did' being New Zealanders only because the interviews required them to. This cannot be completely dismissed. However it is also relevant that the interviews do not invent the issues or lead people to consider their national identity for the first time. Many of the participants actively sought to be interviewed (see below). Also, most of the interviews overran the planned time and people commented that they enjoyed participating, suggesting that they found the talk relevant and natural.

Finally, a major reason for using interviews is ethical. The BPS Standing Committee on Ethics in Research with Human Participants

"wishes to urge all psychologists to seek to supply as full information as possible to those taking part in their research" (2).

This is a strong reason not to collect data by recording naturally occurring interactions, even if afterwards the participants are informed and their permission obtained.

### Designing the interview study

As part of the preparation for the main research, I conducted a two-part

pilot study, in London and in New Zealand. In London, between February and May 1994, I interviewed 9 participants, 6 female and 3 male, ranging in age from 24 to 62. They had been away from New Zealand for periods ranging from one month to 16 years. I contacted the participants through personal contacts ("friends of friends") and initial publicity in 'New Zealand News UK', a weekly newspaper distributed free of charge at various points in central London and also available through subscription. The questions in the interview schedule were about images of New Zealand and New Zealanders; 'typical' New Zealanders and New Zealand lifestyles; participants' family background; learning about New Zealand as children; migration; changes in New Zealand; their expectations and hope for its future; the position of women; divisions in New Zealand society; its relationships with other countries; and the status of the Maori (Appendix A). During each interview the schedule was used as a guide. Some questions were omitted because of time constraints and some answers were followed up in detail, according to the participants' interests.

In New Zealand, in June 1994, I interviewed three adults (female) and sixteen secondary school students (one individually, the others as three different groups), all contacted through three educational institutions in a major city. The questions were similar to those used in Britain but I also asked the students (aged 15 to 18) about national celebrations, famous New Zealanders, the Queen, their lives compared with their parents at the same age, and their expectations for the future (see Appendix B). The adult participants talked mainly about current social issues.

As a result of the pilot study I modified the initial list of questions (for example, most people found the questions which referred directly to "images" or "pictures" difficult to answer so most of these were omitted). The final list used for the main study is in Appendix C.

The key decision for this study was whether the constructions of national

identity in people's talk should be studied using participants inside or outside the New Zealand context. Underlying this is the question of how far such constructions are related to ongoing debates and issues and to recently encountered sources of representations of such debates.

The pilot study suggested that it was important not to assume that the importance of national identity to the individual depended on continuing exposure to up-to-date sources of information and representations. Some participants in the London pilot study sample expressed ignorance of recent events in New Zealand or did not discuss them in much detail but expressed a very strong attachment to their New Zealand identity. (The most extreme example of this occurred in a participant interviewed for the main study, though not included: he had lived in New Zealand in early childhood and for a brief period as an adult, had not been there for more than 20 years, did not intend to go back, and was not in contact with anyone from there, but still felt strongly that he was a New Zealander and valued that identity.)

There are obviously a variety of sources of New Zealand news and representations, even outside New Zealand. These include the national media of both Britain and New Zealand; London newspapers for New Zealanders and Australasians; other 'expat' sources such as professional associations for New Zealanders working in London, and also more incidental sources such as personal letters or the publicity material some participants had contact with through their work.

Participants outside New Zealand encounter more situations in which they are expected to provide accounts of national identity, including discussing where they have a right to be and how they differ from or resemble others. In general, it can be suggested that participants in New Zealand are exposed to more representations and constructions of New Zealand, but outside New Zealand such representations are noticed more (This is a feature of the "banal nationalism" described by Billig, 1995). However even this generalisation can

be challenged: some people within New Zealand would not read newspapers or watch television, for example, while some New Zealanders outside it, like one of the participants in the pilot study, regularly read all the New Zealand newspapers, from the different regions, (at the High Commission) and make an effort to be extremely well-informed about events there. And, as has been mentioned, certain events, like major sporting contests, can make people within New Zealand very aware of how they are perceived and depicted.

For the main study I decided to interview New Zealanders in London. I attempted to obtain a range of participants in terms of age, and also time inside or out of New Zealand, from long-term 'expats' to recently arrived visitors. I expected it would be relatively easy to contact suitable participants because it remains common for young New Zealanders to travel abroad for several years. This is sometimes described as "doing your O.E." (Overseas Experience).

The research data for this thesis is the discourse provided by these participants, rather than the participants themselves. The participants are therefore chosen to provide a broad sample of the discourse of New Zealanders. The range of participants also included people with different knowledges of recent events and changes in New Zealand, different experiences of New Zealand (for example, urban and rural life; life in different population centres). However it is not representative of all sectors of the New Zealand population. The majority of participants would probably be described by most people, including themselves, as middle class, and there are no representatives of Pacific Island or 'Asian' minority groups.

The study focuses on the constructions of New Zealand used rather than on the sources of these constructions, as already mentioned. This assumes that certain constructions made available by media and other sources will persist and become widely used, and others will not, so part of the interest will be which constructions recur across the interviews which make up the discourse

sample.

### The selection of the participants

The participants for the main study were contacted in three ways.

(1) Through an article and a follow-up notice in the London weekly newspaper, 'New Zealand News UK', which described the research and asked for volunteers

(2) Through friends or acquaintances of the researcher; only one of the participants was known to me before the interview (we met briefly in a work context approximately 2 weeks before); some of the participants were contacted through people who had been interviewed earlier, for the main research or for the pilot study.

(3) Through New Zealand organisations in London, including professional associations and a Maori cultural group.

In situation (1) participants contacted me. In situations (2) and (3) I contacted them and asked if they would agree to be interviewed.

The only 'condition' for being interviewed for the research was that a participant called her or himself "a New Zealander" (not necessarily exclusively) or said she or he "came from" New Zealand.

In total, nearly 60 people were interviewed for this research. A number of the recordings were discarded because the sound quality was poor. The final selection was then made to include roughly equal numbers of women and men in each age group; however, because of group interviews, there are more women than men in the total sample. There are also an unrepresentative number of speakers who identify themselves as Maori (8/41 i.e. approximately 20%, compared to 12% of the total New Zealand population who were "of Maori descent" in 1986, according to Zodgekar, 1994: 312); also, all the Maori speakers belong to the two youngest age groups (i.e. 20-29 and 30-39).

### **The participants**

The research data comes from 41 people, each of them interviewed on one occasion. 18 of the participants are male, 23 female.

The material used comes from a total of 32 interviews, most conducted with only one participant present (25 interviews) but the others with two or three people who knew each other and chose to be interviewed together. There were 13 interviews with individual males, 12 interviews with individual females, 2 interviews with female pairs or groups (5 participants in total), 5 interviews with male-female pairs or groups (11 participants in total).

The participants ranged in age from 23 to approximately 63 (some older people did not give their exact ages) at the time they were interviewed. The range of ages is shown in the following table:

Age group	Female	Male
20 - 29	11	6
30 - 39	7	7
40 - 49	3	3
50 - 59	2	1
60 +	1	0

8 participants identified themselves as Maori. Another 6 people who did not call themselves Maori said that they had "Maori blood", or that a parent or grandparent was Maori or part-Maori. This latter group are described, where these categories are mentioned, as non-Maori.

4 of the participants had been born outside New Zealand; one of these had migrated there 6 years before the interview, the others as babies or small children.

The occupation of the participants is shown in the table below. The majority had had university or equivalent post-secondary level training (29/41). (If participants had recently arrived in Britain and/or were doing casual work, the table records their occupation in New Zealand.) This suggests that the sample can be described as predominantly, but not exclusively,



'middle class'.

Female		Male					
Accountant	1	Admin/office	6	Accountant	1	Doctor	1
Film-maker	1	Gallerist	1	Editor	1	Electrician	1
Homemaker	1	Lawyer	1	Lawyer	2	Mechanic	1
Nurse	4	Physiotherapist	1	Optician	1	Pub manager	2
Scientist	1	Student	2	Social worker	2	Student	1
Systems/ computing	2	Teacher	1	Teacher	3	Technician	1
		Technician	1	Valuer	1		

The participants had been out of New Zealand for periods ranging from 3 months to more than 30 years. Many of them had been elsewhere before coming to Britain, for example, travelling in a number of countries or living and working in Australia. 7 of them said they did not intend to live in New Zealand again, 15 spoke of definite arrangements or an approximate date to return (for example, at the point when a visa expired in one or two years' time) and the remainder said they were uncertain when or if they would live there again.

Time out of New Zealand - Female Participants

20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
< 1	< 1	10	26
< 1	3.5	16	30+
< 1	9	22	
< 1	9		
< 1	10		
2	11		
3	14		
3			
4			
5			
5			

### Time out of New Zealand - Male participants

20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
< 1	1	2	7
< 1	5	5	16
< 1	6	16.5	
2	7		
3	7.5		
13	9		
	10		

### **Ethical considerations**

The above information is presented in separate tables partly to prevent cross-referencing which might enable participants to be identified. For the same reason, the extracts used in the texts are numbered consecutively rather than attributed to particular, pseudonymously-identified speakers (in contrast, for example, to Wetherell and Potter, 1992). Confidentiality was guaranteed to all participants, as one of the measures taken to conform with standard ethical requirements for research and in this case the use of pseudonyms would not have provided sufficient protection against identification on the basis of the various extracts used from a single person.

In order to obtain participants' informed consent before the interviews, the following information was given:

- I gave my name and the name of my university
- I told them I was doing academic research, towards a Ph.D on New Zealand national identity
- I described the interview I wanted to conduct (the time it would last; the type of questions, i.e. non-intrusive, open-ended, giving an example e.g. "What images do you have of New Zealand?")
- I said that I would audio-record the interview for later transcription
- I said that all names and other identifying information would be treated

as confidential.

I then asked if the person would be interested in participating. If they agreed then I arranged to meet them, at a place and time that suited them.

When I had only met or spoken to one of the participants before a group interview, I repeated the same points when I met all the participants. I also gave them the following written description:

#### INTERVIEWS ABOUT NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL IDENTITY

People who are travelling or living abroad generally become more aware of their nationality and their country's image. I want to interview New Zealanders in London about New Zealand identity. The questions are about your opinions or experiences rather than 'expert knowledge'. I will record the interview so I can study it later, but all names and identifying information will be treated as confidential.

An interview with 1-3 people will take about an hour.

These interviews are part of a research project for a Ph.D, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

Thanks very much for your time.

Stephanie Taylor

(contact telephone number)

At the end of each interview I invited the participants to make comments on anything that had arisen. After turning off the audio cassette recorder I asked if they wanted any further details and invited them to contact me later if wanted to ask anything. I reminded them that they had the above account of

the research with my name and my phone number. Only one of the participants asked for a copy of the transcript, which I sent.

### **The interviews**

Each interview lasted between 40 and 90 minutes and followed a schedule of open-ended questions designed to cover the following broad areas:

- the subject's personal situation and reasons for being out of New Zealand
- the connection between previous generations of the subject's family and New Zealand, including migration
- images of New Zealand and New Zealanders
- past and future change in New Zealand
- the status of the Maori
- the status of migrants

The list of questions is shown in Appendix C. The answers to different questions tended to overlap, so in any interview some of the questions were likely to be omitted to avoid repetition. In a few cases questions were also omitted because of time pressure. Subjects were told they did not have to answer every question asked. They were encouraged to speak about areas of personal interest and at the end of each interview asked to add any other comments that occurred to them.

The interviews were conducted between August 1994 and March 1995, in most cases in January or February 1995. I arranged to meet subjects at a place and time of their choice, usually in their homes or workplaces in evenings or lunch-hours. All the interviews were audio-recorded for later transcription.

All the interviews were conducted by the researcher. I identified myself as a New Zealander living in London. Most of the interviews had an informal tone, partly because of the open-ended questions but also because the subjects in most cases greeted me as if our common connection with New Zealand was a personal link. This may have also been why so many people invited me into their homes and said, for example, that they had agreed to do the interview

because they wanted to "help you with your Ph.D", which of course they did. For all these reasons, the style of the interviews was mainly relaxed and friendly and I gave personal information about myself (such as my age, home town, family details) when I was asked or if it seemed appropriate.

### **The analysis of the interview material**

The aim of this social constructionist analysis is not, of course, to find a single 'truth' but to interpret the data in order to expose patterns in the discourses used, the relationships between such patterns and alternative constructions of New Zealand and its socio-economic situation (such as the three constructions presented in Chapter 3), and any implicit causality and prioritising of interests associated with the patterns. I am interested "broad argumentative patterns" (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 225) and in rhetorical work. This includes work at the level of presentation of self within the interview and also on the larger scale of the context of interview project, such as when a participant refers to an 'issue' and presents a case for interpreting it in a certain way.

'Discourse analysis' is a term common to many disciplines and widely differing approaches to language. My approach in this thesis broadly follows the principles and methods of the discourse analysis described by Potter and Wetherell (1987) and Wetherell and Potter (1992), which is characterised by "a triple concern with action, construction and variability" (Edwards and Potter, 1992: 28). In other words, they assume that language is interactive and performative, that meanings are created and modified within the ongoing process of interaction, and that there is variation and inconsistency across a speaker's different utterances; this occurs because talk is used to do work within the immediate local interaction rather than simply reflecting pre-established meanings and beliefs (see Chapter 2).

I am also interested in the resources used to do this work. These are understood as a social 'pool' or 'field' of, for example, images, metaphors,

concepts, arguments, associations and assumptions of cause-effect relationships. To assume that these pre-exist any specific interaction or utterance is not to deny the discursive work described above, such as the constitution of meanings within interactions. Rather, I assume that language is not the original creation of any individual speaker (who would of course in that case be unable to communicate with any other). Following the arguments outlined in Chapter 1 and 2, I analyse the discursive work of these individuals as an instantiation of the ongoing discursive processes around New Zealand, national identity and related issues at the time of this study.

I have picked out six features of discourse to assist the analysis and also the presentation of my interpretation. These are participants; speechwork; accounts or constructions; interpretative repertoires; functions, and ideological work, each of which is discussed below.

#### (i) participants

The people who participated in the research can be identified or categorised in several ways. There are the everyday categories used above to describe them, such as gender, age-group and occupation. It is arguable that these are only relevant when 'taken up' in talk, that is, when a speaker chooses to speak as, for example, a woman or a lawyer. This would suggest that analysis should focus on the categories which are mentioned or subtly constructed within talk. Edwards makes this point in a criticism of self-categorization theory:

"In contrast to the cognitions-in-context model of social categorizations offered by self categorization theory (SCT), the analysis of how categorizations of self and others arise in discourse emphasizes their locally constructed, occasioned, and rhetorically oriented nature." (Edwards, forthcoming; 14).

Alternatively, some identities could be said to persist across different situations and interactions, especially perhaps those identities which have

negative status, so that the woman who is a lawyer may be unable to position herself as a 'lawyer'; she will always be heard and understood as a 'woman lawyer'. Another way of saying this is that the speaker is always already positioned, before any work which occurs within the interaction.

In discourse analysis the two approaches could be reconciled, for example, by recognising that the relevant category, occasioned in the discourse, is 'woman lawyer'. This is obviously useful here because it indicates that the unmarked category of 'lawyer' is not available to this speaker. (Rattansi (1995) emphasises the importance of recognising the gendered nature of racial discourses rather than treating race and gender separately.) On the other hand this distracts from 'woman' as a shared identification between, say, 'woman lawyer', 'woman professional', 'woman-as-working-parent', 'woman police constable' and simply, 'woman' which apparently become separate categories.

This debate is part of the larger problem of deciding what precisely is "occasioned" in discourse. Need a category be mentioned to be occasioned, for example? The relevant categories also partly define the relevant context, and vice versa. Edwards refers to the "locally constructed" nature of categorizations, which raises the question of what is local, that is, of what particular context is relevant. Anthony Giddens has pointed out how context can in part be defined by speakers. (In the following extract his term, "agents", emphasises his criticism of poststructural notions of the subject.)

"In speaking of the contextuality of action, I mean to rework the differentiation between presence and absence. Human social life may be understood in terms of relations between individuals 'moving' in time-space, linking both action and context, and differing contexts with one another. Contexts form 'settings' of action, the qualities of which agents routinely draw upon in the course of orienting what they do and what they say to one another." (Giddens, 1987: 99)

I would suggest that in the interviews for this project, which took place in London, the participants in a single interview variously oriented and interacted as, for example, New Zealanders, New Zealanders abroad, as a North Islander and a South Islander, as two members of the same professional group, and so on. Each possibility implies a different relationship and therefore a different occasion and context.

In this analysis I try to be aware of both the immediate and the wider features of this orientation. I look for the subject positions which are set up, taken up, countered etc and generally made relevant within the immediate discursive interaction, as described by Davies and Harre (1990). As well as the more obvious categories already mentioned (such as labels of race, gender and occupation), there are more complex and subtle positions around, for example, opinions and self-characterisations. Some of these can be broadly described as "the kind of person who ..." or "someone who likes/ dislikes/ would do / would not do certain things".

I also consider categories or forms of characterisation as these appear to operate across different discursive contexts. In the terms of the example given above, I would look for common associations carried by 'woman' in the ways speakers characterise 'woman lawyer', 'woman police officer' and so on. To conduct a study of 'New Zealand national identity' is to assume that both 'New Zealand' and 'national' can usefully be approached in this way, at least as a starting point. The interpretation presented in the next three chapters presents such common meanings as the social resources which can be drawn on by speakers and which also constrain and shape individual discursive work. They can also be the meanings which do ideological work, as described below.

o

#### (ii) speechwork

I have coined this term to describe the uses of language which are usually identified in third person reporting of speech. Examples would be 'she



commented', 'he denied', 'she asked' and so on. In this analysis it is often useful to identify unexpected speechwork. For example, one of the questions asked in the interviews was

"It has been claimed that Maoris are the only true New Zealanders. Do you agree? / How do you respond to that?"

The form of the question invites the speechwork of agreeing, disagreeing or commenting. Many of the participants, however, responded to the question as an accusation and the kind of speechwork which followed it included challenging the statement and expressing anger.

### (iii) accounts or constructions

These terms are used to draw attention to the constitutive nature of discourse and the assumption that when speakers refer to 'New Zealand', for example, there is not a single 'out there' referent against which their talk can be checked. In other words, the terms draw attention to the relativist assumptions underlying the analysis.

### (iv) interpretative repertoires and resources

Potter and Wetherell define an interpretative repertoire as

"basically a lexicon or register of terms and metaphors drawn upon to characterize and evaluate actions and events. For example, the categorization of 'community'... is achieved by the use of a cluster of terms and metaphors which are selectively put forward to provide evaluative versions of the events taking place in a 'riot'. " (Potter and Wetherell, 1987: 138)

To say that a speaker draws on a term from a repertoire is to suggest that the larger association is invoked. I also use the terms 'model', 'image' and 'metaphor' when describing how talk sets up comparisons which carry further associations and implications. To say that one country is 'ahead' of another, for example, is to invoke a certain way of understanding time, that is, as linear, forward-moving and progressive. This notion of time can be referred to as an

image or model, or as part of a repertoire which includes 'progress', 'development', 'growth' and 'inevitability'.

Repertoires, models, images and metaphors can all be understood as interpretative resources, that is, the available discursive 'materials' which can be drawn on by speakers for their constructions.

#### (v) functions

The term 'functions', like 'work', refers to the characterisation of discourse as action and construction, as described above. Functions can be general, such as positive self-presentation, or particular, such as countering an accusation or potential accusation, or presenting oneself as consistent.

#### (vi) ideological work

I have already explained the meaning of ideological which I have taken up in this analysis. It is useful to note that such work can, like the (self) positioning of participants, be based on already established meanings or accomplished in context, or both.

#### The transcription of the interviews

The transcription of the interview data was part of the analysis. It established the limits of the data both in the number of interviews transcribed and the level of detail included and omitted. Following Ochs (1979: 44), I aimed to limit the amount of information for practical and theoretical reasons. Some of these have already been described, with reference to the choice of the final participants from the larger number interviewed. It was also necessary to limit the amount of transcribed material so that I would be able to familiarise myself with the content sufficiently to move backwards and forwards between the detail and the larger patterns and features.

The following minimal transcription conventions were used

- pauses are marked (.) but not timed
- laughter is noted as (LAUGHTER)
- different speakers' talk is presented sequentially

- overlap is noted by using the sign = to indicate the beginning of overlap in each speakers' talk

- emphasis is noted with underlining

The major conversational units were recorded, using Ochs' definition of a "turn":

"In the work on adult conversational behaviour in middle class Anglo society, turns are considered to be verbal units bounded either by the talk of another speaker or by a significant pause" (Ochs, 1979: 69)

These turns were indicated on the transcript by using full stop, or a new line after a pause. Other punctuation was not used unless necessary to avoid ambiguity.

The transcripts had two main functions for the analysis. The first was to provide a record for the researcher (myself) of what had been said in the interview in order to reinforce my memory of the interview. The second use was to allow me to investigate patterns occurring across body of data.

The extracts presented in the thesis have an additional purpose. Since the thesis is based on a body of data which is too large to reproduce in its entirety (even if this would not lead to problems of confidentiality), the extracts given illustrate and exemplify the material drawn on. They have been slightly re-presented from the original transcript. The points of difference are:

- they have been edited for succinctness: a series of dots indicates that material has been omitted, within the same conversational turn (...)

- repeated words and sounds (e.g. 'um' ) have been omitted

- in some cases the extracts have been punctuated following the conventions of written English

- some omissions have been corrected e.g. the common New Zealand use of "bought" for "brought" changed to "b(r)ought"

These changes have been made to assist comprehension, since the reader does not have access to full transcripts, recordings or memories of the original

interview. The changes are also to avoid presenting a participant negatively, for example, as inarticulate or incoherent as a result of features of natural talk which differ from the conventions of written English (such as repetition).

### Analysis

As has been noted, my aims were to detect patterns, repeated issues and recurring and contrasting features (such as positioning, speechwork, interpretative repertoires, constructions, functions and ideological work) across the whole body of transcribed talk. While transcribing I noted recurring points, similarities and other interesting features. Later I went through transcripts repeatedly following themes, comparing answers to particular questions and occasionally using computer word-search. I compiled lists of references to similar or related points (for example, points where speakers mentioned the relationship between people and land or New Zealand and other countries) and also computer files of extracts referring to particular topics (for example, the environment).

In addition, I selected individual interviews for closer analysis and for comparison with the features noted in this whole body. These were taken from the younger participants and from the Maori participants because these participants, generally, had more recent experience and/or proportionately more experience in their adult lives of the circumstances described at the beginning of this chapter as potentially challenging to a single New Zealand identity.

### Theorisation of the data

Banister et al (1994) suggest that the validity of qualitative data depends in part on

"the adequacy of the researcher to understand and represent people's meanings" (143).

I identify myself as "a New Zealander who lives in London". I lived in New Zealand until I was 23 and since then have visited regularly and remained in

close contact with people there. One claim of this thesis is that I collected and interpreted the data in part as an insider, although the analysis does not assume the discrete bounded groups implied by that term.

Since researchers using qualitative methods like discourse analysis focus on the localized and particular aspects of their data, and also use relatively small samples, they do not make the same claims for replicability and universality as researchers using more conventional, quantitative methodologies. However this study does make certain claims for generalizability and validity, based on the following points.

Although the sample of participants is small, in statistical terms (41 people), the object of analysis is not the participants but their discourse. Nearly 300,000 words of transcribed interview material were analysed. As is described in the following three chapters, strong patterns and regularities were detected. There were also similarities with other material related to New Zealand, including other interview transcripts, as analysed in Wetherell and Potter (1992) and also rather different sources, such as those described in Chapter 3 of this thesis. The amount of material analysed here and these resemblances with other material confirm that the features identified are regular, not idiosyncratic, and indicate that participants were indeed drawing on collective and shared resources. A further point which suggests that the discursive work done was not individual or idiosyncratic is that during any one interview I found that different questions became redundant as they were anticipated in the answers to other questions; common areas and issues were covered, and similar ideas referred to, however they were initially approached by each speaker.

Because of the theoretical bases of the thesis this analysis does not, of course, claim the status of 'truth'. It is, however, presented as a coherent and relevant argument. In the following chapters a large number of extracts from the interview material are provided, with the aim of opening up to the reader

as much as possible of the process of interpretation and the grounds on which claims are made.

Finally, I would hope and claim that the work has a number of useful applications. Little work has been done on New Zealand identity, especially of an empirical nature, and this thesis should therefore provide a useful resource for future academic researchers. More immediately, at a time of continuing change in New Zealand it is hoped that this analysis will make clear the constructed nature of many 'truths' invoked in current disputes and will therefore indicate the interests which are served, or neglected, if these are accepted unquestioningly.

In wider academic and political contexts, it is similarly important to show the constructed nature of the nation and related concepts. Ideas do not necessarily disappear but get taken up again and re-presented, so work of the kind presented in this thesis may show that ideas and claims which have the resonance of eternal truths derive that resonance from having been recycled. Their constructed nature does not mean they are trivial or irrelevant, but demonstrating it may help those oppressed by them to contest their 'truth'. This must be the final aim of any work in this area.

## **Chapter 5 - Constructions of New Zealand as a nation and a place**

### **Introduction**

The aims of this first data analysis chapter are to show how 'New Zealand' is constructed in the talk of New Zealanders and what work can be done for speakers by the alternative constructions. In particular, I look at how participants use concepts which are similar to those in the various academic theories of the nation which were reviewed in Chapter 1. The talk analysed here draws on the concepts of national territory, a unified and homogenous national population group, the named nation or nation-state (here 'New Zealand') as a unitary historical and political actor, and a global system which is made up of such actors.

The first section looks at how participants talk of New Zealand as a single entity. This includes repertoires of New Zealand as a 'character', in relation to other nations as similar entities, and its positioning on the global stage. The second section reviews constructions of the nation as a group of people and explores some of the implications of the alternatives; this point is developed further in the next data analysis chapter, on self-identity.

Another important feature is how apparently fixed or given aspects of the nation are differently presented and contested. Speakers can also be seen to draw upon time and space flexibly. The third section shows the different understandings of 'time' used by speakers, and how this apparently fixed parameter is itself constructed. There are different constructions of the nation, for example, as positioned in different time-frames. There are also different contexts of action established when the nation is spoken of, for example, as contained or as existing in a global context. The understandings of time underpin alternative accounts of the land; again, an apparently 'given' aspect of the nation can be differently constructed in talk.

The final part of Section 3 briefly considers some of the implications of

the construction of time as a forward movement. This point is taken up in more detail in the third data analysis chapter.

In terms of the overall aims of the thesis, this chapter analyses the constructions of the nation used by speakers as a preliminary to showing the ideological work they can do around contentious issues, and both their flexibility and limits. In addition, the chapter discusses the different subject positions made available to speakers by these constructions and the work they do, including in accounts of the self. The second data analysis chapter looks in more detail at the work done around speakers' self-identity; the third examines the ideological contests around certain contemporary issues.

I begin by looking at one extract which contains a number of constructions and positionings which recurred in other interviews and is therefore a useful introduction to the main arguments of this chapter. The points introduced in it are then explored separately, in more detail, using extracts from other speakers. Two extra themes to be considered are how a positive construction of New Zealand does positive work for a speaker and, in contrast, how a negative construction can still be utilised to do positive work.

This extract is taken from a discussion between two participants who were interviewed together with a third person.

**EXTRACT 1:**

**INT: OK. We were talking about future changes before. What aspects of New Zealand and life in New Zealand do you think it's important to retain, what changes do you not want to see happen?**

**A: I don't want to see too many people go to New Zealand, I don't want to see it. Because it's such a nice place, people that really appreciate scenery**



**B: Immigration laws in other words?**

**A: Yeah. No I don't, not the immigration laws, I just don't want to see New Zealand become overpopulated. Cos it's a small country, the things that people like about it are its cleanliness**

**B: It's as big as the UK**

**A: Yeah I know but it's nice because there's not enough people, not too many people there and I just don't want to see loads of people go there to think: great, let's go to this clean green country and then, because they're there they ruin it. It's not the same any longer. I don't want it to be like England where you travel two miles and you come across another village. I like the big open spaces where you have to drive, no, sometimes you drive 40 minutes and you come across another farm, another farmhouse on the side of the road, you know set back. I don't want too many people there and I don't want them to spoil it (.)**

**B: Yeah I've never really thought of it like that because it seemed the idea is so absurd that that would ever happen**

**A: It's not absurd because it can happen**

**B: I can't imagine why a whole lot of people would ever want to go and live in New Zealand, I mean people want to live in London cos (it's) the world centre, close to everything. Why on earth would they go to?**

A: Yeah they do, they love it. People that are sick of living in cities. A lot of Germans loves New Zealand and there's just no space in Germany at all, and so what do they do?

B: More so than here?

A: Yeah It's really bad and so they just go, the laws in their cities and that, the civil rights laws, you know, you're not allowed to play music after such and such an hour, so you can go to New Zealand and you can get all those things and have a few acres and bring up sheep and goats and all that stuff. That's what they dream and it's their ideal sort of thing. I don't want to see it populated by people like that.

In this extract the participants respond initially to the interviewer's question, then to each other. The speechwork includes disagreement and challenging. A contrast is established between New Zealand and other countries. The speakers agree broadly about the features they associate with New Zealand, but disagree about whether these are desirable or undesirable. However one 'fact' which is disputed is whether New Zealand is small.

New Zealand is depicted as distant from the centre of the world, which is London and, implicitly, the European countries (here Britain and Germany). These countries are described as densely populated ("a village every two miles"; "just no space"), mainly urban, and ruined by having so many people. In contrast, New Zealand is described as "clean and green" (a phrase originally used to promote environmental awareness there), rural and has "big open spaces". People there are freer because there is less need for laws, for example, to restrict noise.

According to Speaker A, these features make New Zealand an "ideal" and a

"dream" for people from the overcrowded centre but also create a threat: such people want to migrate there and if permitted to do so would "ruin" and "spoil" it. The prospective migrants are different to New Zealand's own people who "really appreciate scenery" and make it "a nice place". Speaker A positions herself with these New Zealanders. She speaks as the defender of New Zealand, B (less strongly) as its critic.

### **The nation as a character and global actor**

When Speaker A describes New Zealand as "small", even though, as she concedes, it is a similar size to the United Kingdom, she is referring to the size of the population and she also can be understood as evoking some other associations of being small, such as youth, vulnerability and the need for protection. Fairclough has suggested it is "an ancient rhetorical device" to talk of 'a people' as

"a sort of composite individual with the attributes of a single person... and the capacity to 'act as one' " (Fairclough, 1989: p.87).

This rhetorical device was widely used in the interviews in references to New Zealand and other nations and raises two important issues for this analysis. Firstly, attached to it is an interpretative repertoire which includes 'small', 'young', and New Zealand as a 'child'. Secondly, the device may account for some of the emotions commonly understood to be invested in the nation. For example, I have said that in Extract 1 Speaker A positions herself protectively in relation to the construction of New Zealand as a person-like actor. This discursive move may involve the emotions attached to parallel personal relationships, such as adult and child, or carer and dependent. This point will be discussed in more detail at a later point in the chapter.

At many points in the interview material the 'character' of the nation-as-individual was in some way linked to being small. One image, already discussed in Chapter 3, was of New Zealand as the child of Britain. This can be part of a positive interpretative repertoire. The 'young' country can be seen as

stronger and more innovative than the aging parent, bringing a fresh perspective to the situation, untrammelled by precedent and convention:

### EXTRACT 2

it's like really sort of practical and it's sort of almost, it's a very New World thing, it's something that Old World countries can't do because they're tangled up with all kinds of things, what, how people used to do it. I mean the New World countries you just have this very clear way of seeing something for what it is, which is refreshing, although on the other hand you've lost all, you don't have all these lovely cultural things as well

This speaker explores some of the connotations of 'old' and 'new'. 'Old' can suggest "lovely cultural things", established, developed and polished over time, but also something which is worn-out or obsolete. 'New' can imply 'fresh' or 'modern' or 'up to date', or alternatively 'raw', 'naive' or 'inept'. This extract also recalls the image of the superior new colonial 'race', used for example to explain New Zealand rugby victories over Britain early in the century (Phillips, 1987; see Chapter 3).

In contrast, in the following extracts 'small' is a negative attribute. This can be explained by referring to a different interpretative repertoire. 'Small' here is linked with 'weak'. New Zealand is described as a potential victim, vulnerable because of its size to a hungry and predatory Australia :

### EXTRACT 3

INT: another idea that's been suggested is a kind of larger multinational state with New Zealand and Australia and perhaps some of the Pacific Island nations

C: Well I just feel we'd be dictated to by Australia ...Like you know we'd just be swallowed by them

#### EXTRACT 4

I wouldn't want to be too closely linked with Australia really, I think we could be swallowed up, could become like Tasmania the Second

Other speakers presented the small nation as a potential rebel and exemplar, although still, in Extract 6, vulnerable to Australia:

#### EXTRACT 5

I think New Zealand could um it almost has the responsibility to stand by what it is the clean green carefree image and not to be bullied by the rest of the world

#### EXTRACT 6

Norway as a country has done much better than we have in learning how as a small country you can influence world policy, and I think they, they've particularly, I mean they influenced green issues, they influenced things in the UN, they have been acting as negotiators in Africa and they acted as negotiators in Africa and in the Middle East in a way that was important, and they changed the course of history. We haven't done that, I mean I thought we might develop in that way but we haven't really got ourselves into that position so as a country I think they've handled their size, we haven't quite learned how to use our size as a bargaining chip yet. I think it would be good if we could, cos small countries can have an influence by being negotiators and being independent thinkers, you know and I think Scandinavia generally does better at that than we do. But I, I mean I worry about the fact that Australia'll gobble us up.

In addition to the depictions already described, there were also a number of positive, even heroic images of New Zealand. One was as a moral actor,

dealing with problems but resisting the temptation to use violence:

#### EXTRACT 7

New Zealand has grappled with some dreadful problems, such as the Treaty of Waitangi in the last ten years, and by and large has made an excellent fist of it. Although there are people who'll be bitter and twisted about it in New Zealand, nonetheless the people here would've pulled out the Armalites and Semtex and there would've been killings. America, England, Europe, undoubtedly blood would've been spilt, but none of that in New Zealand.

Another depiction of the nation-as-actor is of New Zealand as a kind of exemplar, a moderniser or social worker. Here New Zealand is in a focal position as a leader, which other countries follow. There are different possible associations, many of them referring to the social reforms which were introduced in New Zealand before other countries:

#### EXTRACT 8

one would hope that it has always in the past led in a lot of innovations that have been useful for the world hasn't it? I mean it was the first to have woman's suffrage, first to have a national health service, now these are all things that have come from thinking New Zealanders.

#### EXTRACT 9

New Zealand was the first country to give women the vote and, it's not that we take it for granted, it's really, I don't even see New Zealand as being this feminist world leader but I think we actually are and we don't even realise it

#### EXTRACT 10

B: This was a fascinating thing about coming to England. I thought coming to England, everybody talks about London, you

know, busy London where you're never going to be able to stand the pace

**A: They've got scales with fractions on it (LAUGHTER)**

**B: They're talking about pounds and pence and, you know they're not, nobody's metric over here. You talk about how many K something is, nobody knows what you're talking about**

The assumption that New Zealand is a successful reformer can be used, in turn, to justify new policies and situations there. In Extract 11 the re-organisation of the economy is presented not as a reversal of the welfare state but as an similarly appropriate, timely and praiseworthy social innovation. In Extract 12 the disputes around the Treaty of Waitangi are also recast more positively:

#### EXTRACT 11

It is still very experimental. In the previous generation it was the social security, social welfare and now we have an economic experiment, so my image of it is a country which is small enough to be able to do things which are radical and unusual if it chooses to do it, where individuals can actually make a difference, because the community is so small.

#### EXTRACT 12

I'm sure we must be leading the way worldwide as far as being good to our indigenous people and sticking by or doing what's right by them and all that sort of stuff, I mean in what other country has (this happened?)

What work is done by such constructions? I have already suggested that speakers position themselves in relation to the nation-character as if it were

another person. The above extracts show how this discursive move can be accompanied by the emotion usually associated with positioning in relation to a person. In Extract 1 Speaker A is protective and jealous on behalf of New Zealand. In Extract 5 and 6 the voices are perhaps more teacherly than parental: the speakers call on New Zealand to be responsible. In 7-12 they are frankly proud, and in 13 (below) anxious. This then may be one explanation for the emotion associated with nation.

At other points speakers appear to equate nation and self, for example when 'we' and 'it' blur together, as in Extracts 10 and 12. This can amount to a self-positioning, so when New Zealand is depicted positively this is equivalent to making a positive statement about oneself.

Positioning oneself as the nation could have other consequences and do other work for a speaker. By "scaling up" to the position of nation/actor a speaker claims a role and importance in a context in which she or he might personally be insignificant (Taylor and Wetherell, 1995). Benedict Anderson has described how the development of maps affected the way people imagined land and community (Anderson, 1991). Similarly, this way of equating personal identity with the identity of a nation may have developed as a response to the overwhelming new scale of the world created through improved communications and transport. It is a way to imagine the self as significant in this larger context. (This would suggest that national identity can be expected to become more, rather than less, important in future.)

In the extracts discussed up to this point, speakers seem to assume some direct relationship between themselves and the 'New Zealand' constructed in the talk. They either take credit for positive features of the depiction, as if, as I have suggested, they see themselves as the nation 'scaled up', or else they position themselves in relation to the nation as if it were a person. Another device was that in a number of cases speakers appeared to personify New Zealand in terms which echoed their own situation. This can be seen in the



following extract in which New Zealand is described more explicitly than above as a vulnerable child: "we still need their support, cos we're so little and so far away".

### EXTRACT 13

D: I think we're gonna grow and I think our New Zealand identity is gonna become very much stronger cos it's still quite small, I think that, I'll be interested to see if we do become a republic and move away from the Queen which I think we will, I mean we have to, we're definitely moving ... and in some respects I think that'll be good and in some respects I think it'll be quite a loss

INT: In what ways good and in what ways not?

D: I think it'll be a loss, because, it just, it was our heritage, it did tie us into the European Community and I think you'll lose things like your two-year work visa which I think's really important for us, young New Zealanders to come away and have that opportunity. I think, but then again it's a benefit in that, I mean we don't really follow England any more and coming over here and just seeing how old it all is and how it really needs a shake-out and how young we are and I think sometimes the influence is restrictive. But then again like we still need their support, cos we're so little and so far away and I don't know if the Americans or other countries will always provide it. But then again the Pacific Rim is a growing area and if we all band together

New Zealand is young and so is this speaker: she is one of the "young New Zealanders" who has "come away". Elsewhere in the interview she described

herself as if also pulled by conflicting needs for freedom and for support: she was travelling alone and feeling vulnerable, especially after recently being robbed, and she was homesick.

Another relation between speaker and nation is set up in the following extract, in which the images of 'child' and 'rebel' are combined. New Zealand becomes a newly independent young person breaking away from Britain and the claustrophobic family links of the old Empire:

#### **EXTRACT 14**

I think (Britain) is a fading country, it's a very fading empire, it no longer exists really. They might think it exists but it doesn't. And we shouldn't tag ourselves with it. The drive and the, economically yeah Asia-Pacific's the place to be. They're our neighbours as well. And also you know we are a country in our own right and why oh why are we sort of paying this homage to this silly figure in this sort of totally eccentric and terrible family?

In this extract Britain is "it" but New Zealand becomes "we"; again the speaker blurs the distinction between the nation-as-actor and the people who constitute the collective: the nation is the sum of its parts. Implicit in this is the further idea that the people of the nation are assumed to be the same.

#### **From single actor to collective**

When participants refer to the population of New Zealand as a collective united by similarity they are drawing on concepts like those used by many of the theorists reviewed in Chapters 1 and 2. For example, Weber wrote of the "homogeneity" of the people of the nation, Smith of "a named human population" (emphasising the singularity). The assumption that populations have distinctive national characters was basic to the earlier social psychological research described in Chapter 2. In the talk analysed here, there are a variety of functions and positionings associated with the speechwork of describing

and defining 'New Zealanders'.

At some points (for example in response to the question "Do you ever feel bad about being a New Zealander?") participants offered negative descriptions of their compatriots. When doing so, the speaker usually positioned her or himself as unlike the otherwise undifferentiated population. Some of these negative descriptions can be called 'stereotypes' because they were offered as amusingly exaggerated pictures of typical New Zealanders, rather like the caricatures of national types, or nations-as-characters, sometimes used in cartoons. This kind of description is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

However sometimes, as in Extract 1, New Zealanders are described as sharing positive characteristics which distinguish them from other nationalities (as Cole suggested was necessary - see Chapter 1). An explanation for the 'national' characteristic may be offered, for example by suggesting it developed as a response to certain conditions or situations in New Zealand's present or past environment and lifestyle.

In the following extracts the second kind of description is combined with a third. The characteristics claimed for New Zealanders are not always distinctive but the speakers position themselves with other New Zealanders as sharing the qualities described. This is therefore a variant on the device of describing the nation-as-actor and equating oneself with it. Here a speaker describes the nation as a population of similar people, and positions her or himself as belonging to it and therefore sharing their (positive) characteristics. Such a construction enables the speaker to make positive claims, but somewhat indirectly, by implying that the descriptions are objective and based on large samples. This use of references conventionally associated with statistical surveys works to establish the status of these comparisons as 'truth':

#### EXTRACT 15

I think we're honest, much more honest than a great many other people, and I think that we also have our feet on the ground. Um just to look at it in terms of broad characteristics, I think a lot of English people are dishonest and can't be trusted, ah I think a lot of American people are driven by the American dream and ah are excessively materialistic and I think a lot of European people have a very narrow viewpoint, like the French, you know the French are, France is the be-all and end-all of everything, whereas kiwis are much more egalitarian, that's a good word, and that applies to their views of the world, to their views of other people and to what they want to do. You know that's very important.

#### EXTRACT 16

I identify the sort of the national trait in most of the New Zealanders I know it is, it is that openness of character, coupled with a slight insularity. Maybe that's what sets us off from, say, Australians. There is a difference between us, partly because we come from a very small country. It's never really been sure of its own identity and I don't think we are yet whereas I think Australians are bigger, brasher, much more sure of their place in the sun than we are. So we have a slight, and I think most English people, or many English people will say this about us, that we are more reserved people than the Australians and many would say more likeable as a result. But um maybe that's something I should've mentioned earlier, there is a slight reserve, a slight modesty about you know many New Zealanders, I'd say you don't get in many Australians.

#### EXTRACT 17

**INT: Have I asked you what you think distinguishes New Zealanders from other nationalities?**

**E Um, (.) well I suppose all the good things that I've said, the fact that they are very friendly and outgoing and um, I think New Zealanders are quite a good balance, you know, the (.) the English are very reserved, the Americans are very loud and I think sort of New Zealanders sort of fit somewhere in between,**

**EXTRACT 18**

**most of the New Zealanders identify with Canadians as Australians identify with Americans, cos everybody likes Canadians as well, as they like New Zealanders, and everybody hates Americans**

Although the characteristics claimed are not extreme or unusual, all of these extracts use a form of the 'extreme case formulation' described by Wetherell and Potter (1987: 47). Here, New Zealanders are positioned as 'just right' in comparison with the people of other nations who are 'too much' or 'too little'. (An alternative label for this rhetorical device might be the 'Third Bear' positioning, after the children's story in which the Third Bear's breakfast, bed etc. was neither too much or too little but always 'just right'!)

This section has looked in detail at one feature of Extract 1, the way speakers ascribe some 'character' to New Zealand as either a single or collective entity, and appear to take some credit for the positive features of this character, or perhaps for positive emotions (such as protectiveness) which it evokes. The next section will look at one feature of these 'global actor' constructions, that is, how they are positioned on the globe. It will then show how speakers can present themselves positively through the use of a negative construction of the nation.

## **The nation positioned on the global stage**

The conventional layout of Mercator projection world maps, centred on the equator at a point below Britain and Europe, makes New Zealand look very small and marginal. On simplified versions of the maps, such as are used in some advertisements, it is often completely omitted. Similarly, when New Zealand was described as 'isolated' or 'a long way away' the central reference was London, as the place of the interview, but also the old British imperial centre; as in *Extract 1*, New Zealand was being spoken of as a distant (colonial?) outpost, and not a different independent centre.

In Chapter 3 it was also suggested that different accounts of New Zealand imply that it has different locations and relationships: from being described as a country with mainly 'European' links, it has become a "Pacific" or "Pacific Rim" or "Asian" country. This 'transition' was referred to by many of the speakers. One made the same suggestion as Colin James (see Chapter 3), that the Vietnam war changed New Zealanders' perceptions of their place on the globe:

### **EXTRACT 19**

I was sort of in that limbo period of the sixties. The only major radical images I have are of the demonstrations against the Vietnam war and how being part of the Pacific and part of Asia really entered the consciousness of people, you know people started thinking it wasn't the Far East, it's the Near North and I think that the Vietnam war and all the protests about that were part of that.

Another more abstract suggestion developed the parent metaphor. The transition results directly from the process of growth; this involves the severing of earlier ties with the 'parent' country and the establishment of physical distance:

### **EXTRACT 20**

I think it was a real smack in the face for New Zealand, having sacrificed so many people in two world wars for this country and then just being cut adrift really, and a lot of people in this country, feel that too ... So I think New Zealand went through a period where the apron strings were forcibly cut for it and it had to find its own feet in the world and ah it was a difficult adjustment, an adolescent period I suppose, and I think now it's matured into an adult country probably. Maybe a lot faster than it wanted to (LAUGHTER) but I think, my perception is that that has happened now and I think it, I see it as a very strong independent country

In the following longer extract there is a strong theme that this change, and change itself, is inevitable and desirable so should be accepted rather than resisted. There is also an implication that the new alliances are more equal:

#### EXTRACT 21

C: ...the only (way) forward for New Zealand is to sort out its troubles at home and just enter into its you know status as a Pacific nation and get on with it. Cos I mean our ties are more and more becoming with the Asia-Pacific region as opposed to with Britain and

A: Mm, I agree with that yeah. And they shouldn't be ashamed of that, that's what they're trying to keep, they're trying to cling on to the old ties but they should maybe forge new ones and be proud of it

C: And I think they are to a certain extent, I mean from what you read you know there's all sorts of trade agreements

going ahead with various Asian and um Pacific countries so um, and reasonably close economic ties with Australia

These extracts contain several different explanations for the transition to Pacific or Asian status: it is a consequence of geographical location; it is a consequence of new (economic) links; it is the reason why new links should be created. Contradictory points are also made about the relationship with Britain, particularly in the earlier extracts 13 and 14: New Zealand is "clinging" to its links with Britain; it is restricted by these, because Britain has not progressed; it benefits from the links because Britain connects it to the European Community and also supports it (more reliably than the United States?). This "variation" or "variability" is a normal feature of discourse, including within the talk of a single speaker; Potter and Wetherell (1987) suggest it results from the different "functions" of discourse, and "the way language is used to bring about different ends" (122). In the above extracts the variability can be understood as a consequence of speakers' aligning themselves with or against the different broad constructions described in Chapter 3, each of which emphasises different interests.

The notions of 'centre and margin' were used to construct positive identities for speakers, but in a different way to those which have been so far described. In the following extracts, the speaker is not positioning her or himself AS New Zealand, but, perhaps like Speaker B in Extract 1, 'stepping back' from it. The underlying idea here is similar to the point she makes in Extract 1, that London is "close to everything". Speakers describe this in more detail, setting up a contrast between what is available in New Zealand and elsewhere:

#### EXTRACT 22

you know my kid, well she can ride a bike but to ride it I have to take her to Hampstead Heath and then, we have to go up to Hampstead Heath (LAUGHTER) and then get the, put the



bike in the car and come home so in London it's a very awkward scenario compared with New Zealand where I think that the children have a better quality of life, in terms of, if you like, freedom...they seem to have you know unlimited access to the things that are free, but then again my kid's been to the ballet several times and knows Swan Lake inside out and can recognise a lot of music that, you know, I didn't recognise until I was 25 or 30 or something like that so it compensates

#### EXTRACT 23

there are things that you get here that you don't get at home... the obvious one's the opportunity to travel, and to Europe and that sort of thing, you can go away for a weekend and have a completely different culture, you can't do that at home, so you've got to decide whether you want to go tramping for a weekend or to Paris

#### EXTRACT 24

F: a lot of my friends (in New Zealand) are related to politics and (they)... would count it a pretty dull month when they didn't get out of the country, I mean they don't advertise that they do, and I think that the escape to Australia's quite important.

INT: ...What do you think they get from that?

F: (PARODY VOICE) 'Culture'

#### EXTRACT 25

one the reasons I came to England too was also access to Europe and that's been really good, sort of I've been to Europe, we've done lots of things in Europe and had lots of holidays and things, and I would really miss that if I went back to New Zealand

In these extracts, as in Extract 1, New Zealand is constructed as a place which lacks 'culture'. Only the first speaker specifies what this is: music and ballet. The others give less detail but suggest that culture is available in cities, especially in continental Europe, though not necessarily in London itself. There is also culture in Sydney.

This depiction of New Zealand is not new. The expression "cultural cringe", used in both New Zealand and Australia, refers to a feeling of embarrassment about lack of cultural achievements and awareness. However it is not used straightforwardly. There is some mockery of the person experiencing the emotion. A recent collection of "Traditions and Folklore", published in New Zealand for New Zealanders, puts the expression firmly in the past as referring to a problem which "used to trouble sensitive New Zealanders" (EII, 1994: 53).

These speakers, and others who mentioned a similar "lack" in New Zealand, talk less about their personal enjoyment of 'culture' (for example, by saying that they regularly attend concerts) than about having easy access to it. They emphasise the importance of having the option to partake of culture.

Alternatively, New Zealand was praised, as in Extract 22, because different activities are readily available there. Many speakers referred to "opportunity" when praising it. There is an echo of the language of tourist promotions. The points of attraction for a resident are apparently the same as those for a short-stay visitor: both are interested in the activities or pleasures which can be sampled at short notice relatively easily and at relatively low cost. Furthermore, it is to the credit of the customer to show she or he has made the best possible deal by obtaining maximum choice. This linking of 'ordinary' life and 'holiday'

and also the positioning of the resident as consumer recalls the consumption of 'land and nature' commodities described in Chapter 3; London and New Zealand are different 'packages' of pleasures; rational consumers are the ones who get most for their money.

As described in Chapter 2, Anthony Giddens (1991) suggests that, in "high modernity", the reflexive understanding of one's self identity has become associated with the self as a project; life must be planned and choices made about lifestyles. These choices are increasingly in terms of consumption. In the above extracts the participants are presenting themselves as people who have made the best possible lifestyle choices.

In addition, in Extracts 22-25, the speakers position themselves as people with extra sensitivities and needs: they (or their friends or children) appreciate 'culture' in addition to 'nature' (tramping, cycling etc.). There are overtones of conventional constructions of class here: London is the place for more 'middle class' pleasures and people. This distinction is echoed in the following extracts: people in certain professions or of a certain quality are presented as more likely to leave New Zealand for Britain, even temporarily:

#### EXTRACT 26

I miss friends, particularly the friends I was with at university. Although having said that most of them manage to get over here, they're either lawyers or doctors and they do manage to visit

#### EXTRACT 27

So coming back to stereotypes, the rugby ah-playing beer-swilling race-going kiwi undoubtedly exists, ah, but it's not an image which people have of kiwis here, in England, because those type of kiwis generally don't come here and engage in that sort of activity I think. The kiwis that come here are people doing their overseas experience and they're open to

new ideas, they want to receive rather than give and they generally I suppose are the better type of New Zealanders, hideous thing to say

These positionings are based on the construction of London as 'centre' and New Zealand as 'margin' or 'periphery'. An alternative positioning used by some speakers was to describe leaving New Zealand as a journey from the centre and therefore a mark of their adventurousness or enterprise. They therefore position themselves positively using the opposite construction to the one above:

**EXTRACT 28**

LR: We have an independent sort of image. Even in the States people are just blown away by the fact that you would

RC: Give up everything

LR: Yeah. Leave and

DR: Sell all your belongings

LR: And take the risk of just going to a country without a job or a house or anything and just turn up at the airport and start from there

All of these centre-margin positionings also do work in the construction of the life narrative of the speaker. She or he is presented as a certain kind of person and the decision to move to another country is offered as evidence.

Kenneth Gergen suggests that a personal life narrative is 'nested' within meta-narratives, which constrain it (Gergen, 1994). An example of such a meta-narrative might be the "broader history of one's people" or the cultural history of a nation. It can therefore be said to correspond to what Michael J.

Shapiro, has defined as the dominant construction of the nation-state (Shapiro, 1988: see Chapter 1). In the case of New Zealand, some of the constraints on a personal life narrative, which of course is part of a construction and positioning of self, seem to derive from the "broader history" as a British colony, summarised in Chapter 3 as the first construction of the New Zealand nation. When speakers use constructions based in the centre-margin distinction they use an interpretative repertoire associated with New Zealand's former colonial status.

### **Explanations for homogeneity and similarity**

As has been noted, some of the talk about New Zealanders recalls academic theories which hypothesise the nation as a group of people bound by some similarity, often implicitly biological (see Chapter 1). In the interviews speakers use a variety of repertoires which imply different mechanisms or explanations for how such a national group comes into being. The two strongest ideas are that the people of the nation are in some way 'made' similar, so it is a permanent quality, and, in contrast, that they seek or embrace similarity, as a more active and intentional positioning.

### **The nation as people who are 'made' alike**

The simplest mechanism suggested was that people are 'made' New Zealanders by being born there:

#### **EXTRACT 29**

I think everybody who's born in New Zealand is basically, I mean they're stuck to it aren't they?

#### **EXTRACT 30**

I don't know, I think maybe it counts as, if you were born in a country. That's probably where, the cut off (is)

By analogy the national community is a family. This image is used explicitly in the following reference to a player in the Wimbledon tennis tournament:

### EXTRACT 31

Who was beaten in the semi-final by McEnroe, was he Chris Lewis?...I thought that that was a tremendous example of New Zealand because you know, everyone, the Prime Minister went round in his pyjamas to give him (LAUGHTER). The English'd never understand that for a moment. But you know, it's the sort of family atmosphere that everyone, every New Zealander is proud of something that another New Zealander has done

Another idea is that people are made New Zealanders by common shared experiences, of their own or of their forebears. A recurring theme in the interviews is that New Zealanders are characterised by ingenuity and enterprise, and that these qualities developed as a result of doing without. Fairburn suggests that this originated in the early history of the colony when there was an emphasis on the need to be a 'jack-of-all-trades' rather than a specialist (Fairburn 1989:54). More recently, 'ingenuity' and 'enterprise' have acquired extra positive associations through monetarist and supply-side economics which associates the terms with entrepreneurial initiative.

### EXTRACT 32

ingenuity came because you didn't have anything else. I mean I have this ingenuity myself and I have this ability to turn my hand to things that, I'm very practical which you know lots of people wouldn't be, I don't think that's vanished.

### EXTRACT 33

New Zealanders like their idea of having initiative and being sort of multiskilled in what they do. It was like one of the things I've heard when I was travelling was during the war the American soldiers, if their landrover broke down they would leave it, and then a New Zealand troop would come by and they would fix it and take it...you know, if you can't do it with a

piece of Number 8 wire then it can't be fixed kind of thing...

The second speaker describes how his brother is currently working in an international war zone where he has again found ingenuity and initiative to be characteristic of New Zealanders, and Australians:

#### EXTRACT 34

it's also the resourcefulness of being able to do all kinds of things, you know being able to sort of use what you've got to be able to sort things out, and to get on with people, I think as well, and sort of make relationships with people that you might not even be able to talk to. Yeah, just a whole range of things. I mean they're often camping out in warzones themselves, so obviously you know from being a boy scout in the good old days, you know, he's grown up with being able to live in certain ways and be comfortable

Other speakers cite a different kind of growing up experience as formative:

#### EXTRACT 35

I think it's something to do with going to school and wearing short pants and you know, that image that I convey from my childhood is what made me a New Zealander and that sort of, if I can say that, sort of rugby, you know Don Clarke and listening to the radio and those things for me were very important in me becoming a New Zealander. And you know I don't know whether, you know we had sort of holidays that seemed so much part of New Zealand, I'm not sure people now would have them, they'd go to Fiji and go to Australia and have a holiday there and go up to Singapore or whatever. You know the fact that we all had holidays and we nearly always went to the same place and, you know it was fantastic for us, we had a

sort of ten days at the beach and we went in the morning and the afternoon and we went down to the swimming pool, those things I think make a, or make my generation of New Zealanders.

Other speakers suggested that both the formative influence and distinctive character were the political and social values associated with the earlier period of the welfare state:

#### EXTRACT 36

My healthy distaste for a class society and and my ability to progress without having been to a good school or had any particularly sort of familial advantages I attribute one hundred per cent to my being a New Zealander. The fact, the fact that I'm not a snob and the fact that I can get on well in any group, I even feel sorry for my own children for the appalling sort of class system that they had to battle their way through, in fact I think it's almost worse now you know than it used to be. I think, I think it is a huge advantage being a New Zealander ah, and also my education was a huge advantage.

This speaker is also using ideas described by Fairburn as having been prevalent from the early period of settlement: that New Zealand is a society in which there are few class barriers and little attention given to the marking of class or other status (Fairburn 1989).

Using a more biological model, another reason given for New Zealanders having common qualities is that they share a common (usually British) ancestry. The following speaker describes New Zealanders as "a nation of educators":

#### EXTRACT 37

That basically reflects our origins doesn't it? I mean, I think the Irish basis for Australians means that they are the



Americans in the South Pacific whereas the Scottish background of New Zealand and there's always been a strong accent on education, we always are trying to educate everybody aren't we?

This image, of course, defines New Zealanders as people of British descent: Maori are implicitly excluded. Similarly, references to settler life and the colonial period tend implicitly to establish the Maori as a group outside the unified population of 'New Zealanders'. This can be seen in the next extract which refers to qualities inherited from the original settlers:

**EXTRACT 38**

it was that sort of pioneering spirit I think is still living on to a certain extent. I mean my mother says that it's absolutely shocking that two out of her three children are now resident in the UK and we say: the spirit that took our ancestors out hasn't been bred out and it's brought us back.

These extracts show accounts of New Zealanders' shared characteristics doing two kinds of work for speakers. First, there is a claim made to some positive personal quality, such as egalitarian values, initiative or, in the following, good looks.

**EXTRACT 39**

INT: Apart from the initiative, what do you think distinguishes New Zealanders from other nationalities?

G: Um, what distinguishes them? I don't know, they're very good-looking (LAUGHTER)

INT: Well I think so to yeah

G: Yeah, spot them in a pub. Um, what distinguishes them?

Well I think certainly if you get a group, I mean, if you get a group together, they certainly look different, and just sort of the kind of general facial features are quite distinctive

Secondly, a group is established, in which the speaker can then take a position. However, belonging is not intrinsically desirable. 'Not belonging' can sometimes be better, as in the following extract where a negative construction of New Zealanders permits a positive construction of the speaker as aware and critical:

#### EXTRACT 40

people are more tolerant here because there's too many people together so that you can be a bit more out front and bolshie and express yourself... You can express yourself in a positive way or in a way that maybe is not perceived as something that's positive and brings light into people's lives, and you can just do it here and it's actually tolerated much more than New Zealand where it's harder to be an individual.

Here the speaker stands apart from the group, defining himself by his difference from it, signalled by the valuing he places on self-expression and being an individual rather than conforming.

A different kind of work is being done in the following extracts. In Extract 42 the speaker again refers to the influence of other people, but here specifically to the influence of Maori and Polynesians on other New Zealanders. This idea simultaneously minimises differences between people within New Zealand and maximises those between New Zealanders and people from other nations:

#### EXTRACT 41

Well I think that the Maoris are an important part of the New Zealand heritage. I feel that they have influenced the Europeans tremendously

## EXTRACT 42

I think white New Zealanders have been very influenced by Maoris, and even now by Samoans in Auckland I think ... maybe Maoris would disagree with this but I think that the pakehas in some ways are quite glad that they've been influenced by Polynesia. I think that they think that's what makes them special. I mean I know I have, I know that a lot of the ways that I think are actually particularly New Zealand ways of thinking, and they're not the same as Australia. They do reflect contact with, even very indirectly, with Maori and Polynesian lifestyles, that is to do with a sort of mindset and um, and I think that's fantastic. I think, that's the one little thing that's really New Zealand you know and I think it's um, and I think it just makes us different from all other countries really

The reference to Australia is particularly interesting because, of course, New Zealanders are likely to be 'grouped' with Australians in London and also, perhaps more importantly, because a number of speakers were careful to distinguish "race relations" in New Zealand from the negative record of Aborigine experience since white settlement in Australia. This construction, of a (white?) national group made different by the influence of the Maori is therefore very effective.

### The nation as people who choose to belong

All of the above speakers refer to ways in which New Zealanders have been 'made'; the unity of the community derives from some involuntary similarity. Other speakers suggested a more voluntaristic basis to membership of the group. This was often in answer to the question "Who do you think's entitled to call themselves a New Zealander?". As shown in Appendix C, this was usually

asked after a question about Maori being the only true New Zealanders. The answers to the second question can be understood as a continuation of the often vigorous denials which the first elicited. The speechwork is often in the form of denials of limits or discrimination. Being a New Zealander is a matter of individual choice:

**EXTRACT 43**

Anybody that's in New Zealand now

**EXTRACT 44**

First and foremost, anyone who's born in New Zealand. (.) If people who emigrate to New Zealand and who choose to take New Zealand citizenship and who choose to call themselves New Zealanders, fine.

**EXTRACT 45**

I suppose, it's whoever just identifies themselves as being a New Zealander which is getting down to what you're doing (i.e. reference to the interviewer's research) which is finding out what that is and I don't quite know. But if you identify yourself as being a New Zealander then you might have a whole different stack of reasons for it. Which is what you're doing now. But mine is being born and bred

The first speaker, in Extract 43, appears to avoid any dilemma of definition: New Zealanders are the people who are in New Zealand. However in the context of a discussion of the status of the Maori, this is also a refusal to distinguish Maori from non-Maori. What it does not suggest is change, that is, a process by which newcomers become New Zealanders. The speaker in Extract 44 begins with the rigid condition, being born in New Zealand, then changes to a different position: being a New Zealander is a matter of choice. The next speaker, in Extract 45, suggests there have to be reasons for the choice, but these can be personal: again, an individual has the power to decide. This also

admits of variation within the group.

In the following extract the speaker anticipates the question about entitlement in his answer to the question about the Maori. He suggests that New Zealand needs to be understood in economic terms, as an entity that participates in the world economy. This avoids any contest between Maori and non-Maori over status by using an apparently neutral criterion. However the economic criterion, of participating in New Zealand's growth, is then modified: a New Zealander is anybody who "got stuck in", a matter of effort, but then, also, who has lived there a generation and has lived in the country. There is a partial return to New Zealanders being made rather than making themselves:

**EXTRACT 46**

X: well from my point of view New Zealand began when they started say trading and things like that, that's where I sort of see New Zealand develop and OK, OK it's got history past that (.) um and that is very important as well, you know there's there's no denying that but um, so I think anyone who's participated in the growth of New Zealand can consider themselves a New Zealander and that obviously doesn't mean solely Maoris.

INT: OK right. So they'd be your criteria for who's entitled to call themselves a New Zealander?

X: Yeah if they got stuck in and helped out, and maybe maybe a generation worth or something, or, time is obviously an important factor and whether you're a country person or not, and that

The following extract, 47, indicates the loosest condition, perhaps because one of the speakers, J, is a recent migrant to New Zealand: becoming a New

Zealander is a matter of choosing and also "loving" the country. Effort and perhaps some less controllable, more spontaneous emotion is relevant.

#### EXTRACT 47

**H: You know you're a New Zealander because you love New Zealand. And I think if you come over and you love New Zealand and you can**

**J: Enjoy the way of life and it's what you want**

**H: Fit in and and be good to New Zealand as it's good to you, then I think that you can be**

Within these answers are different accounts of the bonds which link the (imagined) national community, and each account does different work: New Zealanders are marked as different to other nationalities, or deeply connected to them; the New Zealand group is white, or white-and-Maori with little distinction marked; it is unified through similarity or envisaged as a more complex multiplicity (e.g. Extract 45); speakers appear tolerant of migrants or, alternatively, realistic about the limits to their acceptance.

The two broad ideas which have been identified here, of national identity 'made' or 'chosen', are explored in more detail in Chapter 6 in relation to the construction of self identity.

Here one final construction is examined. This is of the national group as an interdependent community. This can emphasise New Zealanders' responsibilities to each other, and, as a corollary, their limited obligation to others:

#### EXTRACT 48

here um it's like, although I can get very involved in my work in a community I work for, it feels um, it feels like work. It's like, you know I'm doing this, it's more of a role. Um, which

was different to when I was working in Wellington where if I was involved in a committee about something in Wellington, I was doing that for my, this was my own community. Um, and I was also aware of how I was in that community, um, so I had a lot higher expectations on myself because this is where I'm going to live, this is where people are going to see me as a, as a professional person so I'd better get it right the first time. Um, there's certainly a lot more (.), a lot more want within myself to put things in to New Zealand myself

Speakers could feel quite strong resentment when this shared interest and mutual obligation was not acknowledged, for example when other divisions were invoked, as the following extract indicates:

#### EXTRACT 49

I mean I was amazed when I came over here that. I mean to me I was over here in a foreign country and when I was travelling around Asia and I would see New Zealanders and I'd think: we've got something in common, you should be friendly and nice and warm, and I just sort of thought it would automatically be a tie. But it's not and people just say 'oh you come from Auckland'

#### **Constructions of the nation as positioned in time**

References to nations being relatively 'old' or 'new' indicate how constructions of the nation are based in understandings of time. As Benedict Anderson notes

"The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (26)

However such a steady linear movement of time is only detectable and measurable by reference to some outside point. Time is not 'given' or 'neutral'. Understandings of it are linked to comparisons, which are themselves set up by the particular construction of the nation used by the speaker. In the interview material, speakers used three main references in their constructions of New Zealand. The first of these is the apparent rate of change in Britain or other countries, as if the different national communities follow each other's paths, or perhaps race alongside each other on parallel tracks. The second is a point of personal reference, when the speaker left New Zealand and/or came to Britain. The third is a (common) understanding of time as constantly progressing forward from some unspecified starting point and rendering the past irrelevant.

#### Constructions of parallel time

In Extract 1 there was a suggestion that the current problems of Europe, overcrowding and 'ruined' land, could arise in New Zealand in the future. This again recalls the image of the child; it may grow to resemble the adult and develop or inherit the same flaws. The same idea is repeated in the following extracts:

#### EXTRACT 50

they should maybe look at countries within Europe who do look after their environment, albeit too late... New Zealand, if they got on to it now could prevent it from being too late

#### EXTRACT 51

one of my first opinions (of London) was all the poverty .. and I was just thinking: has this problem come about because all these immigrants have been allowed in, and is the same situation going to develop with the Samoan and Pacific Island situation in New Zealand?

The image of New Zealand as a former colony persists in this assumption



that it is simply at an earlier stage of Britain's history. Interestingly, this assumption is also the basis of a common joke which a number of people referred to with irritation:

**EXTRACT 52**

Yes, and the other thing they say which really annoys me is that: I understand New Zealand is just like England was fifty years ago or twenty years ago. I think: well it's bloody near twenty years since I first came and New Zealand was never like that, you know (LAUGHTER) I can't imagine what they think England was like fifty years ago or, I'm sure their history is very lacking. They don't seem to have any idea. People who say that sort of thing, I think have no idea of geography at all, or the way people live outside their immediate way of life.

Speakers also cited the quality of New Zealand's banking system or technology such as telephones as proof that it is really 'ahead' rather than 'behind':

**EXTRACT 53**

when one functions in an office the telecommunications support is light years ahead of England. One small example of that is that here you can't have a conference call, whereas in New Zealand if you wanted to talk to eight people at once on a telephone from all over New Zealand, just ring up Telecom and say please organise it

Alternatively, some of them tacitly accepted the image when they suggested New Zealand has "caught up", "come on a lot", or that it's no longer "backward" as it was in the seventies.

Other speakers also used the 'earlier stage' image but suggested that the possible future path for New Zealand was to develop some of the present problems or undesirable features of the United States:

#### EXTRACT 54

That's the danger I see, the danger of it turning into a  
American city. End up (with the) place thick in concrete

#### EXTRACT 55

K: It's gonna become more like America...

INT: In what way like America?

K: In the way where you're gonna have health care that you  
have to buy yourself which has already started and then = in  
the schools the universities and schools

L: = No superannuation no retirement

K: You're gonna have more private schools I mean that are  
privately funded rather than government funded schools. I  
think they'll become more popular and then the government  
funded schools are just gonna turn into just baby-sitting  
classes for kids that are gonna go nowhere. I think that  
probably will happen I think that's already started to happen  
in the schooling system. There are schools where you you know  
that the kids are not going there to learn.

These constructions do work around dilemmas associated with growth and  
development. These are positively associated with increased affluence and  
technological innovation, and negatively with pollution and increased  
urbanisation, itself associated with crowding, poor public services, and  
extremes of wealth and poverty. All the references appear to be to cities, but,  
as in Extract 1, the contrasts are presented as national differences. This may  
be because the interviews took place in a large city, or because of a persistent

construction of New Zealand as rural, related to the centre-margin construction and discussed in more detail below.

A corollary is that progress becomes 'nationalised'; a decline in the welfare of a group within the nation can be downplayed or ignored by suggesting that the nation as a whole has progressed. This is highly relevant to the recent economic changes in New Zealand which have led to increased unemployment for some groups but affluence for others, as described in Chapter 3.

### Constructions based in personal time

A different 'understanding' of time is when a speaker uses points within her personal lifecourse as the basis of a construction of New Zealand. For example, for people who have left New Zealand permanently, time can be imagined to have stopped there on the day of their departure. The country is frozen in the past. This is of course a common assumption for migrants and can lead them to believe that old-fashioned virtues or vices still persist in their 'home' countries. In addition, there can be a feeling that an earlier, perhaps happier period of one's life is reclaimable, because it is attached to the (other) place where it occurred. In other words, 'home' can become both a place and a time linked together, as suggested here:

#### EXTRACT 56

on a day-to-day basis, I'm really glad to be a New Zealander and glad to know that one day I can go home and it's all gonna still be there, waiting for me you know. And it's probably not gonna change that much

When New Zealand is constructed as a fixed and unchanging object in this way, it also becomes a kind of 'possession'. The speaker takes a personal pride in this possession. For example, when asked "When do you feel good about being a New Zealander and do you ever feel bad about it?", many speakers answered that they felt good when other people visited New Zealand and spoke positively of it:

### EXTRACT 57

It's nice being a New Zealander when you hear from people who've been to New Zealand and they come back and they say it's just wonderful and the people are so friendly

This may be the reason that many speakers were anxious to protect and 'preserve' New Zealand, even though they said they did not intend to return there. In Extract 1, for example, the speakers who discuss the impact of new migrants make their claim from a distance of place and time; neither of them is speaking entirely as an insider, as someone there who will actually be affected by an influx of new migrants. At other points in the interview, both had said they had no plans to return in the near future, if ever. The jealous relationship to New Zealand's attractions set up in Extract 1 by A (who had left 4 years before) is therefore proprietary and protective from a distance; she wants to conserve 'her' New Zealand for some indefinite time in the future. Similarly the following speaker, who planned to return in the near future, describes how he had come to feel that some negative images of held by British people were actually desirable, again as a way of protecting New Zealand:

### EXTRACT 58

I've felt irritated by sort of local views of sort of colonials and the New Zealand backwater, the idea of it being sort of far away, but I mean I was irritated by that when I first got here but now I mean now to me New Zealand is like a well-kept secret and if people don't go there for that reason, then that's fine because I see it as a very different place.

The construction of New Zealand as a possession, like the construction of the nation as a person discussed earlier, may explain some of the emotional investment placed in the nation.

The gap between a speaker's departure from New Zealand and the present, the period of ignorance, can also be interpreted as the time in which

everything went wrong, in which problems began:

#### EXTRACT 59

it's changed so much, the problem of the Maoris and things that I just never faced... I mean in (my town) we had quite a large population, many of my friends were Maori but it was never an issue like it seems to have become now.

This construction means that the speaker's own 'home' of a linked place and time, her private possession, is free from the problems now associated with the country so is 'better' than present-day New Zealand.

The linking of time with place can also lead to the construction of New Zealand and Britain as the places for opposite activities, appropriate to different periods of life, such as leisure and work, or, in the final extract, perhaps duty and pleasure:

#### EXTRACT 60

I wouldn't belittle the time that I had there. It's just that I'm in a different phase of my life now. Had my time of sailing and lying around in the sun and that sort of thing, and now I'm interested in other things

#### EXTRACT 61

people say 'I can't understand how you live here (in Britain) when we have all those wonderful things', and my reply is that you can't go on eating cake all your life

#### EXTRACT 62

I think it's quite possible that we would go back when we were rather older, because I think it is a very easy place to live in

#### EXTRACT 63

I think probably if I had kids I would want to go back, but as long as I'm single, I can't see myself going back

These contrasts are being used here to construct certain self-identities, similar to those around the centre-margin distinction. As with the references to 'culture, these speakers position themselves as having more serious interests than people who stay in New Zealand. Having left is claimed as an indication of ambition and achievement.

### Constructions of land and time

References to time and to New Zealand's colonial history also underlie the various constructions of physical place and landscape. The first relevant distinction is that made, for example in Extract 1, between London and New Zealand as 'urban' and 'rural'. This may arise from their relative population densities, from the aspects of New Zealand missed by homesick migrants (short or long-term), from the images of New Zealand most commonly used in British advertisements for holidays and butter, or from the economic activities associated with each place: London is a financial centre and New Zealand's main industries are, or were, agricultural. Claudia Bell has explored the idea of the rural as the 'essential' New Zealand identity (C. Bell, 1994).

In the following extract, the speakers describe their "images" of New Zealand. Speaker K's exclamation "See!" refers back to an earlier discussion in which he said that a "typical" New Zealander would be a figure associated with farming:

#### EXTRACT 64

You can't get more of a New Zealander than a high country  
sheep farmer

#### EXTRACT 65

M: it's always what I picture, = green grass blue skies

L: = Me too. Mountains, paddocks, sheep

K: Clean and green

**M: Those fences, the white wire, on the trains, railway tracks scene**

**L: Yeah that's what I see and everyone cos I tend to when**

**K: See! Farming see!**

In the following extract the speaker suggests that New Zealand has been 'made' by farmers:

**EXTRACT 66**

rural New Zealand has taken a lot, we should look after them, the only reason New Zealand has what it has today is through what they actually put into the country and we don't really treat them well

This recalls the accounts of settlers 'making' the country their own through the work of 'breaking in' the land (Chapter 3). Once again there is an implicit exclusion of the Maori. The following speaker makes this explicit in her answer to the question "It has been claimed that Maoris are the only true New Zealanders. Do you agree?". She suggests that New Zealand logically belongs to the settlers as the people who made it, as it is sometimes argued that products should be the property of the workers whose labour produces them:

**EXTRACT 67**

I would resent that. I think after five generations in a country which you have broken in and particularly from the South Island most of which was completely deserted when the settlers arrived it becomes your country. Those South Island farmers worked extremely hard and if we regard things like high country sheep farming and things as indigenous New Zealand activity, we have to say the people that do it are New

Zealanders, quite clearly. And a lot of our achievements have come from those people.

The references to New Zealand as rural therefore overlap with depictions of its transformation by settlers.

Another set of images refer to an earlier stage of New Zealand's colonial history when they depict it as rough and unpolished, as if it has not yet become fully 'civilised':

**EXTRACT 68**

it's a beautiful country, it's young ...I still kind of like that rough element in New Zealand. I don't want it to be as cultivated

**EXTRACT 69**

it's still in some ways a fifties countries really ... it's the barbecues on the beach ... the whole thing is really something for another era, sort of innocent

Similarly, when New Zealand is described as 'clean and green', natural and unspoilt, it is as if it had never been colonised:

**EXTRACT 70**

INT: Is there anything else that you wouldn't like to see happen? anything you think it's really important to retain?

P: Um (.) other than (.) overpopulation, I wouldn't like overpopulation. And the fact that people in general aren't very environmentally aware of things, in other countries than they are in New Zealand. Because I've, I've noticed that here being in London. That people aren't so environmentally friendly or aware of the things that they're doing and

INT: So you'd like that to stay in New Zealand?



P: Yeah, I would. And (.) and natural resources as well, the cutting down of trees and things like that, I don't want that to happen in New Zealand. So it's another land issue really. People selling tree, forestry and stuff. Hopefully that won't happen. And the fishing, fisheries.

Here the speaker describes New Zealand as if it had not already been (largely) deforested. There is a denial of settler history, as if this had never happened, and also perhaps acceptance of the new image used in tourist promotions (see Chapter 3). The references to 'selling off' indicate her opposition to government privatisations, again as if these were only a future possibility.

These extracts suggest that the 'rural' and 'clean and green' characterisations of New Zealand are alternatives, based in two forms of economic exploitation of the land, for agricultural production and eco-tourism. The two constructions are based in different timeframes: in the first, New Zealand is the 'broken in', neatly farmed land created by the settlers; in the second, it is a never-settled wilderness, the place of conservationists and, perhaps, the Maori.

#### The construction of time as forward movement

The final point to be noted here is a construction of time as forward movement. Within linear constructions of time as a movement or flow along a path to a destination in the future, there is an implied determinism, or, more colloquially, the notion of fate or destiny. Such a teleological construction implies that the events which occur are irresistible, necessary and ultimately 'good'.

"The future becomes golden to the extent that history becomes a story of continual improvement. As time goes on it is assumed people become more advanced, more rational, more civilised, able to do more things, able

to construct even more impressive solutions to social problems and so on. Interestingly, the society of the near future becomes imagined as a more liberal, just and ethically superior place." (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 184)

Simultaneously the image suggests that the past (the time of immaturity?) is less relevant than the present or future. This construction therefore underlies many of the ideological contests of the kind described by Shapiro, around the very definition of the place or national group, history or future path of New Zealand.

### **Conclusion**

This first data analysis chapter has introduced forms of analysis and also features of the discourses of New Zealand national identity which will be built upon in the analyses in the following two chapters. The main focus of this chapter has been how New Zealand is constructed in people's talk. These constructions include the nation as an individual, person-like entity; as a global entity; as land/territory, and as an entity positioned in time and history. Associated with the constructions are important interpretative repertoires, of youth, childhood, vulnerability, growth and rebellion, for example, and of green and natural wilderness.

Many of the constructions involve concepts similar to those in academic and political theories of the nation, as described in Chapter 1. There are also many associations with New Zealand's former colonial status, with important ideological consequences, such as the status ascribed to the Maori: these are explored in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

This chapter has also shown how speakers position themselves in relation to constructions of the nation and how the positions which speakers take up in relation to New Zealand can be associated with certain emotions. Positioning also does work as a form of positive self-presentation. This point is developed in Chapter 6, on the discursive construction of self-identity.

## **Chapter 6 - Constructions of national identity and self identity**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined constructions of the nation and interpretative repertoires of New Zealand which make up some of the field or pool of interpretative resources used by the participants. It also looked at examples of self-positioning. This chapter focuses on points in the interviews when speakers describe and define themselves, or respond to other people's descriptions (both received and presumed). It therefore looks at speakers' discursive constructions of self, and the use of nation and national identity in such constructions.

Some of the other interpretative resources drawn on in this discursive work have already been mentioned. One is the construction of the nation as a homogeneous population. This includes the notions of identifying characteristics, both positive and negative, and the logic and causality of how such a population is formed and how individuals 'qualify' as members. Conversely, such a construction of the nation also involves the concepts of disqualifying characteristics, and of a bounded population contrasted with other different populations.

A number of dilemmas arise in this discursive work of self-construction. The first is around belonging. Speakers puzzle to reconcile different ideas of how a person becomes a member of the nation. For example, is a New Zealand identity the involuntary consequence of being 'born and bred' in a certain place or is it a chosen positioning? More simply, is identity a matter of 'being' or of 'doing'?

A second source of dilemmas is the different categories of identity. Speakers attempt to establish the relationships between different national identities, and also different kinds of identities, such as national, racial and gender. This leads to questions of what it means to be a Maori New Zealander,

or a female New Zealander, and to compromises and negotiations in order to invoke such 'combined' identities.

Thirdly, there are dilemmas around categorizing and particularizing, around the implications for a speaker of positioning her or himself within a category, or 'stepping back' from it and claiming to be different. This is often a problem because of the clichés and stereotypes associated with a particular national identity. Chapter 5 described how speakers, on the one hand, position themselves as sharing the positive characteristics of ingenuity and innovativeness, and on the other, disclaim the associations with lack of culture. In this chapter similar problems are explored with reference to certain stereotypes of New Zealand identity.

So far I have described dilemmas as if these arise only around the functions of positive self-presentation. However dilemmas also arise because constructions of national identity do ideological work. Shapiro has described a nation as a dominant construction, established through struggle (Shapiro, 1988; see Chapter 2). In Chapter 3 I outlined three constructions of New Zealand, each of which has different implications for who belongs and what the identifying characteristics of a New Zealander would be. In particular, each construction has different implications for the status of the Maori and also of recent migrants from South-East Asia. Within constructions of New Zealand identity there are dilemmas and contests related to these and other constructions of New Zealand, with differing implications for understandings of the workings of its economy, the rights, economic and otherwise of different citizens and groups within the nation-state, and also its social, economic and political history and likely future trajectory. This chapter investigates some of these implications and the conflicts around them.

The first section of the chapter looks at the nature of national identity as this is discursively constructed by participants, then at some of the interpretative resources used in their constructions of New Zealand national

identity. The resources include different identity categories, repertoires, and stereotypes around New Zealand identity.

The second section returns to Shapiro's concept of national identity as a dominant construction and considers its application to New Zealand. In particular I consider Maori identity as a subaltern or "delegitimated" identity, in his term, and look at the conflicts in reconciling discursive constructions of New Zealand identity and Maori identity. Both sections explore the dilemmas associated with discursive constructions of 'New Zealandness'.

### **Discursively constructing national identity**

#### **The link between person and nation**

Chapter 5 showed some of the different constructions of the national group as, broadly, either people who are 'made' New Zealanders or who 'choose' to be. These constructions can work to position speakers as people who possess positive qualities, including racial tolerance. This section will look in more detail at the understanding of 'self' which is contained in these constructions.

The construction of national identity as a relatively fixed characteristic or trait belonging to an individual member of a national group corresponds to the model of the 'monad' and also to earlier assumptions in psychology about the nature of identity, as described in Chapter 2. For example, work around national character similarly assumed that different national groups have fixed personality traits which can be compared. (For example, Peabody, 1985: see Chapter 2). This is also the essence of stereotyping, ascribing immutable and generally negative ways of being to Others.

Speakers referred to national identity in this way when they drew on a biological and vaguely Darwinian explanation, with implications of limited gene pools and selective adaptation. The corresponding model of the person is of a biological being whose traits are either inherited or environmentally determined. Speakers used this image, for instance to talk proudly of being a

fourth or fifth-generation New Zealander, or in the following example, to deny that someone born in Australia is not a New Zealander:

**EXTRACT 1**

**I mean what, she's more of a New Zealander than Australian. Just cos she was born in the Sydney Hospital why would that make her Australian? She's got no Australian background, no Australian blood, all her blood and her background comes from New Zealand.**

Interestingly, therefore, New Zealand's relatively short history as a settlement colony in which the non-Maori majority of the population are descended from relatively recent migrants does not exclude New Zealanders from drawing on images of national identity as a form of kinship link. The biological references which recurred in theories of nationalism (see Chapter 1) also pervade this 'ordinary' talk.

The idea of national identity as a form of adaptation to environment also occurs in two extracts quoted later in this chapter. In Extract 9 the speaker says that three generations of residence in New Zealand have changed the identity of her family from European to "New Zealander or ... white New Zealander". In Extract 11 the speaker suggests that she may have an Australian rather than a New Zealand identity because she spent twelve years of her childhood in Australia.

The term "blood and background", used in Extract 1, and also the common term "born and bred", used by some other speakers, conflate the images of identity as an inherited trait and a trait acquired through experience and adaptation. However the latter model was not usually used to refer to Maori identity. This was generally characterised as a matter of "blood", as will be discussed below.

The construction of 'New Zealandness' as determined by some combination of birthplace, family and upbringing was probably the most common one used

by speakers. Sometimes it was linked to a psychodynamic model: real identity cannot be denied or repressed. For example, in the following extract the speaker suggests that New Zealanders in Britain who try to deny their 'true' identity will eventually experience a resurgence of patriotism:

### **EXTRACT 2**

**There are various things happen to people when they come here, and one of them is that they turn away from our country and they try and make friends with English people and consciously cut themselves off from anything, any New Zealand contact or news. And then strangely fifteen or twenty years later there's a renaissance and they come back to it and I've met people in organisations who say they haven't heard of New Zealand for a long time and then they embrace it, vigorously, and become quite passionate patriots.**

The image of national identity as a permanent trait was not the only one drawn on by speakers. There were a number of available constructions. Part of the variability of the talk analysed was that national identity, like the nation, was constructed differently at points throughout the same speaker's talk.

One alternative to the image of national identity as a permanent trait was to speak of it as a way that one is seen, dependent on both the attitude of the onlookers and the face one chooses to present to the world. Here the model of the person is not of someone made by biology and environment, but as someone making her or himself, in anticipation of and in response to a judgmental audience. There is less emphasis on membership of a national group and more on the alternatives available to an individual.

An interesting light is cast on this way of talking about national identity Giddens' suggestion that in late modernity it is a necessary part of an individual's life project to present a self identity, for example through choices about personal appearance and lifestyle (Giddens, 1991: see Chapter 2). In

less academic terms, there are similarities with the idea of publicising or marketing a product, as some speakers made clear:

### EXTRACT 3

I don't think as a nation we're very patriotic at home, whereas the Canadians are and the Australians I think do a brilliant job of, they've got all sorts of advertising at home and they buy Australia and all that ...Canadians, I mean, if you're away and travelling I mean Canadians always have their little pin badges that they give out of the maple leaf so I mean they're all very patriotic.

The assumption that New Zealanders can choose to present themselves positively also underlies the many criticisms participants made of other New Zealanders' behaviour and references to being good "ambassadors":

### EXTRACT 4

INT: When do you feel good about being a New Zealander and have you ever felt bad about it?

J: Um (.) I must admit I feel good pretty much all the time you know. I'm not ashamed to admit I'm a New Zealander and that (.) you know (.) and feel bad well, obviously occasions when sort of, you know like social behaviour is not always the best. But you know like I participated in that kind of thing when I was a bit younger too so I think you know you can't say (LAUGHTER) 'don't do it', but I think I guess oh some of the behaviour, in groups and that, you know it's a little bit silly and that and ah gets a bit carried away, bit small-minded really. Think a lot of people would look back and feel slightly embarrassed

### EXTRACT 5



I think I owe it to New Zealand to you know be a good ambassador and just show there the good you know the good side of New Zealand.

The two constructions of national identity, as either a fixed immutable characteristic or as the public assessment of a considered self-positioning, can draw, I have suggested, on identifiable models of the person, as either a biological organism with a 'given' identity or a rational and reflexive agent who works to project a chosen identity.

An alternative way that speakers talk about New Zealand identity is completely different and almost poetic. The individual is characterised as a *microcosm* of the country. For example, in the following example the speaker suggests that "small countries always want to be important", personifying New Zealand as capable of feeling and wanting, then says "I can feel it in myself" and offers his own feelings as evidence, as if the link between country and self were unquestionable:

**EXTRACT 6**

I mean small countries always want to be important so they want, they want to be heard, want to be noticed and they, and I can feel it in myself and I'm sure that you can too that you, you know you hear New Zealand suddenly mentioned and you sort of think: Oh that's great! you know and then you think: well what am I doing? There's this, what they've done is not even important but it's this sort of funny thing that you get if you come from a small place that you, it's like coming from a small town, you feel very patriotic about that.

One form of this linking of self and country which recurred in the interviews was described in Chapter 5 as "scaling up" (see also Taylor and Wetherell, 1995). National identity becomes a way for one person to acquire importance in a very large social and historical context. Speakers proudly

claimed New Zealand's achievements, and the achievements of famous New Zealanders, as their own.

Interestingly there is no mechanism or logic underlying this link, in the way that a theory of genes, natural selection and adaptation underlies the first two images. This appears to be a logic which belongs to the discourse of nation itself and is not borrowed from any other form of explanation. The idea that somehow I 'am' my country, so that all of its merits and its population's achievements are my own, is used as if no further explanation is needed. In the same way, speakers discussed in Chapter 5 did not feel any need to explain their links with the nation-actor they referred to (for example, Extracts 5-12 in Chapter 5).

Other characterisations of national identity involve speakers positioning themselves in relation to New Zealand as a place, imagined in more conventional terms. Sometimes this draws on the idea of the national territory as a personal possession, as was described in Chapter 5.

In the following extract the speaker links her identity as a New Zealander to the opportunities she has had and to the niche she can return to; the images parallel conventional characterisations of family and hometown:

#### EXTRACT 7

*I always felt good at being a New Zealander and having the opportunities that I had when I grew up. You know, the opportunities of just being able to go outside and play and not having, the pressures that society in other countries have and murder and all that. So on a day-to-day basis, I'm really glad to be a New Zealander and glad to know that one day I can go home and it's all gonna still be there, waiting for me you know. And it's probably not gonna change that much.*

The references to 'opportunities' also recall economists' accounts of the workings of the market, and the 'commodity' imagery described in Extracts 22-

Another speaker describes identity as the result of formative growing up experiences, as has already been discussed (Extracts 32-36 in Chapter 5) but also as a kind of 'inside knowledge' which is shared by people because they grew up in the same environment:

**EXTRACT 8**

Well there's kind of a shared country really isn't it? Um growing up in New Zealand I guess We all like ah (.) pineapple lumps and jaffas and there's you know there's something kind of old and shared and that doesn't happen anywhere else

The speaker adds the suggestion that this identity is unique ("that doesn't happen anywhere else").

**A New Zealand identity**

This section will look at some of the interpretative resources from which a New Zealand identity can be discursively constructed. One of these is the range of identity categories which speakers can draw on around and in addition to the umbrella category of 'New Zealand' identity. In addition, different meanings of 'New Zealand' identity are set up within the discursive interactions of the interviews. A key move here is to contrast being a New Zealander with some Other identity.

The term "New Zealander" was originally used to refer to the non-European, indigenous inhabitants, the Maori, but is now used, in theory, to refer to all citizens of the modern nation-state (Wetherell and Potter, 1992). As was described in Chapter 3, the name 'New Zealand' is also contested; an alternative is the Maori name 'Aotearoa'. The two major groups in the present population are variously described as the 'Maori', or 'Maoris', and the 'white people', 'pakeha', or 'Europeans'. 'Pakeha' is a word from the Maori language; when non-Maoris choose to describe themselves in this way they may be challenging the claim of Maori to be the (only) indigenous New Zealanders, or,

alternatively, recognising that New Zealand is bicultural and that the two populations should have equal status (Bell 1995; see also Chapter 3). Another common term is 'kiwi'.

In the following extracts speakers discuss the implications of some of these terms as a form of self-identification. In the first, a woman who had recently left New Zealand describes the identity choices which she feels that she has as a non-Maori New Zealander:

### **EXTRACT 9**

**INT:** Looking back through your family, do you know um, at what point they went to New Zealand and when they started calling themselves New Zealanders?

**A:** We're actually fifth generation, we went on one of the first boats. So, I used to have an ongoing argument, I used to get really annoyed on the census forms that it's 'European' and I'd just rather put that I'm a New Zealander or a white New Zealander but I don't. I think at least three generations would've called themselves New Zealanders.

The following extracts show how other speakers set up oppositions and exclusive or inclusive meanings to the category "New Zealander". All the speakers are women who had been living in Britain for periods ranging from three and a half to thirty years. Only one, in Extract 11, said definitely that she would return to live in New Zealand at some time in the future. The first three speakers all made some claim to Maori identity. Unless another question is quoted, each speaker was responding to the question "Do you (still) call yourself a New Zealander?".

### **EXTRACT 10**

**Yeah I think I do call myself a New Zealander but if I'm tied down to it and if I'm in a New Zealand situation so I suppose**

I'm sort of a two two faces um If I'm talking to the rest of the world then yeah I'm a New Zealander but I just happened to be a New Zealand Maori, but if I'm talking in the New Zealand community and it gets to sort of nitty-gritties or something then I will definitely say 'I'm a Maori first'

EXTRACT 11

B: I don't actually say I'm a New Zealander. What I say, if somebody says to me 'Are you a New Zealander?' I say 'No I'm a Maori from New Zealand'

INT: Oh that's interesting. Will you tell me about that distinction then?

B: (LAUGHTER) I think it's really important that that somebody doesn't classify me as a New Zealander, even though I'm I'm, I'm probably just as much Australian as I am a New Zealander because I I've lived for a long time, twelve years in Australia, um from the time that I was born up until ah like twelve or thirteen years. I just think it's really important that you do distinguish with people that I am a native New Zealander. Um, not saying that I'm not proud to be a New Zealander but I just think it's important when you're in another country that you that you let people know that you're not a New Zealander, you're a Maori from New Zealand.

INT: So you see a difference then between the two in a way?  
(.) Or you just said that people don't realise that (.) not all New Zealanders are Maori

B: (.) Yeah I just I just think that that it's important for any race, I mean I'm of this opinion with any any culture or any race is that that you are a nationality and I mean New Zealand is just just, it's New Zealand.

### EXTRACT 12

INT: Right. And can I ask how you describe yourself when you meet people, do you say I'm a New Zealander, I'm a New Zealand Maori or a Maori New Zealander?

C: Kiwi, I say I'm a kiwi. Always (LAUGHTER) No matter where. I mean a lot of people don't know. For instance, I have a lot of friends in from the Caribbean and I go to Trinidadian embassy parties and things and, and they don't, "What's a kiwi?" (LAUGHTER)

### EXTRACT 13

INT: Right, and what does that mean to you, to call yourself a New Zealander, can you say?

D: They're my roots, it's my nationality. It's just, that's what I identify with and I will never be British, I will always be a New Zealander and I make that very clear Probably not answered your question has it?

INT: No no, that's fine

D: (LAUGHTER) Just, I feel very strongly and I feel stronger

about it now living here perhaps than I perhaps did when you first leave and travel you think 'oh yeah I'm a kiwi', it doesn't because your whole base is a bit insecure, you don't know quite where you're going to be, it doesn't really matter, but once you get established somewhere I'm sorry, I'm always going to be a New Zealander (LAUGHTER)

#### EXTRACT 14

INT: OK um, do you call yourself a New Zealander still?

E: Yes I do. I now hold both passports because it became impossible to get round Europe on a New Zealand passport (LAUGHTER) (*describes how her job requires her to travel*) So I have both but I don't regard myself as British. I still regard myself as a New Zealander, despite the fact that (*describes the organisation she works for*) is probably the most establishment body in the whole country

#### EXTRACT 15

Mm yes. But I, my English friends get very cross because they say: you've been here so long that you, and I have in a way too adapted, I mean there are things I love about Britain, and one of them is the fact that it's a man-made landscape, whereas in parts of New Zealand sometimes, particularly when you're out walking in the bush, it's primeval. You get the feeling that no one's ever put a foot there before.

The first speaker (in Extract 10) suggests that 'New Zealander' is a category relevant to the "rest of world"; within this larger context 'Maori' is a minor and only incidentally interesting category, subsumed under 'New Zealander'.

However within the "New Zealand community", whether this is inside or outside New Zealand, the order is reversed: "Maori" is her identity "first", especially in any dispute over a decisively important local issue ("the nitty-gritties"). This speaker, then, decides between 'New Zealand' and 'Maori' identities. 'New Zealand' is Other to the rest of the world, but 'Maori' can be Other to 'New Zealand'.

The second, longer extract (11) raises a number of points, some of which I will return to. This speaker sees similar alternative identities as available to her, "New Zealander" and "Maori from New Zealand". In contrast to the previous speaker, she sees Maori as a category which is relevant outside New Zealand, in the context of "another country"; she regards Maori identity, like that of "any culture or any race" as a "nationality". This could imply a political claim, following the concept of national self-determination, that any nation should be self-governing (see Chapter 1).

The third speaker, in Extract 12, originally introduced herself as someone who made a claim to Maori identity. However when invited to describe herself with one of the categories used by other speakers who identified themselves as Maori, she appears to avoid the distinctions by calling herself "a kiwi", as if this is a broader, all-embracing category. She implies that this identity is a purely personal positioning, sometimes functioning as an amusing puzzle, with no link to the issues which the other two speakers hint at, that is, to wider social and political disputes.

The remaining, non-Maori speakers all set up 'New Zealand' as an alternative or Other category to 'British' or 'English' and, again, present positioning as a personal decision. The speaker in Extract 13 mentions "kiwi" as less important and suitable for a casual traveller; contrasting herself, as someone who is now "established" in Britain, she insists that she will always call herself "a New Zealander". One implication is that self-knowledge is only achieved with effort and maturity, and 'kiwi' is a category for an immature



person who is not referring to her real self-identity. Another is that she receives some pressure to relinquish her New Zealand identity (elsewhere she explains that she has settled permanently in Britain because she has married a British citizen).

The speaker in Extract 14 emphasises that both 'New Zealand' and 'British' identities are available to her, because she has a British passport and works for an organisation with a strong British character or image. It is therefore entirely her personal, and perhaps idiosyncratic, choice to call herself a New Zealander. This recalls the way speakers in Chapter 5 constructed New Zealand as a personal possession: perhaps a person with two passports 'possesses' two countries.

Similarly, the final speaker describes how she defies her friends in continuing to claim New Zealand identity; she implies that the affection she has acquired for Britain, or England, and the adaptation she has made to living here have weakened her New Zealand identity. There is a suggestion of a dispute about the 'truth' of her identity: is she 'really' English now, or 'really' still a New Zealander? This is one indication that a claim of national identity is not necessarily simple or fixed. There are dilemmas attached to it.

All of these women present themselves as making a decision, within certain limits, about which identity they claim. In setting up alternatives they establish different meanings for the same terms: "New Zealander" can mean 'not Maori' or 'not British' or 'not English', for example, or, in the earlier extract, 'not European'.

One of the limits to speakers' choice must be that they are always 'already positioned', that there is no 'pre-national' situation in which all imaginable identities are available. (These particular speakers do not, for example, discuss 'French' as an alternative available national identity.) The alternatives can be seen to derive from New Zealand's history, and from the speakers' own circumstances; for example, the speaker in Extract 13 appears to have one

alternative established by her marriage.

Participants appeared to have different situations of choice around Maori identity. Some participants who identified themselves as Maori, treated their Maori identity as already established, so the choice lay in how to characterise it. This appeared to be the case with the speaker in Extract 11. For others, there was a choice about whether to claim any Maori identity. This was the situation for the speakers in Extract 12 and Extract 35 (later in this chapter) and also the participants who mentioned that they had Maori relatives but did not identify themselves as Maori (see Chapter 4). An important factor was probably appearance: for some speakers Maori identity may have been already established by their acceptance that they 'looked' Maori [or had done as children. (See Hall, 1996b).] However this did not seem to be the only factor operating.

The distinctions made by the speakers in Extracts 9-15 indicate how discursive positioning simultaneously does work in several contexts. The distinctions which the speakers make are established within the immediate discursive context. However they also refer to other interactions and to broader social meanings of the different terms. If examples are taken out of the larger context of the body of interview material on which this study is based, speakers can be seen to be drawing on a limited range of constructions of national identity. Each construction does positive work for the speaker but also sets up constraints. For example, speakers who are long-term residents in Britain and those who intend to stay here permanently imply they are under some social pressure not to put themselves in the category of 'New Zealander'.

These categories associated with 'New Zealander' are one of the interpretative resources available to speakers claiming a New Zealand identity. Another such resource is the 'form' of national identity. If it is constructed as, for example, a 'born and bred' trait or a chosen self-description, this is not an indication of the inventiveness of the individual speaker but also of the

interpretative resources available to her or him. Another interpretative resource is the detail used to construct a specifically New Zealand identity, the 'content' of 'New Zealandness'. Some of this has already been mentioned. There are the repertoires of New Zealanders as enterprising and ingenious. There are the characterisations of the nation/actor as fresh, young and innovative, or alternatively raw and uncultured.

Other interpretative resources can be found in the stereotypes of New Zealand identity. Before discussing these it is important to note some alternative meanings of 'stereotype'. Many theories in social psychology, such as social identity theory (see Chapter 2) and also theories of race (see examples in Wetherell, 1996) use the term 'stereotype' to refer to a simplified representation which is taken by the lay person to be true; the focus is on the cognition processes underlying this simplification. However in this section I am using the term differently, following Hodge (1989). Here a stereotype is recognised as such by the speakers whose talk is being analysed. It is a non-realistic, exaggeratedly simple representation, and is embraced ironically or avoided. In terms of discourse analysis, a stereotype is therefore a lay interpretative resource, rather than the analytical resource used by the theorist (such as the social cognition theorist who assumes it 'causes' behaviour).

One of the interview questions asked directly about stereotypes. Another, which participants seemed to find easier to answer, was

"Is there anyone you think of as typical or representative New Zealanders? It could be someone famous or just someone you know."

This question was intended to elicit widely held images of New Zealand identity. Some people could not think of an answer, many referred to sports-people, specifically or generally, and others suggested themselves or personal acquaintances as typical. But a large number of interviewees mentioned the same person: Sir Edmund Hillary. He was one of the first team to climb Mount

Everest, in 1953 and he and Tenzing Norgay were the first to reach the summit. Hillary is generally described as the first person to climb Mount Everest. He was cited by men and women, non-Maori and Maori, which might suggest there are limited images available to women and non-Maori, although the second most commonly mentioned name was that of Kiri te Kanawa. However Hillary was described in more detail and it is interesting to look at how this "typical or representative" New Zealander is constructed in the following selection of extracts:

#### EXTRACT 16

a guy like Hillary would evoke certain, many strong New Zealand traits I think, a sort of (.) an ease of character, a confidence but in a kindly constructive and practical way, those New Zealand traits um. And an achiever

#### EXTRACT 17

F: Well. Probably the first, probably the second knight of the realm that I was conscious of growing up is there was Edmund Hillary. He was a small businessman who was a sportsman who had a go and achieved something worthwhile and has since been doing good things for people so there I suppose in the various facets of his life there's a summing of the sort of aspirations of various New Zealanders ... (*section omitted*) ... It used to be almost a qualification to be Prime Minister that you'd built your own house

INT: That's right, I'd forgotten that (LAUGHTER). And you're also in the phonebook

F: Um, and you know that's sort of, ties in with the Edmund

Hillary picture, somebody who's out there doing something for himself and doing something for others and fitting a few challenges in on the way. Literally conquered something, put the last tile on the roof or conquered Everest or whatever.

#### EXTRACT 18

I mean it's sort of like we're the quiet ones aren't we? We're the quiet achievers cos New Zealanders do it and there's no well I mean I read Sir Edmund Hillary's biography and well there's no palaver or song and dance because he got to the top of Mount Everest it was his own achievement and the fact the Queen knighted him after was just like a bit like Forrest Gump actually, it was just like 'big deal I went to Buckingham Palace' you know (LAUGHTER) It was just like that whole thing was so laidback

#### EXTRACT 19

it's a sort of worldwide achievement which relates very much to New Zealand activity, mountaineering, being outside, doing that sort of physical courageous stuff, and beating the Brits

#### EXTRACT 20

G: (.) No Edmund Hillary definitely yeah, I think it's an image that New Zealanders like as well outside guy you know pretty down-to-earth knocks over the biggest mountain in the world you know, no sweat

INT: Not too much fuss

G: No no not too much bother just just went there and did it

### EXTRACT 21

for me being someone who went, who used to walk in the bush was someone like Edmund Hillary. And um, you know, someone who's achieved something, who's come from the supposed little backwater and actually gone to sort of international level.

The recurring features in these accounts of Hillary are achievement; pleasantness; quietness; outdoor activity, and lack of fuss and ostentation. The achievement is particularly measured in the contrast with Hillary's "small" beginnings, for example as a "small businessman", from a "backwater" and in comparison with the British, who he "beat". He is pleasant and kind; he does things for other people. Mountain-climbing requires physical courage but is also a type of sport, and involves a close relationship between person and nature. The "lack of fuss" is a rejection of status and 'class': Hillary was not over-awed at being honoured by the Queen.

More negatively, this could be seen as an anti-intellectual construction, emphasising the "physical" and the "practical". It is also highly individualist; mountain-climbing could plausibly be described in terms of co-operation and teamwork, but this aspect is not emphasised in these accounts (nor perhaps in most depictions of this activity).

All of these images recur in the interviews in other contexts, including some which have been discussed in Chapter 5. Their origins can be guessed at: for example, a new, agricultural settlement would logically value physical strength and outdoor activities, and settlers from the less privileged classes in British society might well feel antagonistic towards marks of status. (Some of these points are made by Fairburn, 1989.)

However in contrast to these positive resources, speakers also produced another group of equally male but very negative 'typical' images:

#### EXTRACT 22

This person I'm thinking of is G\* ... he's a big guy who plays rugby, his idea is like swigging down twenty pints of lager or whatever and you know, very brash sort of (.) New Zealander. And you definitely know where you stand with him, he (.) he's, I mean he's a good laugh but to me he's, and I find it hard to see how he can survive over here (LAUGHTER) um with English being so reserved you know. I mean he's the sort of guy who would drop the trousers in the pub or something and it's no great big deal. I mean I would never ever do that, I would never even think of doing that (.) but somehow or rather we do have a friendship you know.

#### EXTRACT 23

he went to University of \*, he has late nights every other night. His idea of a good time is to go to the pub, sit around and get pissed. I mean when they get sick of talking to somebody in a pub that's English him and his mates start talking in Maori which all means that they just start running off a whole string of place names and they think you know and, they epitomise New Zealanders here

#### EXTRACT 24

A typical kiwi? (.) No I can't think of any one person that embodies what I would call a typical kiwi. Oh I sort of do and I use it in a sort of an insulting way really. Sometimes I say: oh typical bloody beer-swilling rugby-loving kiwi yobbo.

The characteristics here cited as typical are heavy drinking; raucous noisy behaviour (in contrast to Hillary's quietness and lack of fuss); socialising in a

noisy group, with "mates", in a pub, being "a laugh" (in contrast to Hillary as an individual actor) and being deliberately offensive, by "dropping" trousers or pretending to speak Maori to someone who doesn't realise you are only reciting placenames. (Interestingly, the last point, while described as a behaviour directed at an English person is also, of course, highly offensive to New Zealanders who are Maori themselves or, since the Maori renaissance, are trying to express sympathy with or understanding of Maori people.)

In the following extract the (female) speaker describes similar typical behaviour, initially with amusement rather than disapproval. However she concludes, critically, that a 'false' equality has been achieved: women join the men in the traditional male activities, sport and bad behaviour, but at a certain point are relegated to the status of "trivial sexual beings":

#### EXTRACT 25

I'd heard sort of going round this little village that there was going to be a cricket match and it was the locals playing the New Zealanders and the New Zealanders were sheep-shearing, they'd come for the summer ...

and I thought this might be quite fun to watch this. And of course at one stage all the New Zealanders suddenly lined up and then dropped their trousers and did brown eyes ...

it was interesting because here you have the women playing on the field as well as if they were equal with the men and I thought 'oh yes that's' you know 'that's good stuff yes' you know because it in Britain the women wouldn't be in on the field it would've been me having to watch just fellas and everybody accepted that but in fact because there was New Zealanders playing they had women in in their team as well, so I thought 'Oh this is great' we get into the pub and I discovered it's all superficial as usual. As the evening goes by these New



Zealanders and blokes you know are sort of getting more drunk and the women are equal with them up to a point and then they start singing songs and they get more rude and lewd and and sexist as time goes on, to the stage where the women are then reduced to being trivial sexual beings again when they're so drunk and they're trying to pull their skirts off and things like this and I'm thinking 'Oh my god!' there's still that deep-seated shitty chauvinism and attitude towards women in the New Zealand men and so on one level it's alright you can be one of the boys ...

But when they decide you can't be one of the boys and play on the cricket field and you have to be trivialised and sexualised, that still goes on and I thought 'Nothing changes'

A useful approach to stereotypes of national character is offered by Bob Hodge (1989). He suggests that it is part of the discursive competence of a language speaker to understand the social meaning of such stereotypes. While some features of his analysis are outside the position adopted in this thesis, his account of how speakers interpret stereotypes can be read as a description of rather complex self-positioning, in the terms used here.

"The stereotype encodes both the ideological complex and a position in relation to this complex. For this reason it serves as a particularly convenient site for the articulation of opposition and resistance to the dominant ideology. (Hodge, 1989: 435)"

Hodge suggests that part of the ideological nature of the stereotype is the contradiction it contains. A speaker/listener must choose an appropriate position on the "bipolar continuum" constituted by the stereotype, its opposite and all points between them. In other words, confronted with a stereotype, the speaker/listener needs to decide whether to accept it at 'face value', as a 'true' account, or to take it perhaps as ironic, assuming its opposite to be 'true', or to

take another attitude to it. In addition, he argues that stereotypes

"can construct unity while sustaining difference within the national group, and mark off those who belong to the nation from others through the possession of the secret and their ability to read it. (443)"

To develop this point, he takes the example of "Strine", a parody on Australian-accented pronunciation, looking at a book of jokes produced for the Australian market. As he says, this "publishes Australian-ness for Australians" (in the same way that the book of New Zealand folklore mentioned in Chapter 5 aimed to explain New Zealand for New Zealanders). Hodge says that for non-Australians the parody speech would simply conform to a stereotype of an (unpleasant) Australian accent, but for Australians

"the pleasure is precisely in the gap between this form of speech and the varieties of English they hear and produce" (432).

There is solidarity and amusement, he seems to be suggesting, in knowing that others (particularly the British) think you speak like this, while you yourself know that you don't. On the other hand, it is relevant that Australian speech is different to British; the jokes are also amusing because the relative status of the two accents is a point of contest. In the past the British accent was 'correct' and 'educated'; now an Australian accent has become more acceptable.

In the accounts of "typical" New Zealand behaviour some similar contrast and positioning work could be operating, with 'yob' behaviour equivalent to speaking 'Strine'. First, it is amusing that outsiders believe this stereotype is an accurate representative of 'our' national group. Second, there is (national) solidarity in understanding that it is only a stereotype and being amused that the outsiders don't realise this. Third, there is also solidarity in partly conforming to it, insofar as New Zealanders are less "reserved", have better parties, or are "better at relaxing" than the British (all claims made by participants).

The third point, however, is delicate; it is necessary to avoid conforming to the stereotype. In Extract 22 the speaker finds his friend "a good laugh" but also describes him as "a horror" (in an earlier comment not quoted above), and in Extract 26 the same speaker has enjoyed going to a raucous club but concludes "It's the regular lots that go there, I think they're the worry". This comment constructs his own attendance as moderate in comparison with the "regular lots". Perhaps their bad behaviour is not a temporary, joking aberration but what they're 'really' like:

**EXTRACT 26**

H: it's a big warehouse, it's out in Kings Cross, it's every Sunday and it holds approximately a thousand people and it's just full of New Zealanders and Australians (.) drinking massive amounts of plonk, of alcohol in a very short period of time and um, you know (LAUGHTER) it's the great Aussie-Kiwi you know

INT: (LAUGHTER) *Horror*

H: It is. It is horrible. They have strippers, they have all this sort of carry-on. And I mean it's a good time for most of them but, that's not what I'm here for. That (.) I think it's quite a good institute. Most people do know about it and they do go there. It's the regular lots that go there, I think they're the worry.

Similarly, the speaker in Extract 25 initially saw the cricket players' behaviour as amusingly irreverent, especially because the team had both men and women in it so appeared less conventional than the British team. However, she stopped being amused when the men's behaviour suggested that they were not breaking the stereotype of the sexist job, but conforming to it totally.

The two opposite stereotypes, the uncultured heavy-drinking job and the

Hillary-style quiet achiever, date back to the early settlement of New Zealand. Phillips (1987) describes them as "The Boozer and the Decent Bloke". At the turn of the century the New Zealand campaign for women's suffrage was closely linked to the Temperance Movement. Men who drank were presented as a threat to family life, to decency and, again, the values loosely associated with "middle class" and also with Britain, in contrast to colonial 'roughness'. In London, currently, many New Zealand and Australian pubs and clubs have a double reputation for sociability and bad behaviour, as described above.

The contrast operates around a similar notion to the "culture" described in Extracts 22-25 in Chapter 5, which also established a British/ middle class/ positive contrast to colonial roughness. Again, it is possible to see a parallel with the example of the Australian accent. The contest here is not over whether or not an Australian should sound like a 'Brit', but, I suggest, over whether or not a New Zealander should act like one. The 'Hillary' and 'yob' stereotypes are similar in that they are unpretentious and show no respect for the (class conscious? cultured?) British. Going to pubs and behaving raucously can work as a similar challenge to 'British' values, but involve the danger of conforming to a stereotype. When someone does this, for example by going to the pub too often (Extract 23 above), speakers step back and distance themselves, taking positions in another (imagined) group, of discerning New Zealanders.

Are these different discursive positionings equally available to all speakers who identify themselves as New Zealanders? This analysis indicates that there are constraints. Firstly, the stereotypes are both male, and partly defined as such by being different from women. In the case of the 'yob', women are the (hetero)sexual opposites, for example as "trivial sexual beings" (Extract 25) or "strippers" (Extract 26). The Hillary-type quiet achiever and 'outdoors' type is implicitly contrasted to women in a domestic and dependent role inside the home. This suggests that positionings with any reference to

these stereotypes (in Hodge's terms, the positions on the bipolar continuum) are not readily available to women; it will be difficult for a woman to construct herself as a New Zealander using these interpretative resources.

Secondly, the stereotypes are also racialised, in that both are white. For instance, the 'yob' behaviour described in Extract 23 includes the joke of 'pretending' to speak Maori, which would be more difficult for someone who also positions her or himself as Maori. More significantly, the Hillary-type quiet achiever is positioned against the British (for example, in "beating the Brits" and in not being awed by royalty) but the contrast is, as has been noted, one of class or perhaps of the superior new colonial 'race' in the sense of being British-descended. It is not that Maori are the opposite by which this stereotype is defined, as women are to both: in this case, Maori are irrelevant. Again, it will be difficult to use these discursive resources to construct a Maori New Zealand identity, let alone a female Maori New Zealand identity.

These speakers are concerned about how they are seen by others, as New Zealanders. In some situations, as described in Extracts 27-30, a claim of New Zealand national identity can do useful work. Travellers feel proud of the aspects of their home country which other nationals envy. This is part of the construction of the nation as a personal possession, noted in Chapter 5:

#### EXTRACT 27

when people ask me and they say "Oh what's it like?" you always just say " Oh it's wonderful" and they say "Well what are you doing here?" and so, yeah it's great

They can feel part of a group of compatriots and attribute bad experiences to the inferiority of other countries and national groups. They can also draw on positive associations in specific fields, for example, for their work.

#### EXTRACT 28

it works well over here, New Zealanders tend to be well thought of in in most industries, they're specially well thought

of in my industry, publishing, the few kiwis that come over here and stay in publishing tend to get on very well

#### EXTRACT 29

the charge nurse of the last area I was working with, she's had a lot of kiwis and Australian people go through her unit and stuff and, she said that she likes getting kiwi and Australian, she lumped us together (LAUGHTER), kiwi and Australian nurses because she liked the way we were trained, she liked the way we used to muck in and pick up things quickly and, just our general attitude so I guess we've got a good hardworking reputation as well

#### EXTRACT 30

at work they talk about us being a New Zealand mafia, kind of they joke between themselves, because we pop in, and we also lever each other round, to jobs, so I've told people where jobs are and they've applied, and I've been told where jobs are and I've applied. So there is quite a network going on

However New Zealanders who have either emigrated or left their own country temporarily also encounter dilemmas around their national identity. Firstly, while wanting to claim a special identity they may become aware that they are not very different from other nationals, to themselves or to others. For example, the speaker in Extract 29 refers to New Zealanders and Australians being "lumped" together as a single category.

Another dilemma can derive from the different ways of describing national identity, for example, as a permanent trait or a flexible form of positioning. There are obviously contradictions here which become noticeable when travellers wish to distinguish themselves from other New Zealanders. In many cases speakers referred to the reputations which New Zealanders have in London of being, on the one hand, capable and hardworking, and on the other,

raucous and heavy drinking, following the stereotypes discussed above. There is a need to reconcile a positive self-characterisation with a sometimes negative public face and label. This dilemma operates as a constraint on speakers' positionings and self-constructions. Some of these points are present in the following extract:

**EXTRACT 31**

**INT: So what does it mean to you now to call yourself a New Zealander?**

**M: Efficient (LAUGHTER)**

**L: Friendly. I feel like as soon as you get on the plane to leave New Zealand you suddenly become**

**K: An Australian (LAUGHTER) You do though, you do don't you? As soon as = you get out of New Zealand**

**M: = You become a foreigner**

**L: Oh no, not to everyone, to yourself. You suddenly become New Zealand, you become "I'm a New Zealander" = I've got my**

**M: = An ambassador**

**L: flag on my bag, I've got my you know, New Zealand T-shirt or sweatshirt and my New Zealand socks and and I you know you want the whole world to know that you're a New Zealander**

**K: Until you get here and see what all the other New**

## **Zealanders do**

These speakers had been complaining about the inefficiency of British banks. They first construct themselves as New Zealanders, in contrast, as efficient and also as friendly, two positive qualities. Speakers K and L then talk of the identities conferred on them by other people; identity now derives from the way they are perceived, as "foreign" and as indistinguishable from Australians. Interestingly, Speaker L mentions becoming foreign "to yourself": she becomes a reflexive being, perceived not only by others but by herself.

Speaker L then describes how she presents herself in order to establish an identity as a New Zealander; she 'becomes' a New Zealander at the point when she leaves the country and comes under the gaze of non-New Zealanders, and she takes control of their perceptions by, literally, labelling herself as a New Zealander. Her identity is now a performance. However Speaker K points out that the performance also associates her with the (bad) behaviour of other New Zealanders; she is not on stage alone and her audience may be influenced in their assessment by other performances. In this extract therefore the speakers explore the dilemmas of how to be seen in the way they (would like to) see themselves.

Another example of these dilemmas occurs in the following extracts. In the first, the speaker is describing how he chooses to "attach" his identity to certain New Zealanders and achievements of New Zealanders, in education, his profession :

### **EXTRACT 32**

to feel that you know the education system that we, that we stand out and I'm proud to be known as a New Zealander in that way and so, so I mean I kind of attach myself and rub elbows with all those other kiwi teachers that have made a worldwide impact, or teaching systems. There's a word for that in Maoritanga, we call it 'mana munching'. So I munch a bit of



that particular *mana* (LAUGHTER) But otherwise it's, you know another thing that I can think that's quite a different situation

This is similar to the practical advantages described by the speakers in Extracts 28-30 . However this speaker then goes on to give an example of a different situation. Again, there are the images of New Zealanders abroad as ambassadors and as badly behaved 'yobs':

### EXTRACT 33

like once I was sitting in an insurance company waiting to insure my car for going to Europe and there was a bunch of shaven-headed kind of rugby beer swilling types getting their insurance and smoking and generally being kind of loud and raucous and I just completely want to divorce myself from that. And yet I see those people as going out there and kind of being our national image sometimes, and and that's when I want to scream at people 'we're not all the same! you know, we're a whole nation of different types of peoples and different types of, of everything really'

In expressing his awareness of other people's judgments and his wish to "divorce" himself from certain images of New Zealand this speaker is not talking of his national identity as a fixed trait but as a mobile category which is to some extent controllable and negotiable. However, paradoxically, he is choosing to position himself with people who are one "type" and not another; his identity is chosen but theirs, good or bad, is, implicitly, fixed.

This section has looked at the 'forms' of national identity constructed by participants (for example, as a permanent trait) and also the 'content', that is, some of the interpretative resources available for the discursive construction of a New Zealand identity. It has shown how New Zealanders position themselves 'with' or 'apart from' stereotypes and (presumed) popular perceptions of New Zealanders, and has also considered some of the dilemmas

and problems around such an identity. These will now be discussed in more detail, using the concepts of 'dominant' and 'subaltern' identities.

### **Dominant and subaltern identities in New Zealand**

Shapiro (1988) has analysed the modern nation-state unit, taking the example of "Guatemala" (the inverted commas are his), as a dominant construction which naturalises certain boundaries and power relations. This construction obscures past struggles and continuing challenges. Challengers "acquire delegitimised identities"; for example, in "Guatemala" Mayans and Aztecs are presented as violent and fantastic figures (see Chapter 1). Shapiro's analysis therefore suggests that a national identity is also a dominant construction which works to reinforce existing power relations and counter contests to them. Here I will use the terms 'dominant' and 'subaltern' identity, taken from Shurmer-Smith and Hannam (1994), to refer to the discursive constructions of legitimised or delegitimised identities.

My analysis differs from Shapiro's in the assumption that discursively constructed national identities are not single but multiple. One reason for this would be the multiple nature of constructions of the nation. For example, each of the three possible constructions of New Zealand described in Chapter 3 can be associated with a different construction of national identity.

The three constructions are of New Zealand as a white-dominated former colony; as a Maori or bicultural society, and as a multicultural open economy. In terms of the first, the dominant construction, or constructions, of New Zealand identity could be predicted to do ideological work to establish and reinforce a white British-descended identity. In Shapiro's terms, according to this construction both Maori and recent Asian migrants can be understood as contesting the dominant national unit. The Maori claim a different identity, and also separate, collective ownership of land. "Asian" business-people are often described in ways which suggest they are seen either as operating in a wider space than New Zealand, or alternatively as attempting to create

exclusive social enclaves, and therefore not respecting the boundaries of the dominant unit. In terms of this construction Maori and 'Asian' can be understood as subaltern identities.

If the second construction of New Zealand described in Chapter 3 prevailed, the corresponding dominant constructions of New Zealand identity would be either of Maori, as the indigenous New Zealanders, or of pakeha and Maori as equal partners. Interestingly, a visual image which was used in many advertisements, particularly in the 1980s was of two boys, one white and one Maori, hand in hand (discussed by A. Bell, 1995a).

The constructions of New Zealand identity which would correspond to the third multicultural construction of the New Zealand nation described in Chapter 3 might include several differently racialised but equal and compatible New Zealand identities. Again, this has become a common visual image, frequently using photographs of children.

(It is not part of this thesis to examine such visual images in the media, but it is worth noting that their apparent variety is usually deceptive: only certain kinds of difference are acknowledged. An interesting dispute arose in April 1995 over a Telecom New Zealand television advertisement showing a Maori child playing the piano. It was described by a Maori leader, Sir Paul Reeves, as an example of tokenism. He complained that the child was 'Maori' only in facial feature and skin colour; no other difference from non-Maori, so no other meaning of Maori identity was presented. His criticisms can be interpreted as a complaint about the suppression of difference.)

Another implication of the third construction is that this is the form of a successful modern economy. Corresponding constructions of national identity therefore can be expected to carry associations of economic success and also the logical inevitability invoked in models of market economics.

There are other reasons for assuming that discursive constructions of identity will be multiple and variable. Speakers draw on a wide range of

different resources. They must attend to different concerns related to wider contexts as well as to those arising in the immediate interaction.

Discursive constructions of national identity will not necessarily be in the form of single 'characters', like photographic images, but are likely to establish more complex relationships, to the land, to Others, to work and so on. The previous section indicates the prevalence of male, white and also anti-'cultured' repertoires in constructions of New Zealand identity.

The next section will consider in more detail the dilemmas which arise for speakers as a result of dominant constructions of national identity. In discursively positioning themselves speakers are constrained by these dominant constructions and certain discursively constructed identities may be difficult to reconcile, in both 'form' and 'content'.

#### Constructing an identity as a Maori New Zealander

As has been discussed, some of the extracts already quoted (for example, Extracts 10 and 11) suggest a contest between Maori and New Zealand identities. This contest is largely conducted around constructions of Maori identity as a permanent essential trait. In some situations this construction can be seen to position Maori speakers favorably. The reification of Maoriness, as a way of "being" can make it seem more fundamental than New Zealand national identity, however defined. (This is relevant to the contests around indigenous status which are described in Chapter 3, and also in Chapter 7.) For example, in the following extract a speaker who identifies herself as Maori responds to a question about her identity:

#### EXTRACT 34

INT: What does it mean to you when you call yourself Maori and what does it mean to you when you call yourself a New Zealander?

R: I think to me a New Zealander is someone who, may not

have been born there I dunno, but someone who is brought up with the New Zealand ethic which is, I dunno, meat pies (LAUGHTER) and and rugby and netball and and Saturday sport and all of those things, but being a Maori means having all of that heritage behind you as well and having that way of thinking and that thing that some people call 'aroha' and that thing that some people call um 'Maoritanga' and that is the distinction because, I mean where I grew up everybody knew and understood those things including you know the pakehas and um you know it was just an accepted thing but then as I grow into the wider world I realise that people didn't have an appreciation and I thought that was sort of sad in a way. But that's what being a Maori means it means having all of that behind you or with you yeah, which some New Zealanders just unfortunately don't have

So for this speaker New Zealand identity is the result of environment, of influences and experiences during the time someone is growing up, and perhaps also 'inside knowledge', but Maori identity is more fundamental.

Another speaker, who could be said to have chosen his Maori identity as a form of self-presentation or positioning since other members of his family do not claim this identity, rejected the perceptions of others (of his appearance, for example) as important and also spoke of his Maori identity in essential terms, as biological, although not as a quantifiable "blood" link but as "roots":

#### EXTRACT 35

that was the only time that there was a full-blooded Maori in that line, and then it got kind of whiter and whiter and whiter or paler and paler or more diluted as the generations came by, I think that was now five generations ago, I think. You know often people say to me, cos I don't look like a Maori they

say 'well what percentage are you?' or 'How much Maori are you, how much Maori blood have you got?' or something and I don't, I actually have kept away from working it out, what the maths of it is because it's not important, as a Maori would know, that just, it's not a how much you are thing, it's that you've got roots thing, and it doesn't matter where it is.

As has been mentioned, there have been attempts to postulate an indigenous white New Zealand "pakeha" identity which can stand against this characterisation of Maori identity (A. Bell, 1995b). The contest is conducted around a construction of identity as an essential trait, that is, as a way of being. This can be seen in the responses to one of the interview questions, which sets up Maori identity as an essential characteristic:

It has been suggested that Maori are the only true New Zealanders.

How do you respond to that?

Although the responses to this question varied, in most cases the construction of identity as essential did not. Speakers either agreed that Maori are the only true New Zealanders, or they disagreed on the grounds that there had been an earlier group of true indigenes, the Moriori, or they rejected the suggestion on the grounds that there are no full-blooded Maori remaining.

These responses do different work in relation to constructions of New Zealand national history, and to claims on the resources of the country, as will be discussed in Chapter 7. As has been noted, the construction of Maori identity as essential can do positive work for Maori speakers. However it must be noted that such an identity may be inescapable. For a speaker who is 'already positioned' racially, for example, because of appearance or name, this way of understanding her or his Maori identity can work as a form of resistance. However its final effect is to require more discursive work, in explaining and making the essential identity positive, than is required of a speaker whose non-Maori identity remains (in most situations) invisible.

The responses also show clearly the social nature of the discursive constructions which speakers draw on and use to position themselves. The same arguments and even turns of phrase recurred; consequently they could also be anticipated, as in the following extract. This speaker explains that he "classes himself" as Maori because of the way he was brought up. He introduces this explanation with the statement that there are no "full-blooded Maoris around"; in other words, a purely 'biological' explanation is not available to him. He then lists the Maori aspects of his own upbringing; the list is quite long, implying that the claim is strong, and includes Maori words which he does not translate for the interviewer. One of these is in fact the word for Maori language ("reo"):

**EXTRACT 36**

From our perspective we were, I class myself as Maori, though I don't believe there's any, from the knowledge I've got there's any full-blooded Maoris around. And I think when people class themselves as Maori it's because that's the way they've been b(r)ought up(.)

And I was bought up with the reo and the culture and, and the performing and going to all the tangis and everything. But at the same time I think it was drummed into us that you have to sort of like, to get on this world you've gotta, I think Sir Apirana Ngata, who was sort of like, one of the greatest Maori people, said that you must take the best from both worlds

In this extract the speaker simultaneously states and demonstrates the point that Maori people should "take the best" from both the Maori and non-Maori worlds. First he anticipates a possible criticism and shows that he is aware of challenges to Maori identity as biological, and specifically, of the claim that there are now no "full-blooded" Maori people. He then demonstrates his own special knowledge, of things Maori and the Maori language. Finally he

quotes an important Maori who was also sufficiently acclaimed by non-Maori to be knighted. In total he presents himself as someone who does not make an unsophisticated claim of biological difference and can agree with arguments often used against Maori people, yet who still has extra knowledge and experience which non-Maori (like the interviewer) lack.

In the three previous extracts (34-36) Maori identity is presented as a strong and essential identity. In Extract 34 it is specifically opposed to a New Zealand identity, in Extract 35 it is constructed as different from being white, and in Extract 36 it is contrasted with a 'modern world' identity (this being the world you have to "get on" in). All three speakers construct Maori identity as something more or extra than the Other, however defined.

Does this suggest that Maori identity is now one of two dominant identities in a bicultural nation, as would be suggested by the second construction of New Zealand described in Chapter 3? The answer must be 'no', for several reasons.

One reason is that, as noted above, speakers who identify themselves as Maori and as New Zealanders are required to do this kind of explaining and justifying. Some non-Maori speakers do similar work around their claims of New Zealand or of pakeha identity (for example, in Extract 9), acknowledging the contest from the Maori, but to a lesser extent.

The second is that there remain considerable difficulties in reconciling discursive constructions of a strong Maori identity with either a successful 'modern world' identity or a New Zealand national identity. This is shown in the following more detailed analysis which draws on an interview with a Maori woman living in London to show some of the constraints and limitations to self identity construction in terms of Maori and New Zealand identity.

In the course of the interviews the speaker, who will be referred to as Speaker S, establishes conflicts between Maori and non-Maori as changing over time. In an account of the different generations of her family she describes a



conflict between, on the one hand, Maori language and culture and on the other, English language and "a pakeha world" and "the pakeha way". Her grandfather's generation had the Maori language but did not pass it on because it was incompatible with a pakeha world:

**EXTRACT 37**

he decided that he would bring his children up totally English-orientated, because he felt that it was a pakeha world Her mother was therefore denied Maori culture. This is described in strong terms:

**EXTRACT 38**

I think she felt that her culture had been ripped from her ...the pakeha way was forced on her.

The language echoes the violence of invaders, of abduction and rape. As a result, the speaker suggests, the mother became "radical" in her valuing of her Maori identity and her denial of New Zealand identity which the speaker equates with "pakeha".

In describing herself, the speaker suggest that these earlier conflicts have now largely been resolved. She describes herself as having been brought up in a pakeha way and seems to suggest that she is able to call herself a New Zealander because her Maori identity is weaker than her mother's:

**EXTRACT 39**

S: I've been brought up totally just you know pakeha, just English everything. And in a way I, I don't have any bad feelings, I mean I know a lot of people do, a lot of Maoris do have a lot of bad feelings. But I don't and I think I would class myself as a New Zealander. Um, even though I am Maori.

INT: Now that's quite interesting so do you think your mother might not, she'd say I'm Maori and not New Zealander?

S: Oh yes totally. She would be, she would class herself as Maori.

In this account, both Maori and pakeha identities are described in terms of "doing" (language, "way"), and in terms of self-positioning (classing oneself as New Zealander or Maori), but Maori identity is also described in terms of "being", as when the speaker says "even though I am Maori" and when she describes her mother's Maori identity in almost psychodynamic terms as emerging more strongly for having being denied or repressed. Like the previous speakers (Extracts 34-36) she therefore describes Maori identity as more essential.

'New Zealand', 'pakeha' and 'English' identities are equated. For her mother, 'Maori' and 'New Zealand' identities are opposed. The speaker suggests that she has escaped the "bitter" and "bad feelings" which her mother has and that, after her grandfather's experience of being punished for speaking Maori and her mother's strong negative feelings, she lives in a happier, less conflictual time. However later in the interview, in her response to the question about Maori as "the only true New Zealanders", the conflict between Maori and pakeha ways is described as less resolved. It emerges as a conflict between different generations of Maori which places pressure on the speaker to act in different ways:

#### EXTRACT 40

I think that a lot of people would say 'yes' and in a way I would say yes because I am of Maori background so I'd say 'yeah course course' you know. But in the other instance I don't think that you can turn round and say 'well you can't come in' because now, this day and age, you can't turn round to people and say 'oh this is my country, you can't come in'. Whereas I think a lot of, my older generation would think 'well of course

this is Maori land', 'this is Maori, this is Aotearoa', you know, 'course this is Maori, and you should fight for it and you should fight for it to get it back' and do all that. And you just, I think you just think, you start to stress out cos you think 'oh, in a way I've only ever known pakeha ways and pakeha beliefs and so why are you trying to push Maori onto me now'. And you think 'in a way I'd like to think that, yeah, we are, we were the first people there without a doubt but there was another culture there before us and we completely obliterated them you know, killed them off and stole their land, the Morioris' so, who's right?

In answering this question, Speaker S talks less about what people are than about what they do and what they are seen to be. Accepting the premise (that Maori are the only true New Zealanders) would require her to fight, to get Maori land back and to stop people (the descendents of British settlers, or later migrants) from coming in. It would require her to resolve practical problems, change her "pakeha ways and pakeha beliefs" and answer accusations that the Maori people wiped out an earlier people. She is trying to resist the demands of other generations that she should do things which will embroil her in conflicts.

This extract also indicates some different stereotypes of being Maori which speakers who claim this identity must position themselves against (as the speakers quoted earlier positioned themselves against stereotypes). Wetherell and Potter (1992) have noted the common construction of Maori as "activists" and "stirrers". They discuss the rhetorical work done in non-Maori speakers' talk by the contrasts set up between

" 'activists' versus 'sensible Maoris', 'activists' versus the 'conformist mass', 'the Maori people' or parts of the Maori people versus the 'placid Pakeha majority'." (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 157)

Participants interviewed for this research also used "activists" and "radicals" as an extreme case formulation, as in the following two examples. The first, Extract 41, is from a participant who identified herself as non-Maori. The second, Extract 42, is from two who identified themselves as Maori and are discussing a Maori cultural group:

**EXTRACT 41**

Just that these radicals are doing more harm. I mean there's been people out there that've done good and you know, sure they needed a few more rights and you know, but not it's turned around where it's more racist against, you know, the average white person in New Zealand than it is against the Maori people (.) you know and it's sort of gone from one extreme to the other, you know, there's, I think they're doing a lot of, radicals are doing more harm than good.

**EXTRACT 42**

T: ... I think it's wonderful to carry it on. Some people would you know

U: Turn their nose up to it

T: Because it's, for what we are and for what we've got, it's quite you know

INT: Who would turn their nose up to it?

T: Um, old traditioners and sort of very um, what would you call them?

U: Staunch

**T: Yes sort of the**

**U: Almost activists kind of**

These two extracts indicate a negative and extreme construction of Maori as activists. Looking back to Extract 40, Speaker S can be seen to position herself against this construction and also against a construction of Maori as a non-modern identity. This second idea emerges strongly in the following extracts from the interview with her.

In response to another question in Extract 43, below, Speaker S first denies that it is possible for one person to reconcile Maori and pakeha identities, then agrees that she has managed to do that "because I was b(r)ought up pakeha first"; this suggests that the two identities can only be reconciled if the Maori identity is weaker, that is, if pakeha remains dominant. Although throughout the discussion Maori identity is characterised as something that people 'are', indisputably, questions of identity are discussed as problems of 'doing', of living or thinking in a certain way, and of performing correctly as either Maori or pakeha:

**EXTRACT 43**

**S: a lot of Maori have found it harder to change their lifestyles, change the way of thinking. I think that's probably the hardest thing that. I found it easy because my mother'd been totally, she'd bought me up totally pakeha and, because she had been bought up that way, whereas a lot of Maori find it very difficult to identify between the difference of either, and I think they're either pushed to either be one or the other, you know that's the difference. You can't harmoniously be both and run, run your whole life smoothly**

INT: Do you think not?

S: Going going like, jumping between the two

INT: Don't you feel you're doing that a bit? I mean you seem harmonious and you seem to have the two.

S: Yeah I do. I think mainly because ah (.) because I was bought up pakeha first. I think if I'd been bought up totally Maori, Maori and just speaking Maori, English was my second language and all, everything I ever learned was my culture, not the other way round

INT: Then that would've been a disadvantage

S: I think so yeah. Um, I wouldn't say, I don't feel it's a disadvantage but I think some Maori do find it a disadvantage because they have to distinguish or try, try to live a life that they're not comfortable in.

She then describes her brother as such a person:

EXTRACT 44

my brother was completely brought up completely differently because he lived with my grandfather before he died, and he was brought up totally Maori, in the in the, in the bush um. An outhouse. No running water inside, no electricity, all that. And he was brought up speaking Maori, he's complete, he's (.) he finds it very hard I think, to identify with a lot of things. He has no concept of um opening a bank account and

things like that. Finds it very difficult. And he's very quiet-spoken and can be pushed around. Not by pakeha but by people in general, because he's so quiet and timid because he's been brought up the Maori way. And when you've been brought up that way you find it very hard to step into a role like working and like places like Auckland or, where you're bound to be able to find a job.

So here "the Maori way" is being contrasted with urban life and also a competitive modern labour market, and people who have only known the Maori way are not strong enough to survive in such an environment. Here is the construction of Maori as non-modern. This echoes her depiction of her grandfather's choice, between Maori culture and "the pakeha world" as the (capitalist urban) environment his children would have to survive in. Wetherell and Potter (1992) comment on this negative positioning of Maori in relation to the 'modern':

"Maoris continue to be a race but Pakeha New Zealanders become representatives of an international modernism. Their identity lies in the way the world happens to be now rather than in their distinctive blood" (Wetherell and Potter, 1992:127)

The underlying assumption that the "Maori way" is impractical and outdated is similar to the 'nativism' discussed in by Shurmer-Smith and Hannam (1994). It could also be seen as the assumption that Awatere Huata is trying to counter in her construction of Maori as natural entrepreneurial achievers (1996: see Chapter 3).

This speaker constructs the dominant New Zealand identity as "pakeha" or "English", in terms of lifestyle ("way"), English language, and "beliefs", and also work environment. She depicts the conflict between Maori and pakeha identities as ongoing and difficult; as an individual she can only reconcile these two if her Maori identity is subordinate. She describes this conflict

almost entirely in terms of "doing" rather than "being", that is, in terms of performance rather than innate identities.

In talking about living outside New Zealand, the same speaker talks of her identity in terms of other people's perceptions; she explains her Maori identity by referring to a spectacle they may be familiar with:

**EXTRACT 45**

When I say I'm a Maori now, to certain people who ask me, they find it hard to identify with, so I always say to them 'Well you know the New Zealand rugby team, you know when they do the haka at the beginning of the game, well that's my culture, that's my heritage, that's what a Maori is'. And then they're aware of that.

She belongs to a Maori cultural group and describes their performances as changing people's perceptions of New Zealand identity:

**EXTRACT 46**

Spreading our knowledge, spreading our culture through London. And through Europe as well when we go and do cultural festivals in Holland and elsewhere in Europe so I think we're spreading the word that you know there is another culture that exists in New Zealand bar the English. Everybody thinks well New Zealand is sort of like the place where the English sort of like settled. And, I think as a whole for New Zealand, that's probably what I've, changed, people being aware of the Maori in New Zealand.

Such constructions of Maori, as culture and performance, can also be problematic . [For example, Wetherell and Potter (1992) point out how Maori culture can become "a site for Pakeha skill acquisition" (134) when reduced to language, arts and crafts.] However it is noticeable that there are fewer conflicts in Speaker S's account of her identity in this situation. In New Zealand



she 'is' a Maori through her family links, but this immediately creates a pressure to act out her Maori identity by 'doing' certain things. The alternative ways that she can 'act out' her Maori identity are both problematic. The first would be to join in the political struggles in which her mother is active. This form of acting out reinforces the special claims of the Maori as indigenes, including their land claims, and contests the dominant construction of New Zealand identity [with some success: non-Maori speakers concede a special status to the Maori, although this can in turn serve functions for the non-Maori (as the source of a unique identity for New Zealand) and is also contested.] However it is also stereotyped negatively as an 'activist' or 'radical' identity.

In her descriptions of her brother, Speaker S implies that another way of acting out this identity would be incompatible with using her skills to have a successful career in the capitalist/pakeha labour market. She is referring to the construction of Maori as an anti-modern identity. Of course it is possible to argue that a Maori identity is perfectly compatible with success as a competitive urban worker, but in this interview, and others, a conflict is set up, for example when the speaker says:

**EXTRACT 47**

a lot of Maori have found it harder to change their lifestyles, change the way of thinking. I think that's probably the hardest thing that. I found it easy because my mother'd been totally, she'd bought me up totally pakeha.

The near impossibility of denying her "pakeha" upbringing and her qualifications suggest that in New Zealand she feels she cannot live out her Maori identity:

**EXTRACT 48**

you start to stress out cos you think 'oh, in a way I've only ever known pakeha ways and pakeha beliefs and so why are you

trying to push Maori onto me now'.

Outside New Zealand she can construct her Maori identity with less conflict in terms of both being and doing. The latter is performed through her participation in the cultural group and the positive work this does "spreading our culture".

This analysis suggests that the constraints which certain constructions of (Maori) identity can place on speakers, and the difficulty there can be in reconciling discursively constructed (New Zealand and Maori) identities .

### Conclusion

This chapter has examined the interpretative resources used in participants' talk to construct New Zealand national identity. The 'forms' of such constructions include models of the person and of the relationship between this person and a national population united by similarity. The 'content' includes different identity categories around New Zealand identity and also stereotypes of New Zealanders.

The chapter has considered the dilemmas involved in discursively constructing oneself as a New Zealander. Some of these dilemmas arise in speakers' work to position themselves positively, for example, in relation to stereotypes. Other dilemmas result from the dominant constructions of New Zealand identity associated with dominant constructions of the nation, of the kind described by Shapiro. The second section of the chapter considers the difficulty of reconciling a construction of national identity with certain subaltern identities, such as an identity as a Maori or a woman. This difficulty and the conflicts around the construction of a Maori identity were discussed in detail with reference to one interview.

## **Chapter 7: Using constructions of national identity and nation to do discursive work around contentious issues**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapter looked at how discursive constructions of self-identity can draw on interpretative resources associated with the nation and national identity. It explored some of the ideological implications of constructions and positionings associated with self-identity. This final data analysis chapter examines how speakers mobilise discursive constructions of nation and national identity in their talk about contentious issues.

In terms of the aims of the thesis as a whole this chapter shows how claims of national identity and concepts of the nation persist and change through contests around issues associated with 'globalisation', such as reorganisation of the national economy; redefinition of the national community to acknowledge the claims of sub-national minority groups, and increased migration into the national territory. These are changes which, as Billig summarises, postmodernist theorists associate with the disintegration of the nation (Billig, 1995). This analysis suggests that these issues are linked with contests around the construction of the nation, but not about whether or not the nation and national persist. The contests operate on the assumption of the continuation of the nation (although this does not preclude the device of presenting certain changes as a threat to the nation). In addition, this chapter shows how claims of national identity do ideological work around the issues, in the sense of 'ideological' discussed in Chapter 4. In other words, claims of national identity do work around power, normalisation and the obscuring of contest and challenge.

The three issues discussed are taken from the case of New Zealand but are related to the impact of globalisation and are therefore relevant elsewhere.

The first issue which is considered is the recent economic changes in New

Zealand. These were described in detail in Chapter 3 and include a massive reduction in the provisions associated with the welfare state, an increased emphasis on competition and enterprise, and a general 'opening up' of the national economy to global market forces, following the general tenets of monetarist and free market economics. The economic principles and policies adopted in New Zealand resemble those taken up in many other national economies in the 1980s and 90s.

The second issue is the status of the Maori. This can be understood as an example of the struggle of a minority 'racial' and 'cultural' group not to have its identity subsumed, and also as a struggle by an indigenous people to reclaim rights and land lost during colonisation. Again, there are parallels with situations elsewhere.

The third issue is the status of new migrants within New Zealand. There are parallels with the situation of the Maori in that such migrants are minority groups, but in this case the contacts and competition are not associated with past economic exploitation but with ongoing and future developments of the 'global economy'. The opening of national borders to new migration is linked with opening them to trade, investment and the movement of finance.

Most of the extracts on these three issues are from the responses to a particular set of the questions from the schedule in Appendix C. The first issue was raised in answer to the following group of questions:

What important changes have occurred in New Zealand in your lifetime?

What changes do you think will occur in the future?

What changes would you NOT like to see? What do you think it's important to retain?

In answers to these questions many participants also began to talk about the second issue, the status of the Maori. This was also directly raised in the following questions:

It's been claimed that Maoris are the only true New Zealanders. Do you agree ?

Who do you think is entitled to call themselves a New Zealander?

The final issue was raised with the group of questions:

New Zealand has been described as a nation of migrants. Do you think it's easy to become a New Zealander?

Can you think of any groups of migrants who haven't fitted in particularly well?

Do you think there should be any special tests or conditions for would-be migrants?

Have you heard about the recent Asian migration?.

Do you think this should be encouraged?

### **Economic change and inclusion in the national economy**

This section will look at some of the contests and dilemmas around economic change and inclusion in the national economy. Chapter 3 suggested that New Zealand has experienced significant change in this area. Of course the New Zealand economy has always been dependent on other larger economies to provide markets for its exports. In this sense the government's control over the economy is and was illusory because prosperity depends heavily on factors operating on a wider scale. For instance, even when protected by import controls, as described by Colin James (1992), New Zealand industries have had to compete effectively if they were to expand outside very limited domestic markets.

However the national government's tax and distribution policies do influence the relative prosperity levels within New Zealand and constrain or facilitate people's participation within the national economy. Government welfare provision and also job creation can influence people's two main forms of participation, as consumers and earners. It can be argued that almost all residents participate as consumers, but obviously those with less income

spend less. This form of exclusion is more significant when, as has happened in New Zealand, the market has taken over the provision of certain goods and services which were previously provided outside it, such as leisure activities, certain kinds of food production and processing, and care for dependents. (The status and activities of women are obviously highly relevant to the functioning of the market in these areas.) In the longer term, government policies on education and health facilitate or limit access to resources which affect opportunities and welfare.

In addition, the government is also an important and influential disseminator of ideas about economic cause-and-effect and therefore about what constitutes deserved or undeserved failure or success economically. For all these reasons the major changes in government policies and in the economic theory espoused since 1984 are likely to have changed the grounds for inclusion within the national economy and, by implication, access to a share of national prosperity.

The responses considered in this section are from people aged 30 or less at the time they were interviewed (in late 1994 and early 1995). Since the reforms around both the economy and the Treaty of Waitangi were initiated by the 1984 Labour government, these people had seen change introduced and debated throughout most of their adult lives. Some spoke of the economic situation of New Zealand in more positive terms than others but it was noticeable that most participants in this age-group talked of the reduced welfare provision and the other economic reforms as inevitable and necessary.

The speaker in the following extract speaks positively of recent changes without distancing himself from them. He focuses on the same changes emphasised in this thesis in Chapter 3 and incorporates them into a narrative of New Zealand having developed and progressed:

#### **EXTRACT 1**

**INT:** the next thing I wanted to ask you was what important

changes in New Zealand have occurred in your lifetime?

D: (.) There've been quite a few I suppose. Probably the most significant one that really springs to mind is the election of a Labour government in 1984 and what came out of that. Roger Douglas and what he did. Like if you ask me, he's the reason I see New Zealand is doing very well at this point in time economically and that. Like he had vision, that man has got absolutely superb vision, he's got the vision of a nation in front of him whereas I find a lot of other politicians are a lot more narrow-minded, so I think the election July 84, that was very significant. There's obviously been other ones

(.) Well probably one going on at the moment is the Maori land claims and things like that. That's obviously, they're trying to sort that out. But that probably hasn't got to the stage of being so significant cos it hasn't been settled yet. But whether it ever will will be, that could take a long (time) to settle, looks as though it's gonna take a long time just seeing what's gone on on Waitangi Day

(.) There's also, I do recollect sort of (.) such things as (.) like the oil price increase in the early seventies and that, like I remember quite clearly my father saying 'oh you know, this is not good'. And that obviously had a flow-on effect through New Zealand like it meant that we all of a sudden started to import you know, our imports and exports didn't match and got out of balance and the balance of payments. In fact taking it from the point of economics, answering my questions from the economic point of view cos you know that's my slant on life,

I think the Springbok tour in 81 was quite significant, sort

of that changed things a little bit too. Obviously it divided the country quite significantly. But I feel New Zealanders probably grew up from that too and it's a better country for it, that an event like that happened you know like (.) cos I think (.) people would've taken a lot different approach to the whole event if it was to happen again in similar circumstances. I don't think something like that would've gone on.

INT: What you mean sort of the whole, confrontation and things like that?

D: Yeah it would've been talked about a lot more before the event happened and I don't think the event would've gone ahead like, you know people would've said well you know (.) would've sat down and thought it through all the way through and said 'OK'. Well I don't think you'd have a Prime Minister that would've let something like that go on again (LAUGHTER) So I thought, you know, that was pretty significant, it pretty brought the country of age a little bit. You know like it was mass confrontation. And (.) sort of changed people's views, it split things up for quite a while, by all accounts. Although like it didn't really affect my family or anything like that, they sort of (.) kept pretty quiet on the whole...

The Labour government in 84 is definitely as far as I can see the most significant. Just the way that they changed the whole structure of the New Zealand economy. And the thinking of New Zealanders and the way they go about doing business. The whole, the government said like 'stand up on your feet, you can do it'. And gave them the confidence to do it. And people



moaned for a while but then they realised 'well gee, we are a little better than, you know, let's praise ourselves and let's get on with it and do the job'. I think that attitude's rubbed off to the benefit of the country

How then does this speaker draw on constructions of the nation and national identity? Firstly, in this account New Zealanders are depicted as sharing an independent attitude; it is a common national character, promoted by the 'parent' government. The values espoused in this account are similar to the nineteenth century values described by Fairburn (1989), and also of course those emphasised in the liberal economics revival of the 1970s and 80s: individualism, self-reliance or reduced reliance on state support, and 'enterprise' or entrepreneurial initiative. The 'strong minimal state' of economic theory has here become a strong, 'cruel to be kind' parent.

Secondly, by discussing events in national terms the speaker achieves a positive account. On this scale "New Zealand is doing very well at this time economically", even if individuals and groups within the population are not. A part of this positive construction of the nation is the parental government.

This speaker, who had studied economics and worked in a related field, speaks positively about the Finance Minister in the 1984 Labour government, Roger Douglas (who was so widely regarded as the 'mover' of the economic reforms that they were known in New Zealand as 'Rogernomics'). Here the speaker aligns himself 'with' the government, making no distinction between his own interests, the interests of New Zealand and Douglas's "vision".

Apart from the reference to the Maori, this account is dominated by the assumptions that change is inevitable and good and that there is a forward trend of positive development, expressed using the metaphor of growth and maturation. For example, at various points, "New Zealanders grew up" and an event "brought the country of age a little bit". The government is depicted as a strict but wise parent which forced and helped New Zealanders to become more

independent. The people, its children, "moaned for a while", then "realised" and became confident successful adults.

The speaker uses a timescale in which quite long periods of hardship or negative events are placed within a narrative sequence which is ultimately positive. The 1981 Springbok Tour (see Chapter 3), which "divided the country quite significantly", is described here as having had the positive effect of making New Zealanders grow. After the divisions, a new stronger unity was created. The speaker suggests the same events (the tour and the disputes around it) could not happen now, 14 years later, because New Zealand is necessarily better than it was then: its politicians would not make the same mistakes, people would respond differently and in a more mature less emotional way, by talking through the problems.

In contrast, the references to Maori land claims are not fitted into this teleological account. They are left out of the narrative of New Zealand's maturation into a unified nation of successful people. This recalls the constructions of time discussed in Chapter 5.

When the speaker moves to the issue of Maori land claims, he distances himself from both the government and the problem. (When he says "what's gone on on Waitangi Day" he is referring to Maori demonstrations at the commemorative ceremony in New Zealand on 7 February 1995, the day before this interview was conducted. Both the events of the day and the controversy around them had been widely reported in Britain.) The government are now 'they': "they're trying to sort that out" (emphasis added). It is clearly someone else's problem and he is much more tentative in passing judgement on its importance and likely outcomes, as shown by his choice of words ("probably hasn't got to the stage ....", "whether it ever will be, that could take a long time to settle, looks as though it's gonna take a long time") compared with the more definite expressions used earlier ("he's the reason I see New Zealand is doing very well" "he had vision").

Having constructed 'New Zealand' as the relevant entity, the speaker can be seen to position himself positively in relation to it. He takes credit for its economic achievements because he is part of the successful economic entity or else he is that entity, scaling himself up (see Chapter 5). New Zealand has experienced problems, learnt from them and progressed to a positive point and he is at that same point. He is one of the population with a positive attitude.

Similar positions are taken in the following shorter extract from a discussion between three women who are nurses. The reform of social welfare is also described as having been necessary and inevitable, and good for people because it encourages them to be responsible for themselves: it "breeds a better attitude in people". Again a strong parent-government is implied: it "encourages people to take an interest":

#### EXTRACT 2

E: We've also had an upheaval as far as our social welfare system so the welfare system has changed much more from the 'cradle to the grave' welfare, you know, expected to be looked after, that's all much more kind of 'look after yourself' mentality, a bit more. Even though it was brought in by Labour, a much more kind of right-wing kind of way of, just over the last how many? four years or whatever it's been

INT: I was just going to say, how does that seem from nursing? I mean, you must've been looking at that and really debating sort of

E: Oh I think: good on them. Oh I think that that's the way, I don't believe in the social welfare from beginning to finish, it doesn't sort of encourage people but I mean there is a happy

medium

F: I think it encourages people to actually take an interest in their health and

E: The expectation, it doesn't matter what happens you're gonna be looked after is wrong, completely wrong, and the country can't afford it, especially since

G: But you shouldn't be penalised for bad health either I don't think

F: No not for

E: Oh no you shouldn't but especially since

F: Not for chronic health but

E: These days it can't be, it's not affordable as far as the country goes with so many more people getting older, so fewer people, people not having so many children so the people that are paying taxes not being able to afford to support a system that is constantly giving handouts for everybody left, right and centre, no I think it was an inevitable thing and

G: Good on 'em

E: It breeds a better attitude in pe-, it makes for a better attitude in people.

This account resembles the previous one in the emphasis on the inevitability of change, which is also used to mark it as essentially moderate rather than extreme. The reform represents "a happy medium". It promotes unity because it removes the split between those who had to pay taxes and those who formerly took "handouts". In this discussion economic change is again assessed in terms of its benefits to the whole (imagined) national community ("We've also had an upheaval as far as our social welfare system") and its necessity for "the country".

These extracts show how the principles of the market economy can be incorporated into a construction of the nation or nation-state. In the accounts of these speakers the role of the national government is, paradoxically, to lead people to be self-reliant and independent; this attitude becomes the shared national character, the notion of "essential homogeneity" which Weber described. Change is accepted as part of the inevitable progressive historical course of the nation.

However there is a paradox, as pointed out above, in the role of the national government. Speaker D from Extract 1 confronts this at a later point in the interview when he criticises government management of state-provided housing.

### EXTRACT 3

I think the government need to sort of probably look at the way, you know they're charging market rents and everything these days cos there's like state housing, but they tend to I think over-, be a little bit keen on what they think a market rent is and and that. I can't see how a whole country can pay a market rent cos there's obviously some people that aren't gonna be able to afford it so why charge them more they can afford? I think, although there are mechanisms in place I understand like you know you can only pay twenty-five or

thirty-three percent of your income, so if that's the case that's good. Cos you've gotta give these people a bit of hope and that, you know that they don't get in that sort of poverty trap (.) horrible... But as long as the government are fair and that and try to be fair, I think at the end of the day the majority of politicians, no matter, you know so much crap gets printed about things and the media create so many stories if you ask me...

Here the speaker encounters the dilemma implicit in the construction of the national government as both advocate of the free market and 'wise parent'. In this extract a 'market rent' is not only the price for accommodation set by the operation of impersonal and inescapable market forces, it is also the price which the government, as landlord, elects to charge its tenants. The speaker suggests that in deciding to do this, the government is being unrealistic ("there's obviously some people that aren't gonna be able to afford it"); it is also not fulfilling its parental role ("you've gotta give these people a bit of hope"). The underlying assumption that people have a right to affordable housing is more in line with welfare state than free market policies; the basis for inclusion is not success but membership of the national group. The speaker appears to become aware of these contradictions and avoids them by changing the subject; he begins to criticise the media.

However not all of the younger participants positioned themselves as having benefited from the economic change. In the following extracts different speakers position themselves as excluded (Extracts 5 and 6 are from the same speaker):

#### EXTRACT 4

I think of say 20, 30 years ago, finding a job, working was much easier... like our parents could slip into a job, any job and basically you'd be sort of hands on, do the job, and you'd

get better and better at it. And with that, schooling has sort of upgraded, the education's been much higher and people are actually getting well-educated now, different ages, different age-groups...I wasn't told when I was younger to look at a career. I mean you know even my parents didn't even tell me, you know they just left us at it and we had to sort of fend for ourselves and I wish they had given me some sort of inspiration... I mean little kids have, you know it's all computerised as well, some parts in schools and you know, there's learning Maori language and I missed out on all of that. ... there's a big sort of jump. It's like, we're in another world. You know, we have to fight I feel. I'm 30 and at my age we have to fight for everything, where it's a lot easier for the people before, in that era before us and the era after us, there's a big difference.

#### EXTRACT 5

when I go home ...I'll be ...29, and I haven't got a tertiary qualification...I mean I'll still find a job but I just won't find one of a high level

#### EXTRACT 6

Well I've been working for ten years I've been paying tax over there and suddenly I've been told I'm not gonna get a pension, my kids are gonna have to pay for their university. So although that's a sign of the times and I don't begrudge you know, that's just moving into the twenty-first century, I mean that's a part of the course, but still I feel like there's got to be a point where, I suppose they are starting with our generation,

they they seem to be just cutting it off and these people are suffering

These comments recall James' suggestion that the New Zealand welfare state was premised on the guarantee of work (see Chapter 3). The first speaker seems to position himself with "people that ...want the run of the mill sort of job", who are willing to work but have not planned and qualified for a specific career. He feels that he was misled, literally, because he was not prepared for the new situation. The second speaker is similarly resentful, because she paid taxes towards future support which now she will not receive; at another point in the interview she says that she will guide her (prospective) children to obtain tertiary qualifications and wishes she herself had known this would be necessary. Both of these speakers are resentful that the 'rules' have changed. They suggest that they were already independent and self-supporting but belong to a generation which has been unfairly disadvantaged.

Despite these concerns, both speakers accept the inevitability of change and also seem to believe it is progressive. The speaker in Extract 4 envies younger people. The speaker in Extract 6 refers to "moving into the twenty-first century" as if this is a positive prospect. However both present themselves as excluded from the improvement. The speaker in Extract 4, who identifies himself as Maori, also envies younger people's access to Maori language tuition. [His description of a new generation who have career directions, computer skills and Maori language recalls Awatere Huata's image of modern Maori as "economically powerful, natural business people", described in Chapter 3 (Awatere Huata, 1996: 83)].

Extracts 4-6 reveal another paradox. If New Zealand is constructed as a society of independent people who support themselves without assistance, and if enterprise and initiative are part of the national character, do those who are less successful or less confident then feel that they are no longer part of the national community? The answer is 'not inevitably', because the constructions



of nation and national identity are neither single nor consistent. The speakers in Extracts 4 - 6, while feeling excluded by their (potential) inability to be self-reliant, re-integrate themselves by positioning their 'lost' generation within the longer-term narrative of successive generations of the nation, including those younger than themselves and also a future generation which might include their own children. However dissatisfaction and protest at being excluded from rights and benefits can become, in a circular argument, the grounds for further exclusion; those who divide themselves off by claiming to be treated unfairly are seen to be outside the happy, forward-moving national group; they do not belong because they do not belong.

### The contest between Maori and non-Maori

As has already been mentioned, the question about Maori being "the only true New Zealanders" was responded to by many non-Maori speakers as if it were a challenge. Their speechwork included expressions of anger and indignation and attempts to discredit the premise. This was unsurprising. The question was provocative and I often introduced it with the comment "This might sound contentious". The reason for using this question and the reason that it could be provocative lie in two of the constructions of New Zealand as nation which were outlined in Chapter 3. These constructions of New Zealand as a former colony with a predominantly white, British descended population, or alternatively as a Maori or bicultural nation, raise the issue of who the nation belongs to. This has been particularly focussed by the Maori land claims and, more recently, large payments made to certain tribes in settlement of the claims. The question about "true New Zealanders" is therefore similar to "Who owns New Zealand?"

Despite the legal claims and financial settlements just mentioned, the 'ownership' is of the type associated with the nation rather than commerce. Speakers are not concerned about buying and selling resources (although these do become issues around the rights of recent migrants, as will be discussed in

the next section). Rather, "Who owns New Zealand?" or "Whose nation is this?" is a dispute about alternative historical narratives. Some of the theorists of the nation reviewed in Chapter 1 (e.g. Smith, 1991; Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983) emphasised the importance of national history, whether or not they ascribe the status of truth to it. Shapiro (1988) suggested that the dominant construction of the nation obscures past struggles. In participants' responses to the question discussed here there is a contest over alternative New Zealand histories, and also over whether any history is relevant to the present day.

One way to understand the contest is by considering indigeneity. If Maori are accepted as the indigenous New Zealanders, then later non-Maori arrivals can be understood to have a secondary status; this would follow from concepts of the nation having a basis in biology or common cultural roots, or a belief in either of these (see Chapter 1). Many non-Maori speakers responded to the question by challenging the Maori's indigenous status. One way to do this was to suggest that present-day 'Maori' are not authentic:

#### **EXTRACT 7**

**INT:** I mean let's be contentious, some people have said Maori are the only true New Zealanders. How do you respond to that?

**J:** (.) Well (.)

**H:** I don't know I mean they obviously, yes, they were the first there, I mean the English went over and colonised the whole place sort of thing so I suppose in a sense they are the only true New Zealanders but there's none you know, you'd be hard-pressed to find one Maori in New Zealand now that is full Maori blood, I mean it's a mixed race now so

Here authenticity is equated with being full-blooded; contemporary Maori

are not authentic because they have intermarried with white New Zealanders. (This argument is also mentioned in Chapter 6, in Extract 36.) Alternatively, authenticity can be linked to tradition: modern Maori are not authentic because they do not obey their own traditions. This logic appears in the following extract in which the speaker criticises "radicals" (a common negative term used by both non-Maori and Maori speakers to criticise Maori associated with political activism and Treaty claims; see Chapter 6). The basis for the criticism is that in failing to follow the principles of certain Maori elders, the radicals are not conforming to Maori custom; they are not, in the terms of Wetherell and Potter (1992), acting as respectful custodians of their heritage:

#### **EXTRACT 8**

people like Dame Whina and the Maori Queen are supposed to be these highly respected wardens of Maori society and have absolutely no impact cos if they did, cos Dame Whina always used to say "We've got to work together, we've got to work as one, we've got to be one people". Oh yeah? Until ... the radicals come out ... they've got no idea, they haven't got an idea of working as a team because they just don't think of teams, they don't listen to anybody

Both arguments are brought together in the following extract, from the same interview as Extract 7. Again there is the references to "radicals": this is also an example of another form of discrediting, in which the device is "to accuse those one disagrees with of violating the norms of moderation" as described by Wetherell and Potter (1992: 153):

#### **EXTRACT 9**

J: You know what makes me cross is that there's no full-blooded Maori in New Zealand you know so what's the beef? You know I just

**H: It's these young radicals coming through**

**J: Yes but I mean those young radicals have probably got a sixteenth Maori blood in them you know or something and I mean they you know they don't have the right I I don't think**

**H: Even a lot of the elders that are left there now don't like what's going on they don't like what they're doing**

A different challenge to the indigenous status of the Maori was to suggest that another people pre-dated them in New Zealand. These people, the Morioris are widely believed to have been in New Zealand before Maori settlement from the Pacific (although there is now dispute as to whether they were a different population). References to the Morioris were used in two ways to counter Maori claims. The first, as described, was to deny that the Maori have a special claim as the first people of New Zealand, reducing them to 'also migrants'. The second is more of a moral argument, that the Maori do not deserve land because they treated the Morioris badly and dispossessed them; like criminals, the Maori have forfeited their rights:

**EXTRACT 10**

(in response to a question about what New Zealand schoolchildren should be taught about New Zealand; see Appendix C)

**That the Morioris were there first...And that the Maoris came along second anyway and ate them all**

**EXTRACT 11**

**INT: there's people who've said that Maori are the only true New Zealanders. How do you feel about that?**

**L: Well I think that's a lie isn't it? (.) Because then, because it's (LAUGHTER) you can be very heavy here. It's conquer or be**

**conquered in this world and that. They conquered the Morioris, the Morioris have been proven a a race and a creed of New Zealand and they've gone and conquered them so how can they turn, so if I find them very hypocritical**

This second speaker, like many others, responds to the question as a challenge to his own right to be in New Zealand. The accusations he makes, of displacing and maltreating the resident population, are precisely those Maori have made against the European settlers. Speaker L has therefore neatly inverted accusations that might be made against himself!

Other speakers minimised the importance of the Maori by saying that they were also migrants (This is the argument used by King, 1991, discussed in Chapter 3):

**EXTRACT 12**

**INT: So how do you feel if you hear someone say, for example, that Maoris are the only true New Zealanders?**

**K: That's absolute rubbish, they're not any more, they only just got there nine hundred years before the Europeans didn't they? So I don't think there's anyone who's a true New Zealander except perhaps the tuatara lizard (LAUGHTER)**

This speaker is using a common image of New Zealand's history. The image is of a series of arrivals, a "migrant line" of different kinds of people, stretching back into time. At the back are the Morioris. Next come the Maori and then British settlers, with the time between their arrivals compressed; for example the speaker quoted above describes it as "just nine hundred years'. Much further forward are other migrants, with the recent 'Asian' migrants at the front. The best place, the right place in this queue, is not at the front but at whatever point the speaker positions her or himself and family; those behind are irrelevant, those in front are intruders, and the different groups are

created by their positioning in the line.

Finally, another challenge to the idea that Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand is the argument, already mentioned, that pakeha are also indigenes now (A.Bell 1995; see Chapter 3). This appears in the work described in Chapter 5, around people being 'made' New Zealanders. It is also implicit in the claims that all New Zealanders, and not just the Maori, have a spiritual relationship to land, discussed in Chapter 5.

A different response to the possibility that Maori have a special status as indigenes is to acknowledge this status but neutralise it by constructing them as a people of the past, who are largely irrelevant to the present day. Wetherell and Potter (1992) point out how the construction of Maori culture as a "heritage" means Maori people become its custodians, or risk being labelled inauthentic:

"Culture defined as heritage becomes traditional and unchanging. It refers back to some golden and unsullied time of the constant re-enactment of rituals and values. Culture is seen as ancient, it is the past, not the present and the future, and so the correct response becomes preservation and conservation while the appropriate emotions emerge as nostalgia, grief at loss, 'hanging on', collecting and saving. The emphasis is on memory and faithful reproduction...

"Maoris in this formulation become museum keepers." (Wetherell and Potter, 1992:129)

There is an underlying image of time moving forward from the point of British settlement. The Maori people and culture are constructed as a feature of a period of unchangingness before the British settlers brought over their clocks and began history. The assumption is that that there is a single forward time movement and the past is left behind, irrelevant.

More generally, Shurmer-Smith and Hannam (1994) define as "nativism" the view that a people, such as an "ethnoregionalist" group, had a "golden age"

and can only aspire to go back, to return to it, in contrast to "renaissance", the conception of the rebirth of a culture in a new form. Despite the term "Maori renaissance", speakers made many references to, for example, "preserving" Maori culture and to there being no full-blooded Maoris "left". When Maori are positioned in this way as people of the past, this effectively denies that to be Maori has any contemporary political meaning (also Wetherell and Potter, 1992:129). The golden age is over:

#### **EXTRACT 13**

you almost get the feeling actually, that the Maoris were a more noble race than they are now and they've lost a tremendous amount over the period. In fact, that they took on Western civilisation, took quite well to it to begin with and their status in the world was preserved and they were, they had a good position in society, and somehow that's been lost, it's got a lot worse in the meantime and I don't know why it, why that should be

The construction of the Maori as an antique race can also imply both a subordinate position in an evolutionary racial line and inevitable 'natural' displacement by European culture (the 'doctrine of fatal impact' described by Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 124).

One account of New Zealand's history is therefore a narrative which begins with white settlement. The Maori are irrelevant, as well as antique, but this raises a dilemma. For non-Maori New Zealanders, as has been mentioned, Maori provide a national distinctiveness, which distinguishes New Zealand from other English-speaking nations in the wider global context:

#### **EXTRACT 14**

if you ask a New Zealander to perform some sort of action or song or thing that identifies themselves as New Zealanders the only thing they can really do is Maori

This works like the record of 'good race relations' which some speakers suggested marks New Zealand off from Australia (discussed in the next section). It solves the problem raised by Douglas Cole (see Chapters 1 and 3): what makes New Zealand different? Acknowledging the Maori as central to New Zealand identity works positively for non-Maori speakers in the global context but negatively in the more local contest.

It is important to note that the various arguments explored here were offered in different tones, from angry to joking. Most were not presented unthinkingly. As the following extract shows, many speakers were aware of the dilemmas within either a 'true' or 'false' response to the original question about the Maori as the only true New Zealanders:

#### EXTRACT 15

Yes I have a bit of a problem with that because I've, having been fairly critical of the way the English operate around the world, you know I don't like some of the things that've gone on in Ireland or or in other parts of the world by this empire, I at the same time have to say that's where I come from, and we went out there and did exactly the same thing. So, we being the English I guess. So yes, I've got really mixed feelings about that. I feel proudly New Zealander, that is my country, but I know that history tells me you know the white side of the community wronged the Maori people, so, mixed feelings, but no I do not accept that they are the only New Zealanders because one just has to move on in life and that is history and we are here now and where we should be going is towards resolving those past differences which a number of people are trying to do. But any sort of view of separatism I have no time for, we are New Zealanders, nobody owns the land, the things that went on with the land were very bad but they did not, you



know, that society is the pakeha, is the Maori and we are today as much New Zealanders as they are. Even though we committed some horrific wrongs. So that would be my view on that.

This response includes many points and arguments. The speaker wishes to define himself as a New Zealander: he moves in the answer from positioning himself as English ("we being the English") to positioning himself as a New Zealander ("we are New Zealanders"). He mentions points of principle: there is a need to acknowledge past wrongs and condemn similar practices and their consequences which still continue elsewhere. He opposes private ownership of land, perhaps as a 'green' or anti-materialist political stance ("nobody owns the land"). He also opposes social practices based on the division of people into discrete groups ("any sort of view of separatism I have no time for"). His final statement ("So that would be my view on that") implies a single balanced conclusion which, to the interviewer and reader, has not been achieved; perhaps the conclusion is that there is not a conclusion!

These difficulties and dilemmas are avoided in yet another response to the question, that of denying that any past, Maori or non-Maori, is relevant to the present day. Like the speakers discussing the economy, quoted in the previous section, the speaker in Extract 15 looks forward to a point of resolution: time is progressive. A corollary would be that whatever has gone before is inferior and therefore irrelevant to the present day. This assumption appears in the following extract in which the same three speakers as in Extract 2 are discussing Maori claims under the Treaty of Waitangi:

#### EXTRACT 16

G: They were ripped off, but then again it's a long time

F: Oh I mean

G: I can't be bothered with it personally. It sounds really

selfish but you can't claim back everything that was given away years ago. It was a mistake at the time

F: No I mean

G: But you can't take livelihoods off people that are in this day and age, it just unrealistic

F: No I agree with that, we shouldn't be paying for the sins of the fathers (LAUGHTER)

G: You should just maybe look back and think: well we made a mistake and we should admit that

F: No the representatives of Queen Victoria's government made a mistake (LAUGHTER)

G: Yeah that's what I mean, that they all made a mistake, it was bad, badly but I'm not expecting, I'm not going to give anything of mine up to any tribe

In this extract the speakers first acknowledge that an injustice occurred and then dissociate themselves from it. They suggest that the past is both inaccessible and irrelevant. Wetherell and Potter (1992) note this device and call it the argument that "You cannot turn the clock backwards" (177). Here the speakers suggest that it is impractical to try to resolve the claims and "unrealistic" to prioritise them over people's current "livelihoods". (Again, Wetherell and Potter noted the same 'moves' in the interviews they conducted in New Zealand in the 1980s.) The latter point also implies that the claims are not about tangible financial matters but something more abstract.

The speakers then link the claims to people of the past ("fathers" and "Queen Victoria's representatives") rather than themselves as contemporary New Zealanders. This is interesting because it positions contemporary non-Maori New Zealanders as a different nationality to the settlers. The same point is made by another speaker; he goes so far as to suggest that colonial wrongs in New Zealand are a point of shame for contemporary Britons rather than non-Maori New Zealanders:

#### EXTRACT 17

I certainly rib people over here when they start talking about colonialising New Zealand and I talk about stealing, raping and pillaging

Finally, in Extract 16 the Treaty claims are reduced to a stark personal conflict over ownership ("I'm not going to give anything of mine up"). The references to a "tribe" and to Queen Victoria are slightly mocking, marking the disputes as archaic and emphasising the repeated argument, that the events of the past are less important than those of the present. This is a 'common sense' argument, accepted by all three speakers.

Other speakers used the 'practicality' argument to minimise the importance of claims under the Treaty of Waitangi, depicting the Treaty itself, as irrelevant or unrealistic compared with the status quo:

#### EXTRACT 18

I think by and large most New Z-, most white New Zealanders are receptive and sympathetic to the Maori claims, and would pay as, more probably than they are if they could afford it and the government would pay more if it could afford, but the problem is, having put somebody down or cheated them for a hundred years, how can you properly recompense them without handing everything over? And I think the government is understandably reluctant to do that, and a lot of New

Zealanders feel, ah reluctant.

### EXTRACT 19

**Mm. I don't know, treaties that were signed 200 years ago by another generation, there's no guarantee that they're going to be enforced. Reality's another thing all together.**

The speaker in Extract 18 exemplifies the dilemma between preserving the status quo and appearing racist. As with many other points noted in the analysis, many speakers acknowledged that they were aware of this and attending to it in their talk.

This section suggests that the contest between constructions of New Zealand as Maori or as a former colony are still unresolved. This is an active issue. The arguments which are described above are produced and restated and puzzled over again and again in the body of interview material, and there is a great deal of energy and emotion attached to this talk. Underlying the disputes are concepts of national territory and alternative constructions of national history. There is the assumption that unity is desirable and derives from similarity, and that difference is threatening. Present day New Zealanders are spoken of as the inheritors of their history who must either accept its consequences or make some good argument for denying them. In other words, the contest is understood and argued around assumptions about the nation.

### **Contests around migration and the status of new migrants**

The final section of this chapter considers a different contest over the definition and boundaries of the national population. The issues around migration and the status of new migrants will be considered in two sub-sections. The first focuses on speakers' accounts of becoming a New Zealander. The second is concerned with the contest between the existing population and new migrants.

### Becoming a New Zealander

This section examines talk about migrants 'becoming' New Zealanders. Again, the issue can be understood as a contest between the alternative constructions of the New Zealand nation outlined in Chapter 3. Is 'a New Zealander' a member of a society and culture which originated as a British colony, or one of the partners in the bicultural relationship between Maori and pakeha, or any individual within this particular competitive multicultural Asia-Pacific society? The first construction can be understood to exclude the Maori and also non-British migrants; difference is not tolerated and the accepted meaning of good race relations is that any separate Maori identity will be subsumed and assimilated. The second construction can acknowledge Maori either as the original indigenous people of New Zealand or as a separate but equal identity to an indigenous white 'pakeha' identity. The third construction can also be interpreted variously. Either it reduces both Maori and pakeha to two among many different but equal racial and cultural identities within New Zealand, or it reduces Maori to one among many non-white identities competing for acceptance within white society, or it can relegate Maori to an irrelevant antique status within a competitive modern world.

Only the third construction 'recognises' new non-British migrants. One of the questions asked in the interviews was

New Zealand has been described as a nation of migrants. Do you think it's easy to become a New Zealander?

A few speakers disagreed that New Zealand is a nation of migrants and some answered the question in terms of official requirements, referring for instance to the "points" system used to evaluate immigration applications. Otherwise, the two main responses were, first, that New Zealanders are tolerant and accepting of others, and secondly, that migrants are accepted if they "make an effort" to "fit in". For example:

#### **EXTRACT 20**

I actually think New Zealanders as a whole, my experience has been that we're not a, we're not a racist um (.) society cos that's really what it all comes down to, sort of (INAUDIBLE) so I think as a whole New Zealanders accept people and that comes across over here, we accept people for who they are and what they are and it really isn't relevant whether they're pink, blue or green, but so I think, I mean cos I don't think, well I know personally and I know, you know, my circle wouldn't say to somebody, "you're not a New Zealander" we'd accept them and it wouldn't matter how they talked or what they looked like

Here acceptance is available to any newcomer. This might therefore imply that the migrants themselves are to blame if they are not accepted, for example, if they experience prejudice. A New Zealand identity is either (automatically) conferred by others or else it is a way of 'doing', of positioning oneself in order to be perceived by others as having this identity. This is clear in the next extract in which the speaker already quoted goes on to criticise Chinese migrants for their failure to behave like New Zealanders:

**EXTRACT 21**

**M:** When you start hearing, I mean there was this woman came out = and she

**K:** = But the

**M:** Wanted to set up a Chinese-speaking radio station and a Chinese-speaking TV station and a Chinese-speaking university to cater

**K:** = That's

**M: = Well if they want to**

**K: If they want to = speak Chinese, eat Chinese**

**M: = Go that far go home I mean**

**K: Yeah. If they want to come to New Zealand be New Zealanders**

**M: Become part of it**

**K: You be a New Zealander, you don't be a Chinese person in New Zealand, which is one thing they're doing too much**

In this extract Chinese identity is a form of 'doing' which prevents the migrants from being perceived as New Zealanders. 'Chinese' is used as an alternative category to 'New Zealander'. However in the following extract another (former) national identity, Indian, is discussed and the same speakers explore a problem: certain people are perceived as 'Indians' rather than 'New Zealanders', whatever they do. "Fitting in" is not enough. The speakers are drawn uncomfortably close to acknowledging that certain races cannot be perceived as New Zealanders. This contradicts the earlier claim that New Zealanders are tolerant and not racist:

#### **EXTRACT 22**

**L: But, I mean it's not, I mean the the thing that, you know "Indians own all the dairies", that (.) mindset, I mean, they don't necessarily um**

**K: (JOKING VOICE) Who thinks that? (LAUGHTER)**

L: They don't necessarily separate themselves from us and eat, I mean they still obviously eat curry and stuff but I mean they don't separate themselves as much as the um Chinese do but we still don't say "Oh you know New Zealanders own the you know the dairy down the road"

K: Yeah

L: = We say "Indians do"

M: = A nationality is nationality is

K: But that = actually is a good descriptive

L: = But we're still, but we're still not

K: It's a good descriptive thing though

L: But we are still not considering them a New Zealander, = based on

K: = Not necessarily

L: Based on how they look

K: Not necessarily. You describe them by what they look like, you, if you don't know their name or ah, whatever

M: You say "that Indian chappie" so you know who you're



talking about

**K:** Yeah I mean w- (.) it's only

**L:** But can you honestly say that you consider them a New Zealander? I mean I know I don't ever think of them as a New Zealander = I think of them as a

**M:** = But that's what, it's, I'm talking sort of that's visual, though once yes you actually got talking to them you probably

**L:** = Yeah

**K:** = Yeah it depends

**M:** I mean obviously you can't change the way you look

**K:** And also some of them that are just arrived you don't consider them, whether they're staying for good or not, you still you know yeah = not quite there yet

**M:** = Like I mean we're at

**K:** Cos I mean we did a lot of work for a couple of dairies, I mean, half of them couldn't even speak English yet so you don't consider those ones New Zealanders because they're still immigrants. They're not New Zealanders yet. Just because they got here doesn't mean they're yet. They might be in the future, but at the moment they're still like foreigners

The speakers work through the contradiction that migrants ought to conform ("not separate themselves") in order to become New Zealanders yet even when they do mainly conform their original national identity will still be remembered, as this new form of categorisation or trait ("we are still not considering them a New Zealander"). The Indian is not an unmarked "New Zealander"; membership of the dominant group is qualified. Speaker M suggests this distinction is unimportant when she says "that's visual, though once yes you actually got talking to them you probably". In other words, the person who looks different will eventually, after the first contact, be accepted as a New Zealander. But Speaker K, after having first agreed with M, again resorts to the previous explanation: the only problem is people's behaviour so when they conform sufficiently they will be accepted as New Zealanders.

In these discussions the "Chinese" and others are marked through the use of a subnational category as if this identifies a permanent trait, but this marking is explained as a consequence of their different behaviour. The combination of 'trait' and 'performance/positioning' logic, discussed in Chapter 6, is used to exclude both new migrants and the descendents of certain migrants from the dominant construction of white New Zealand identity.

However in one case two speakers who identified themselves as Maori used the same form of labelling to reduce all groups, including "English", "Scottish", "Irish", "pakehas" and "Maoris" to the same status and therefore to challenge any single construction of a dominant identity:

#### EXTRACT 23

INT: OK. Can you think of any groups of migrants, any groups that you feel haven't fitted in particularly well? You might be thinking back to your childhood or you might be thinking of something recent (.) (.)

Again only if it comes to mind. If it doesn't, don't push it

P: No not really (.)

Q: I think it's, we've got a very cosmopolitan, where I'm from B\* is very cosmopolitan. There's a lot of Greeks, there's a lot of Italians, there's a lot of Island, Pacific you know like Tongans, Samoans, Niueans, Rarotongans. There's a lot of Maoris, there's also a lot of (.) (.) oh English and Scottish, and they, and a lot of Indians, some Sikhs, there's lot of Chinese and they seem to stay in their own groups yeah. They stay in their own groups

P: But it's not as if you can't go out with one another or

Q: No you can still go out with one another but they're, most of their communities if you, like on the weekends they still seem to stay in their own groups, where during the week they might diversify and go into, you know, go out with a friend, a Greek friend or go out with an Irish friend or then go out like that, on the weekends usually they sort of get family-orientated and go back into their own groups

INT: Right

P: Oh I think there's a lot of integration. Or maybe not a lot but yeah there is integration. Like um (.) yeah I think yeah there were groups but even within the groups people were mixing. Like yeah there were a group of Samoans but there were a few Maoris tossed in there, Chinese. There are a group

of Maoris and there are pakehas mixing in there too and then there are Chinese and there are. You know everyone's got, I mean you can't have exactly one group you know that's not, you know that's got no influence from anywhere else. You know Auckland's really mixed, you know you can get any mixture in South Auckland (LAUGHTER)

The reference to 'pakeha' is striking because it challenges the status of pakeha identity as a norm. As Wetherell and Potter say

"Pakehas tended generally to locate themselves or speak from 'outside' race." (Wetherell and Potter, 1992: 127)

Here non-Pakeha speakers place them firmly back 'inside' it as an equivalent category to 'Samoan', 'Maori' and 'Chinese'.

Chapter 3 described how until recently most migrants to New Zealand were of British descent. These debates about new non-white migrants again indicate contests around whiteness as the dominant New Zealand identity. The second part of this section looks at talk about the general desirability of immigration into New Zealand, and the particular category, discussed in Chapter 3, of 'Asian' migrants

#### Outsiders as a threat to the nation

In Extract 1 in Chapter 4 there was an example of a speaker positioning herself with New Zealanders who appreciate, protect and conserve the natural environment, in contrast to outsiders or foreigners who will "spoil" it. This idea recurs in the following extract:

#### EXTRACT 24

as far as, I mean tourism being a major industry, it's important to retain a very tight control over the number of tourists and environmental damage, cos already when I, when I was a teenager and I used to go tramping I could drink from the streams, and now you can't because there's ....some sort of,

yeah bacteria in the water which has been brought over by the tourists who've been walking in the areas, and friends tell me about a lot more rubbish sort of discarded on tracks and things like that, which is sort of. New Zealanders growing up, that was like a taboo, you know, you take out what you bring in. So it was really watching out for damage to the environment. I suppose, I mean there's also been a lot of buying up of resources from, from outside countries like Japan, um, and I suppose as a New Zealander I'm not, I wouldn't say, I'm not anti-Japanese cos, my father's work was a lot with Japanese technology when it first came into New Zealand, one of his jobs when I was younger, but just I'm anti-sort of my home being bought up, and having to pay rent to someone who's not a New Zealander.

Here the speaker establishes a connection between tourism, environmental damage and Japanese investment, both in technology and property. In the flow of this account there is an easy blurring of the distinctions between short-stay tourist visitors who go walking or tramping; non-New Zealand investors in business projects, and permanent migrants who purchase housing and other property. Some of these are the 'new' people who are in New Zealand as a result of the economic reforms described in Chapter 3, that is, the focus on tourism as a major industry; the trade and investment links established with South-East Asia, and the business immigration scheme. However this also includes, more tenuously, the migrants who entered after the long-postponed abolition of the migration laws which had favoured white British people, as described by Brawley (1993).

This speaker also makes a distinction between ownership by a non-New Zealander and a New Zealander. He seems to suggest that if his home were owned by a New Zealander, it would still be his own! This recalls the

construction of the national population as homogeneous and as a family, as if the New Zealand landlord would share his interests. It also distinguishes the ownership of a purchaser from the ownership of national territory by members of a nation.

A similar idea is used in the following extract:

**EXTRACT 25**

**M: I don't think it should become overpopulated, I don't think they should allow too many immigrants in (LAUGHTER) Um Japanese. I don't think they should buy it up. I mean, you know they own**

**N: Should sell out the land. Yeah**

**M: I mean you know they own, Japanese are starting to own so many assets (.)**

**N: They'd eventually be able to call the shots and New Zealand will lose its**

**M: Yeah short-term it's fine because it helps our economy but I don't think long-term it's gonna do the country any good**

There is an assumption here that those who own land or assets have a special power and different interests. They will be able to "call the shots" and, implicitly, will use this power to do things which will not be in the interests of those who own less. But if New Zealanders own the land or assets, they will act in the interests of the population as a whole. The speaker is using the assumption discussed earlier (see Chapter 1) that the national population is homogeneous. Also, in this extract, as above, there is a 'blurring together' of different kinds of newcomers.

These speakers are aware that migrants can help the economy (perhaps again conflating them with foreign investors). It is interesting that the dilemma of whether to accept or reject them for the good of the country is resolved using a reference to the 'long term'. The economist Maynard Keynes said "in the long term we are all dead!". However in the national timescale the long term is still relevant, because nations survive longer than individuals. Like the speakers discussing the economy in Extracts 4-6, these speakers can be seen to 'use' the timescale of the nation in the way suggested by Gergen (1994): they 'nest' their personal lifescapes in the macro-narrative of the nation.

Lola Young has described ideas about migrants and the natural environment as these are used with reference to Britain:

"The issue of population (its size, composition and location) provides much of the focus of what is sometimes called 'eco-racism', which is a loose collection of ideas claiming that migrants and 'aliens' exacerbate environmental problems by their very presence, contributing significantly to pollution through their lifestyle, especially through their rate of reproduction."

"In Britain, the degradation of the English - rather than 'British' - countryside is seen as analogous to the alleged deterioration of the nation itself: the land is held up as a repository of values, culture and heritage which transcend class or gender interests, all of which should be subordinate to the nation." (Young, 1995: 100)

The interest here is how closely this corresponds to speakers' accounts of the New Zealand situation, even though certain references and assumptions are inverted. For example, most of the 'migrants and aliens' are not moving from poorer countries to an economic centre but in the opposite direction. In the British context "values, culture and heritage" are associated with extended occupation and 'civilisation'; in New Zealand land is a "repository" of different

values derived from the relative absence of culture and heritage.

In the New Zealand context, the threat of population growth is not seen to come from reproduction but from the loosening of border controls. The 'aliens' are the migrants and tourist visitors whose arrival followed the economic reorganisation of the 1980s (see Chapter 3).

Finally, in the New Zealand context, the construction of the newcomers as polluters can also do work in the ongoing contest over the land between two groups of insiders, the non-Maori and Maori, as already described. In Extract 24 above, the non-Maori speaker claims an almost spiritual respect for the land as part of the values he had been taught when growing up. This works not only as a positioning against newcomers but also as a claim to have a similar status to the indigenous Maori, the *tangata whenua* ("people of the land"). The existing population and the newcomers are constructed as groups which are different from each other but internally homogeneous.

In general, there are a number of dilemmas around migration. The first of these is that to advocate immigration controls can appear, in terms used by one speaker, "racist" and "elitist". The second is that speakers who call for a return to earlier situations, such as stricter controls, can appear unrealistic because of the idea, discussed earlier, that change is inevitable, progressive and desirable. Also, in the New Zealand context being discussed, because of the link described earlier migration is associated with South East Asian investment and trade, and this part of the world is, in turn, depicted as the inevitable future. This appears in the following extract. The speaker had been discussing earlier immigration policies:

#### **EXTRACT 26**

**INT:** What about the recent so-called 'Asian' immigration?

**P:** Well as I understand it that's again elitist because you don't, you're not allowed in unless you've got the money and



then people look at the rich Chinese, Vietnamese and whoever else are coming in, and resent them because they set up communities of their own and seem to have a lot more than your average New Zealander and that's disliked, but what can one say except that's a natural outcome of what's going to happen if you allow to these people to come in and bring money in? There is a price to be paid and these people are not stupid. They haven't become rich in a terribly, terribly hard society, much much harder than New Zealand, without knowing that there's a price to be paid for everything and so they want their price when they come into New Zealand. And they want to live together and they'll want to exploit the resources that New Zealand has, and the attitude that New Zealand has, and the opportunities that New Zealand gives, and that is going to create resentment, but, New Zealanders eventually will wake up to it but not for a long time to come I don't think

He reaches a negative conclusion, depicting New Zealand using some of the images discussed in Chapter 5, as implicitly vulnerable and naive. It will inevitably and irresistably fall victim to the South East Asian nations because these have superior market strength, more worldly ruthlessness and more experience of competitive struggle. Immigration must not be resisted because that would be racist, and cannot be resisted because that would be unrealistic.

For other speakers the construction of newcomers as a threat to the environment resolves the dilemmas more positively. A different realism is invoked, the need to protect the environment as an economic asset. The 'new' links with Asia are countered with the importance of the 'new' industry of tourism; speakers are looking ahead, not behind.

#### **EXTRACT 27**

**INT: Um, what changes would you not like to see? What**

aspects do you think it's important to retain?

Q: Yes I think ah you know while you have to say that to survive we need investment, we need tourism, um, they mustn't come at a price, or too great a price, and that's um, a selling out of everything that's good about New Zealand. Um, the simplicity, the openness of the people, the the honesty of the people, the environment I mean which is clearly sort of one our major attractions anyway and is bringing more people in. And the more that are come in, the more likely that it's going to be spoiled so, and you can see in Queenstown and places like that where the potential lies to sort of ruin the country so I would like some (.)

I think there are some dangers that we seek to become like other countries. Um, we don't need to do that. We need to just be much more international in our thinking and to and to foster alliances with other countries and to and to encourage more tourism, um, but we don't, we don't sell out our own identity, our own country, our own geography.

The following speakers also talk of protecting New Zealand, using the 'vulnerable' image described in Chapter 5. They talk of two kinds of migrants, both of them negative. Those who are uneducated come only to get "dole" money from the state. Those who are educated take jobs from New Zealanders. But once again they are aware of dilemmas: perhaps migrants can "contribute". An extra problem here is that one of the speakers is a recent migrant.

#### EXTRACT 28

INT: Right. Now do you think there should be tests and conditions for would-be migrants?

**N: (.) Yeah yeah I think so, definitely**

**M: Yeah there's got to be some sort of employment**

**N: I think so yeah. I think the country has to really look after itself, otherwise they'll just, it'll destroy itself. Definitely**

**INT: So what what kind then do you think there should be?**

**(.) You said employment**

**M: Yeah there has to be some, I mean they have to have some evidence that they're gonna be able to support themselves and not just come over and go on the dole. Cos although, you know, I mean I don't think, I don't think it's even fine that half the New Zealanders that are on the dole are on the dole but (LAUGHTER) let alone people that just come over purely because they know they can do that**

**INT: Right**

**N: Definitely. I think people that've got something to contribute to their country um. And it's**

**M: Yeah. You've just gotta be careful though because, You know if you let in loads and loads of educated people then, there again they take the jobs that educated people from New Zealand, do you know what I mean? So you've**

N: Yeah

M: I mean you've really got to be careful. Perhaps it's just a numbers thing

N: But I think it's the balance. You've got to get the balance right and then just go from there but um, definitely people that are that are not gonna drain on on the system and society and contribute something to society, I mean that's pretty hard to. Maybe it's speaking from a position of luxury, it's quite an easy sort of a thing but. But it's, I think as a as a country you've definitely gotta look after yourself, otherwise (.) no one else will

In the final two extracts, the speakers are responding to the question about "Asian migration". Both had left New Zealand only a few months before and both expressed a definite intention to return. Both are also aware that to reject migrants could sound 'racist'.

EXTRACT 29

INT: Right. Um, (.) are you in favour of this continuing Asian migration?

R: I think um, I think um, you know I think we've got enough. You know like you go out to Pakaranga and you just see that, the subdivision like there used to be all fields out there and now it's just all loads of the same huge houses, with big driveways and security fences. And I just sort of think, there's enough. I mean I don't want to say you can't come in, we don't want you here, it's not I don't want them here, I just think: well that's enough here, but you know it's difficult (.) It's just, I'd

rather be a bit more diverse in the, in who's coming in and not just such great big settlements of all community which seems to be what happens. I'd like to see more Europeans and Americans and Australians. Not just necessarily Western countries

This response includes many of the arguments and dilemmas around this contest. Migrants are accused of damaging the environment, by filling up previously empty land with (ugly) houses. The houses are big and have security fences; the migrants are rich and their wealth seems to constitute a power and a threat. The migrants are all the same. It was noted in Chapter 3 that the term "Asian" works to place a variety of people in the same category; this now becomes grounds for criticising them and calling for more "diverse" immigration. "Europeans and Americans and Australians" would be preferable, but the speaker then counters the racist implication: migrants need not be "Western".

The final speaker again conflates the issues of migration, investment, development and tourism. An extra issue here is that this speaker identifies himself as Maori. He suggests that the "Asian migrants" can be compared to the British settlers who threatened Maori identity in the nineteenth century. However he acknowledges that this view may be the result of his "prejudices":

EXTRACT 30

INT: OK. Have you heard about recent so-called Asian migration in New Zealand?

S: (LAUGHTER) Ye-es

INT: Can you tell me what you've heard about it?

S: Well as I guess the thing is the land and the forest and stuff ... (discusses a Japanese university) ...well what do I think of

it? Was that your question?

INT: What do you think about the Asian migration? What have you heard about it, what do you think of it, should it be encouraged?

S: Well I don't know, it kind of scares me a bit. I don't know if that's my own prejudices coming through. (.) I don't know whether it's my own prejudices or not. (.) But it makes me a bit uncomfortable, not what I've heard but what I've seen. People coming and living in a country, I mean I just see it as being a bit more of what happened a hundred and fifty years ago, except that I don't know that it's going to be so easy to push our culture, what has come up to be a New Zealand, I don't know if there is a typical New Zealand culture but there's a New Zealand image, to push it aside, the language and whatever, which is what happened when the pakeha came and you know gone were the. Gone was our language fairly smartly, although it's not gone cos we're such a staunch race (JOKING VOICE) took much more than that. I don't know that that's the Japanese people's intention. I guess they just want to stretch their legs, I don't know. And I'm (.) But it just makes me a bit uncomfortable I suppose. Because it's kind of almost like someone coming into your, into your house and sitting on your couch and using your remote (LAUGHTER)

At the end of the speech the speaker turns from logical argument to a frankly emotional appeal, using the image of the nation as personal possession and private home. The new migrants are compared to an intruder who enters and treats your home as his own.

## Conclusion

This chapter has looked at talk around three contentious issues and examined how the debates around these issues are conducted in terms of nation and national identity. The arguments and positionings used by speakers include the constructions of the nation described in Chapter 5 and the constructions of national identity described in Chapter 6. The debates indicate the continuing relevance of New Zealand's colonial history and the unresolved contest between Maori and non-Maori New Zealanders. They also suggest that in New Zealand the effects of globalisation, including the reorganisation of the national economy and the opening of national borders to investment and new migration, are debated in terms of the nation and incorporated into new discursive constructions of the nation and national identity, but do not, for these speakers at least, prompt a repositioning of self or others in any alternative postnational terms.

## Chapter 8 - Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the discursive constructions of nation and national identity and the work done by these constructions in the talk of participants who claim a New Zealand identity, using original data from interviews conducted in late 1994 and early 1995. Following Wetherell and Potter (1992), discourse is understood to be constitutive and material. It is assumed that the constructions used by speakers are multiple, fragmented and sometimes contradictory, and that variation is a natural feature of talk (Potter and Wetherell, 1987).

Speakers are assumed to draw on a pool or field of discursive resources which includes understandings of 'nation' and 'national' and also ideas, images, narratives, categories and stereotypes which are more specifically associated with New Zealand (Chapter 2). 'Old' ideas around the nation are not abandoned but persist in the pool of resources, to be taken up and reinterpreted in new situations. For example, descriptions of New Zealand as a land of "opportunity" and of New Zealanders as "enterprising", which, according to Fairburn (1989), were initially related to the circumstances of nineteenth century colonial settlement, are now incorporated into accounts of present-day New Zealand and New Zealanders in terms of free market economics.

The analysis in the thesis shows, firstly, that a claim of national identity can do work for an individual as part of the discursive construction of self identity. Individuals can position themselves positively using positive and negative constructions of the nation (Chapters 5 and 6). Such positioning can be achieved through the use of concepts which are also found in academic theories of the nation, such as that of a national population united by similarity (Chapters 1, 5 and 6). Part of the positioning is the link established between self and nation. A speaker can, for example, claim to share traits



common to the whole homogeneous population, or speak as if she or he is the nation, or talk of the national territory as a personal possession. National identity can be established as 'made' or as 'chosen' (Chapters 5 and 6).

The work around the discursive construction of self identity and the taking up of discursively created subject positions leads speakers into puzzling and dilemma. For example, this can arise when speakers attempt to reconcile *alternative ways of characterising nation and national identity*. Another dilemma arises from the attempt to reconcile self-presentation with other people's perceptions. Speakers are aware of stereotypes of national identity and position themselves with reference to them (Chapter 6). These stereotypes can therefore act as a constraint on self-positioning.

Other constraints on discursive constructions and positioning derive from the interpretative resources available around the particular national identity being constructed (Chapters 5 and 6). Certain constructions appear contradictory or anachronistic, requiring extra discursive work from speakers, such as *rationalising, justifying and defending*. These constraints can be understood using the concepts of "dominant" and "subaltern" identities (Shapiro, 1988; Shurmer-Smith and Hannam, 1994). The talk analysed suggested that dominant constructions of New Zealand identity as white and male still persist. Maori and female remain "subaltern" identities, although again there is some dilemma around this. For example, for non-Maori New Zealanders, a construction of New Zealand identity as Maori or bicultural does positive work to establish this identity as distinctive and separate compared to other national identities (especially British), but can undermine their own status within New Zealand. However, overall, a claim of Maori identity can be seen to involve a speaker in extra discursive 'defence' work in order to reconcile the claim with a claim of New Zealand identity, avoid negative stereotypes and counter arguments that Maori are inauthentic or irrelevant.

A second claim of the thesis is that constructions of 'nation' and 'national'

are ideological, in that such constructions establish and perpetuate relations of power and dominance, rendering these normal and invisible (Chapter 2). Challenges and contests are "delegitimated" (Shapiro, 1988). The dominant constructions of national identity do such ideological work, leading to contests around definitions of New Zealand as "Maori", "pakeha", "bicultural" and "multicultural" (Chapters 3, 6 and 7). Alternative constructions of the nation itself, including different understandings of its timeframe, history and geographic location, similarly do work to include and exclude, at both the individual and collective level, and also reflect different forms of economic activity, itself ideological, because, of course, alternative economic activities serve different interests. Further dilemmas and puzzling arise because ideology is not monolithic but fragmented and contradictory (Billig et al, 1988).

The third claim of this thesis is that changes associated with globalisation do not render national identity irrelevant. This claim is addressed with reference to three major changes associated with globalisation, namely, the reorganisation of the 'national' economy to open it to global market forces and flows of investment; a similar (limited) opening of national borders to new migration, and the increased acknowledgement of minority groups within the national population. The analysis shows how contests around these changes in New Zealand continue to be conducted in terms of nation and national identity (Chapter 7). For example, disputes around inclusion in the economy are still discussed in national terms. Economic exclusion may be 'rationalised' by nesting the biographical narratives of individuals within the longer-term narrative of the nation (Gergen, 1994; see Chapter 7). Dominant constructions of New Zealand national identity can work to exclude new migrants, especially those who are not white. And, as has already been described, the continuing contests around the status of the Maori are conducted in terms of alternative constructions of the New Zealand nation.

The analysis presented in the thesis is inevitably limited. In particular, the data used could be drawn on for a more detailed interpretation of constructions of gender. The method of discourse analysis, like any qualitative method, limits the number of participants and the amount of material which can be analysed. I have already suggested that the 'data sample' should be understood to be the talk analysed rather than the participants, but a different selection of participants would be needed to consider in more detail the situation of other groups within the official New Zealand population (Chapter 4). In particular, this analysis does not include participants who identify themselves or would be identified by others as 'Pacific Islanders' and 'Asians' (Chapter 3). More generally, the analysis is relevant to a particular time and set of socioeconomic circumstances, although there also some reasons to claim generalisability. (Chapter 4).

As has already been stated, it is hoped that this thesis will act as a resource for future researchers and, more importantly, draw attention to the use of constructions of nation and national identity and their implications in ongoing debates in New Zealand and elsewhere. Barrett (1991) suggests that ideology may, after much academic dispute and redefinition, be understood as

"discursive and signatory mechanisms that may occlude, legitimate, naturalise or universalise in a variety of different ways but can all be said to mystify" (167).

This thesis has argued that constructions of nation and national identity are ideological in this sense, and has aimed through its analysis to demystify them.

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Appendix A: Questions used for pilot study (Britain)

(Note: The aims are those which informed the pilot study, but which later changed, as is described in Chapter 4)

BEGIN WITH FIRST NAME OR OTHER IDENTIFIER, AGE, STATUS AND LENGTH OF STAY IN BRITAIN (TOURIST, WORKING VISITOR OR RESIDENT), AND DATE OF LEAVING NEW ZEALAND.

1. As a New Zealander abroad, do you find other people have a certain picture or image of New Zealanders and New Zealand?

How far do you think that picture is correct?

In what ways is it wrong, in your opinion?

*(AIM - to start interviewee thinking about NZ, from outsider's view and from own)*

2. What would be your picture of a typical New Zealander?

What are the traditional images of New Zealanders?

Do you think there's any truth in those images?

*(AIM - to find commonly held images, stereotypes)*

3. What symbols would you choose to represent New Zealand, for example on stamps or a new flag?

What photos or film or TV images would you choose to represent New Zealand?

*(AIM - as above)*

4. Thinking back to your childhood and schooling, can you remember learning about New Zealand and becoming aware that it was a separate country? (Tell me about this]

What do you think that New Zealand children should be taught about their country today?

*(AIM - to identify sources of images and perceived changes in NZ society)*

5. What would you describe as a typical New Zealand lifestyle?

Some people would say that nowadays it makes little or no difference whether you live in New Zealand or Australia or in parts of Britain or the United States. Do you agree?

What makes New Zealand better or worse than other countries?

*(AIM - as 2)*

6. New Zealand is a nation of migrants. Do you think it's easy to 'become' a New Zealander (compared with , say , an American)?

Can you think of any examples of migrants who have not really fitted in?

Looking back through your family, how would the different generations have described themselves in terms of nationality?

How do you describe yourself in terms of nationality?

What does that term "New Zealander" mean to you?

What images come to your mind when you say it?

How has that sense of yourself changed over your life?

*(AIM - to find 'us' and 'them' images; positioning of self in relation to others, particularly nations and states which were sources of NZ migrants; importance of British and other origins; changes in images over time)*

7. When you meet another New Zealander outside New Zealand, how do you describe or identify yourself? (by city?)

What divisions do you think are important in New Zealand society?

What divisions do you think will be important in future?

Which groups in New Zealand society are disadvantaged? How has this situation come about? What could change it?

*(AIM - to find other divisions and ways of positioning , including place e.g.town / island and class; to find images of how equality and opportunity operate in NZ society)*

8. Some Maori groups have argued that they are the only true New Zealanders. Would you agree?

Which cultural or racial groups will change New Zealand society in the future, in your opinion?

*(AIM - to raise race as a division and way of positioning if this has not already come up)*

9. New Zealand women received the vote before women in most other countries, but there's also a strong domestic tradition of New Zealand women being good wives and mothers. How would you describe the position of women in New Zealand society today?

What pictures would you choose to represent New Zealand women today, for example for a book cover or calendar?

How do you think life has changed for the women of your generation compared with the women of your mother's generation?

What further changes would you like to see for women in New Zealand?

*(AIM - to raise gender as a division and way of positioning )*

10. How do you feel New Zealand has changed in the last few years / since you left?

Generally, what features of New Zealand and life in New Zealand do you think will change in the future?

What features would you say it was important to preserve?

What would you say are the problems or dangers that New Zealand faces today , socially, culturally and economically?

*(AIM - to identify changing image of nation and advantages which membership of nation confers)*

11. Which other countries are most important to New Zealand now?

How has this changed over your lifetime?

Have these changes produced any problems?

Do you think other countries will become more important in the future?

*(AIM - as for 6 and 10)*

12. When do you feel good about being a New Zealander?

Has there been any time you've felt bad about being a New Zealander?

*(AIM - to find values which nation represents)*

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## Appendix B: Questions used for school students in New Zealand

1) What celebrations and festivals are important in NZ?

RE Waitangi Day & Anzac Day - Why is it important?

What does it stand for?

What do you/ yr family / people do to celebrate?

2) (Are you taking history?)

What have you been taught about the history of NZ?

Do you find it interesting?

Would you like to study more? anything you want to learn more about?

Have you learnt any NZ history from outside school? What ? Where?

What other countries do you think NZ students should learn about?

What other languages do you think should be taught in NZ schools?

3) How do you think NZers differ from people in other countries?

Do they look different? dress differently?

Are the women different from the women in other countries? the men?

4) Have you visited or lived in another country?

What other countries would you like to visit? live in?

Do you think NZ is a better / worse place than (other countries mentioned)?

How do you think it's different?

Are there any countries where you definitely wouldn't want to go?

5) If you won an overseas holiday now, with spending money, where would you go? What would you buy?

6) NZ is getting a lot of tourists now. If you have some visitors from overseas to entertain, where would you take them?

What would you show them?

7) When you turn on TV in the middle of a programme, how quickly do you know if it's a NZ programme or not?

Which programmes do you like?

Where are they from?

What's the difference between the programmes from (whatever countries are mentioned)?

8) Tell me some famous NZers. Which ones do you admire? Why? Which ones do you think are most important? (Which one would you put on the cover of a book about NZ?)

9) What's the population of NZ now?

Do you think that's the right number of people for NZ?

10) Every country has migrants.

Where do most of NZ's migrants come from?

Where else does NZ have migrants from,?

Do you think that will change in future?

Do you think that's a good thing?

If someone comes to NZ to live, do you think it's easy for them to fit in?

What problems can they have? Why?

How long does it take a migrant to become a NZer?

11) Some countries make a film to show new migrants, to say, this is what it's like here, this is how we live, this is what you need to know. Imagine you're making a film like that for migrants to NZ. What will you show?

Part of the film says: these are the problems in NZ today. What will you show? What's the cause of this problem? Is it anyone's fault?

12) Have you lived in other parts of NZ?

Where else in NZ would you like to live? Why / why not?

How is life different in other parts of NZ?

13) In most countries there's inequality: some people have a better life, some a worse one. Which people in NZ have the best life?

Which have a worse time and problems? Why?

Do you think that will change?

14) Think of your mother and father when they were the same age as you are now. How is your life different?

Do you think it's better or worse for you now that it was for them?

Do you think you'll have a better or worse life than them?

15) What do you think most of the people in your class will do when they get older?

What do you think the boys will do? the girls?

16) What do you think will change about NZ in future?

What would you like to change?

What do you think it's important to keep the same?

17) Do you think NZ should become a republic or do you think it should keep the Queen as the head of state the way she is now?

18) Do you think there should be a Maori King or Queen of NZ?

19) If you were choosing some pictures or film of typical NZers what would you choose? for women? for men?

20) What do you think people in other countries know about NZ?  
think of NZ?

## Appendix C: Questions used for main interview project

1. Job.Time in London / away from NZ

2. What were your reasons for leaving New Zealand?

Are they the same reasons that you're in London now?

Do you think you'll go back?

Do you miss it? What do you miss?

3. Do you (still) call yourself a New Zealander?

What does it mean to you to call yourself a New Zealander?

When do you feel good about being a New Zealander? Do you ever feel bad about it?

4. Looking back through your family, would your parents and the generations before them have called themselves New Zealanders?

5. What important changes have occurred in New Zealand in your lifetime?

What changes do you think will occur in the future?

What changes would you NOT like to see? What do you think it's important to retain?

6. As a New Zealander abroad, do you find other people have a particular image of New Zealand and New Zealanders? Is there any truth in it?

Can you think of any cliches and stereotypes of New Zealand?

What images of New Zealand do you have?

7. What distinguishes New Zealanders from other nationalities?

What do you feel you have in common with other New Zealanders?

Is there anyone you think of as typical or representative New Zealanders?

What are New Zealanders' values?

Do you think land and the environment are specially important to New Zealanders?

8. New Zealand has been described as a nation of migrants. Do you think it's easy to become a New Zealander?

Can you think of any groups of migrants who haven't fitted in particularly well?

Do you think there should be any special tests or conditions for would-be

migrants?

Have you heard about the recent Asian migration?.

Do you think this should be encouraged?

9. It's been claimed that Maoris are the only true New Zealanders. Do you agree ?

Who do you think is entitled to call themselves a New Zealander?

10. What divisions do you think there are in New Zealand?

Assuming that no society is homogeneous, who do you think is disadvantaged in New Zealand society?

11. Would you like to see New Zealand become a republic?

Another idea that's been suggested is a larger multinational state with Australia and some of the Pacific Island nations. How would you feel about that?

12. What symbols would you choose to represent New Zealand?

13. As a New Zealander do you feel that your country owes you anything, or that you owe New Zealand anything?

14. Do you think that New Zealand as a country or you yourself as a New Zealander have any special fate or destiny?

15. What would you like to see New Zealand children taught about New Zealand ?