

THE GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF LANDFALL AND
ITS INFLUENCE IN RELATION TO THE CULTURE OF
NEW ZEALAND AND THE COMMONWEALTH.

A thesis presented for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English literature
in the University of Canterbury,
Christchurch, New Zealand.

by

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November 1972.

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DEDICATION

To my mother and father,

Phil, and Jane.

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PREFACE

All the research and development of the following dissertation has been made possible by the award of a New Zealand Commonwealth Scholarship (1970-1972) tenable at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch. The spirit in which the Scholarship is awarded is one of mutual understanding between Commonwealth countries, as a first step to better international understanding among all countries, and it is sincerely hoped that this thesis will, in some small way, contribute to the spirit of friendship and cooperation that exists between Canada and New Zealand. It is my opinion that no two Western countries have greater common interests; in peacekeeping and peacemaking; in trade and non-alignment with military blocs; in standard of living and quality of life; in relations between ethnic minorities and powerful majorities in sovereign states: and I believe that our histories have led us in comparable cultural, social, and political directions.

The original goal that led me to pursue doctoral studies was to present a major comparative study of "the social and literary mythology" (ideas discussed by Northrop Frye in Fables of Identity) of Canada, New Zealand and Australia. The comparative aspect of this goal is now planned for a future book. The extensive and rich documentation of the story of New Zealand, available in the many city, provincial, university and private libraries throughout the country, has made the confines of a Ph.D. thesis hard to determine. As a result, and in order to

choose a suitable and original topic, the thesis has been confined to a discussion of post-war New Zealand literature and culture as presented in the quarterly Landfall under its first editor, Charles Brasch (1947-1966).

The Introduction to the thesis explains the approach towards the topic: "The Genesis and Development of Landfall and its influence in Relation to the Culture of New Zealand and the Commonwealth." The term "Commonwealth" has been alluded to so that the thesis can be regarded in terms of the future comparative study. I believe that the term "Commonwealth literature", as accepted at the Conference on Commonwealth Literature held in Leeds (9-12 September 1964), can be used for the time being as a premise for comparative study.

The chapter on historic influences on Landfall is a survey of intellectual periodicals that developed out of the radical years of the Depression. A discussion of Charles Brasch and editorial policy arose from the comment by E.H. McCormick that "the periodical is best approached through a consideration of its editor". McCormick's survey, New Zealand Literature, has been of inestimable help in providing a perspective of New Zealand literature from its beginnings. The chapters on poetry and the short story are predominantly literary criticism discussing the two major genres of literature that appear in Landfall. Certain book reviews and some commentaries are incorporated into these two literary chapters since there is little continuity among reviews and commentaries. The three remaining chapters on The Maori; the Asian/Pacific Consciousness; and the Intellectual Environment, are designed to illustrate certain special aspects

of the New Zealand consciousness that connect the socio-cultural themes in which I am particularly interested.

Many people have been of considerable assistance to me in this enterprise. I would like to thank Charles Brasch most sincerely for his gift of a complete set of Landfall and a copy of Landfall Country. The set of Landfall has been entrusted to me until some future time when it will be donated, in New Zealand's name, to a Canadian library. I owe Dr. Brasch a considerable debt of gratitude for his confidence and support which have been so encouraging during the months of research and writing. My debt to the English Department at the University of Canterbury is also great. I am extremely grateful to Professor H. Winston Rhodes, Mr. Lawrence Baigent and Dr. K.K. Ruthven who have tirelessly read and supervised the thesis in its roughest drafts, and to Professor John Garrett who helped me decide on the topic and gave me a lecturing appointment in the Program of American Studies that permitted me extra time to complete the thesis. I am also grateful to Professor Ray Copland and Father John Weir whose knowledge of, and comments on, New Zealand literature, have guided my approach. Robin Dudding, editor of Islands and former editor of Landfall, has been a constant ally.

Many people across New Zealand have also assisted me. I would like to acknowledge particularly the assistance of Kendrick Smithyman, Dr. Allen Curnow, Dr. Wystan Curnow, Professor M.K. Joseph, Professor Robert Chapman, and Dr. Bill Pearson of the University of Auckland. Also I thank Mrs. Rosemary Chapman of the University of Auckland Library (New Zealand and Pacific section) for her help. I am extremely

grateful to Mrs. Whetu Tirikatene Sullivan, Member of Parliament for Southern Maori, for her comments on Maoritanga, and to all the Maori people I met in Riwaka, Hawkes Bay, and the Coromandel Peninsula, who talked openly and explicitly about themselves and their people. Without their help I might have seen New Zealand as travel posters picture it; not as a unique Polynesian/European community.

I acknowledge the considerable help given by the librarians at the Victoria University Library and the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, and also by Mrs. Thomas of the University of Canterbury and Macmillan Brown libraries in Christchurch, and Mr. Michael Hitchings of the Hocken Library in Dunedin. My thanks are also due to Professor Horsman and Professor Dalziel of the English Department of the University of Otago, and to the librarians at the library there. I am also particularly grateful to Mr. Ted Middleton and Mr. Michael Smither for their long hours of conversation on numerous topics in the Captain Cook Tavern in Dunedin.

None of this work could have been undertaken without the help of the University Grants Committee in Wellington, and particularly I would like to thank Sir Alan Danks, Miss D.L. Anderson, and Mr. Broad, for their approval of travel funds and support of a year's residence in Australia. I thank also Mrs. Burns and Mr. Haywood of the Registry of the University of Canterbury who have answered many questions of administration. Finally, but primarily, I thank everyone in New Zealand who showed me the truly fascinating and significant country they inhabit.

INTRODUCTION

In 1962 the Caxton Press in Christchurch published Landfall Country, a selection of work from Landfall (1947-61) chosen by editor Charles Brasch. The collection was designed by Charles Brasch to present a selection of the best examples of stories, poems, essays, and paintings published in Landfall since the second world war. The high quality of work published in Landfall Country showed that Landfall had provided a focal point whereby New Zealand's cultural progress could be measured. It was also evidence that New Zealand literature contained works of excellence.)

It was fortunate that the genesis of Landfall coincided with what may now be regarded as a post-war "renaissance" in New Zealand's cultural life. The Depression of the thirties, and the military involvement of the early forties, affected the New Zealand consciousness in many ways. Most notably, from an intellectual point of view, the effect of uncertainty, violence, and adventure, gave rise to the revival of the arts in New Zealand when certain New Zealand intellectuals returned home after their war experience. Many who returned home had a renewed interest in their country, particularly from a cultural viewpoint.

Landfall has provided the world with a picture of "Landfall Country" that many New Zealanders have never realized or even considered. New Zealand is still better regarded for its climate, geography, and peaceful way of life, than for its contribution to culture. But the native writers who chose to remain a part of "Landfall Country" have provided insights

into New Zealand's way of life and national habits that help to define what may be intellectually termed "the New Zealand identity." It is probable that many New Zealanders are not very concerned with such a definition, but for any observer with more than a superficial interest in a country the concept of "identity" is a useful starting point. Insofar as New Zealand is significant as a sovereign world state, so its culture and "social mythology" are significant in determining New Zealand's place in the international arena.

Whatever arguments are levelled against the quest for a nation's identity or "quintessence", there is still the feeling that a national political and social sovereignty depend, in part, on a cultural sovereignty. This feeling is neither literary nationalism nor isolationism. On the contrary, New Zealand's two languages are part of the Polynesian and European worlds, and most aspects of culture in these South Pacific islands are derivative and adapted. But there is no other country identical to New Zealand, and for that reason it is useful and necessary to investigate the unique idiom of life that is New Zealand's. New Zealanders are proud of the inherited aspects of their culture, and have never sought to destroy them by revolution or banishment. There has never been in New Zealand the same kind of cultural nationalism that existed in the United States of Noah Webster or the Australia of the era of The Bulletin at the turn of the century. In this respect, New Zealand more closely resembles Canada with its concern for the "useable past" and a loyalty towards its lineage uncommon in a century of self-determination.

In the years since 1945, New Zealand has learned a "Native accent" of its own, and has evolved as a cultural centre in its own right.

One characteristic of post-war New Zealand culture is the expression of social realities in imaginative terms. It is true that a good deal of New Zealand literature is mainly aesthetic in its aims, but it is also true that writers in New Zealand, whether consciously or unconsciously, have provided interesting insights into the New Zealand social spectrum. The late sociologist C. Wright Mills described the socio-cultural aspects of artistic consciousness as "the sociological imagination."

...it is by means of the sociological imagination that men now hope to grasp what is going on in the world, and to understand what is happening in themselves as minute points of the intersections of biography and history within society. In large part, contemporary man's self-conscious view of himself as at least an outsider, if not a permanent stranger, rests upon an absorbed realization of social relativity and of the transformative power of history. The sociological imagination is the most fruitful of this self-consciousness. By its use men whose mentalities have swept only a series of limited orbits often come to feel as if suddenly awakened in a house with which they had only supposed themselves to be familiar. Correctly or incorrectly, they often come to feel that they can now provide themselves with adequate summations, cohesive assessments, comprehensive orientations. Older decisions that once appeared sound, now seem to them products of a mind unaccountably dense. Their capacity for astonishment is made lively again. They acquire a new way of thinking, they experience a transvaluation of values: in a word, by their reflection and by their sensibility, they realize the cultural meaning of the social sciences. (The Sociological Imagination)

It is the concept of the sociological imagination, with all its intangibles and speculations that will be applied to the study of "national identity" in the post-war New Zealand literature

published in Landfall. Such a study with inter-disciplinary premises might not find favour with proponents of the New Criticism, but Landfall was, and is, an intellectual journal with concerns that are other than literary in some published material.

In his book, The Sociology of Literary Taste, Levin L. Schlücking provides a premise that can be practicably applied to a study of New Zealand literature

Just as in natural history the characteristics of fauna and flora can only be recognised in association with the peculiarities of the locality, so in the history of literature existence and colouring and individuality proceed largely from the sociological soil from which the literary creation springs.

This is one way of looking at literature, and the following thesis is one way of looking at New Zealand literature.

"Landfall Country" is a dimension of the intellectual consciousness applied to the islands of New Zealand. Like anything intangible, such a dimension can only be identified through illustrations, metaphors, allegories, and calculated guesses. But there is always the possibility of a cultural or sociological "epiphany."

Landfall was born to permit the growth of a distinctive consciousness and outlook in the New Zealand of the post-war years.) It is premature to be either conclusive or dogmatic about this, but it can be said, as the following dissertation tries to show, that a selective survey of the contents of Landfall reveals New Zealand as a nation of the twentieth century aspiring to excellence in its cultural and intellectual life.

HISTORIC INFLUENCES ON LANDFALL

Landfall is the most significant and successful literary periodical ever produced in New Zealand. Volumes of its numbers appear in many foreign libraries and, through its pages, overseas readers judge the intellectual life of New Zealand. While both the standard of Landfall and its durability as a periodical are unique in the history of New Zealand writing¹ there are important influences and experiments that had a bearing on the genesis and purpose of Landfall. This chapter will attempt to discuss some of the forerunners of Landfall which probably influenced the editor and co-founder, Charles Brasch.

The university magazine Phoenix, printed in Auckland by the able poet/typographer Robert Lowry, appeared each term in 1932 for a total of three issues. In a later issue of Landfall Ronald Holloway colourfully recalled the situation within which Lowry and his colleagues worked:

I found him at Auckland University College in 1932, in a room at the end of the lower cloister, printing the first Phoenix on a miniature press, page by hand-set page, Ingenio et Labore (footnote: "The legend of the Auckland University College arms.") ...Before the second Phoenix was printed, the plant had been taken over by the Students' Association, and with a power-driven platen, was established in a basement room under the Science Building. The chemists let their sinks overflow and much paper was spoilt; and there were stinks. Meanwhile the unemployed rioted in Queen Street, and Bob, like many other students, was enrolled as a special constable and hung up his truncheon behind the printery door. Before long there were more riots, but our Guardian of the Law was already on the side of the oppressed. In Court,

1 Tomorrow, the political publication of the thirties and early forties, might be compared in significance, but its life was cut short by Government threats after only six years.

a fellow constable attempted to report Bob's inflammatory words verbatim; from the prisoner the S.M. heard, "That, sir, is not my idiom!" His Press was already an instrument of propaganda, and the College authorities were uneasy. (Landfall, Volume 18, no. 1., March 1964, pp.55-56)

The radical strain was constant in publications like Phoenix which, as labours of private enterprise, escaped the expurgation of commercial interests and narrow-minded subscribers. The lesson that Landfall was later to teach by example was that only a politically "grey" or "slightly radical" publication could survive in the conservative political and social environment of contemporary New Zealand.

Allen Curnow, who, with Denis Glover, is probably one of New Zealand's best satirists, wrote,

Obstreperous magazines were stupidly suppressed, after brief lives, by university authorities in Auckland and Christchurch: older writers, such as Cresswell and Mason, joined in these ventures with student committees. The Phoenix quarterly (which lasted four issues, 1932-3) printed work by Fairburn, Mason, Cresswell, Charles Brasch, Robin Hyde, James Bertram (who left then for Oxford, later to work for renascent China against Japan) J.A.W. Bennett...and the present writer. Politically, the effect was to provoke and anger the more panicky set of local conservatives, alarmed sufficiently by strikes, demonstrations, and (in Auckland) actual rioting. A peevish press earned the contempt of some serious writers, which it still enjoys. The odds were more than evened by the General Election of 1935 which put Labour into power for fifteen years. But young New Zealand had discovered the use of the printing-press. 2

The fight against a reactionary "bourgeois press" has existed from the beginnings of European settlement in New Zealand. In the first instance, the fight was carried on by English and Irish immigrants who were educated in Europe and were eager

2 Curnow, Allen, The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse, Penguin (Harmondsworth, 1960), p.49.

to write in New Zealand. Iris M. Park, writing in her relatively conclusive survey of New Zealand's intellectual periodicals, says,

The literary periodical of the 19th century was often a scholarly work, seeking to maintain some of the standards of English educated society, its contents made up of discussions of classic and modern literature, translations, and admirable accounts of the natural history of New Zealand. 3

One of the first satiric and radical periodicals (not mentioned by Iris Park) was The Tomahawk, "a Saturday Journal of Criticism, Commentary, and Satire." The Tomahawk first appeared in the bustling goldrush port of Hokitika on Saturday March 5, 1870. Its "proprietor" was Edward Harris, and its printers were George Tilbrook and Joseph Ivess. In a prospectus attached to the first issue, the editors stated their desire to compete with the established press in a tone that was later to be adopted by Lowry, Glover, and others.

The want of an honest, outspoken journal, a thorough exponent of public opinion has long been felt. The existence of that want has been the fault of the people themselves. They have allowed a monopoly of the power of the Press, and that monopoly has been fraught with the most injurious effects, not only to the town of Hokitika, but to the whole of the country. The so-called leading journal has not only been long distinguished by the absence of a policy, but it has become the organ of a clique, and is systematic in aiding, abetting, and applauding the actions of those who have brought the County into a position of difficulty and discredit; and, impressed with a belief that its monopoly is secure, that the public of Hokitika are too careless and indifferent to take an interest in the fortunes of a journal started in opposition to this self-styled leading journal, has adopted a rule with regard to reporting proceedings of public institutions never heard of before in the

3 Park, Iris M., New Zealand Periodicals of Literary Interest, National Library Service, (Wellington, 1962). Miss Park traces chronologically the history of intellectual periodicals with accompanying details and descriptions.

history of journalism. (The Tomahawk, March 5, 1870)⁴

The journal under attack, The West Coast Times, was accused of upholding the capitalist philosophy of "you claw me and I'll claw you", and of omitting "a line that is written to protest against an abuse, to expose a sham, or to make known a grievance." The Tomahawk attacked its enemies through articles from imaginary journalists; "Trotty Veck", "Polly Pink", and "Policeman X" who "will...give a metrical lucubration on the politics of the day". The style was often verbose and the tone propagandized, but The Tomahawk aimed to prove "how necessary it is...that a tyrannical and arbitrarily exercised monopoly should be checked." The Tomahawk lasted only four months and was briefly replaced by The Lantern with the motto "Lux in tenebris." The Lantern soon ceased to exist, but the spirit of an independent radical publication lived on. The Tomahawk and its successor formed a precedent in New Zealand journalism and the most remarkable element of its existence was the high standard of satire it maintained. For a weekly organ this was no mean achievement, but its creators were not "New Zealanders"; they were immigrant settlers sowing the seeds of a new nation.

The Phoenix writers of the 1930's were indigenous New Zealanders who cared for the lineage of their British past, for the urgencies of their Depression present, and for the improved future of their descendants. Above all, they were eloquent visionaries rooted in the New Zealand experience. The admitted and unmistakeable influence of the English literary publication

4 An original volume of numbers of The Tomahawk and The Lantern is held in the Macmillan Brown Library at the University of Canterbury.

The New Adelphi, gave the Phoenix committee a model of achievement. It was perhaps coincidental that the husband of Katherine Mansfield, John Middleton Murry, should, as editor of The New Adelphi, have influenced the editors of Phoenix but the indirect connection between New Zealand's greatest expatriate writer and a group of highly capable artists, who chose to remain patriated, is significant.

The Phoenix took its watchword from a reply made by The New Adelphi to George Bernard Shaw who had made a critical comment about people with oracular intentions. In the first number of Phoenix (March, 1932) an introduction entitled "The Cause of it all" quoted the reply to Mr. Shaw: "Mr. Bernard Shaw is a very clever man, but there are some things that he does not know. And one of them is this, that 'there is such a thing as disinterested enthusiasm for an idea.'" The "idea" behind Phoenix.

...might be variously described--in descending order of grandiloquence--as the integration of national consciousness, the focussing of contemporary opinion upon local needs, the creation of cultural antennae, the communication of definite standards of taste, the "redeeming of the times".

Such an idea "itself is protean", but the Phoenix group set a formula for New Zealand's cultural sovereignty. It was primarily a literary magazine:

But its interests do not stop with literature. In any modern paper with pretensions to seriousness (even should they go no further than a vague concern as to the fate of the world) some political reflections must find a place. It is hoped to encourage in these pages, then, the discussion of social and international affairs, if only as an attempt to foster the world-outlook that is... so sadly lacking in our university and in our community as a whole.

Phoenix was, therefore, an intellectual magazine produced by a

self-identified "intelligent minority" of visionaries. That their task was idealistic is illustrated in the launching words of the first number:

And so the Phoenix...takes flight for the unknown.
 Before it lies a desert of indifference, with here
 and there, it may be, a green isle of popular favour.
 But its flight, like the eagle's, is towards the sun.

The "unknown" became four brief issues, but the point had been made. D'Arcy Cresswell, in a short article in the charter issue entitled "Culture and Puberty", expressed the hopes of Phoenix contributors,

...I welcome, not the wanton poets nor the symptoms of mischief, not the down on our lip, not the yearning and stammering, not the lady poets sharpening their razors, but in place of imported papers such as Mr. Middleton Murry's London Adelphi any paper of our own which is likewise devoted to quiet understanding, devoted to humour, devoted to culture, devoted to love. Our dawning manhood demands such a paper among us.

At last there were devotees to the interpretation of life and experience in New Zealand who were aware also of a much wider world, and the "literary" Phoenix developed an "aesthetic policy."

While the brief life of Phoenix was just sufficient for The Times of London to "take cognisance"⁵ two other university magazines met with less success in Christchurch. Several students at Canterbury College, fired by the same principles and ideals as the Phoenix writers, created the little magazine Oriflamme in April 1933. The name was derived from the sacred banner of St. Denis that was used on the battlefield as a rallying-point. Oriflamme was described by its creators as "...simply a rallying-point for people of different views". Ian Milner, a scholar later shunned by his countrymen for political reasons, described

5 Phoenix, volume 1, no. 2, July 1932, page 43.

it as a "spasmodical" and it was edited and produced by the Canterbury College Caxton Club of which Denis Glover was a leader. The governing body of Canterbury College, fearful of the radical tones of the more eloquent students, suppressed Oriflamme after only four typewritten issues. It was to be a tactic that became the rule rather than the exception in New Zealand's history of small independent magazines.

A new magazine was immediately instituted, entitled Sirocco, after the warm Sahara wind that reaches the coast of Italy.

Sirocco, which takes the place of Oriflamme, exists, like its unfortunate predecessor, for the expression of independent views on topics likely to be of interest. There is no particular bias of selection, but what is considered the best of the available material will be published whenever sufficient is in hand to make an interesting number. The price is sixpence.

This note at the beginning of the first number of Sirocco, July 1933, vividly illustrated the continuing fight for freedom of expression, a cause which the authorities in New Zealand aimed to suppress on all counts. Perhaps the language of the young radicals was too much for unenlightened governing bodies;

O you wretched materialists, idealists in spite of yourselves! Vulgarly, you poor saps! O you wretched Christian idealists, allowing a sour materialist taste to turn your stomachs against the greatest idea of centuries. The one way to settle the new Communal society which shall be, and preserve it from the mumbo-jumbo of artificial religion, sex-perversion and animality, is the Christian way. As it has risen on each wave of social progress and held the ground gained, so Christianity must rise on this next wave. It is strong enough, if it will only try its strength, to be in at the death of Capitalism.

An older generation of authoritarians was unable to comprehend Philo's (Denis Glover) "dichotomy" of the rise of Christianity over the "death of Capitalism." Despite New Zealand's vanguard

social justice the wages of Capitalism were too much a part of the way of life. It is interesting to note, however, that many of the young radicals repudiated Marxism as well as Capitalism; philosophies which were both considered to be forms of a dehumanizing materialism. There were, of course, Marxists in New Zealand, but their influence has never been great. Above all the new philosophy was a belief that New Zealand should do "the right thing" rather than "the accepted thing." It was a rejuvenation of intellectual self-determination that the Statute of Westminster (1931) had made official in the political realm.

The most unfortunate tale of action and reaction is the history of the weekly (later a fortnightly) Tomorrow which was probably the best magazine of its kind up to that time in New Zealand's English-speaking history. First published in Christchurch in July 1934 Tomorrow was the brainchild of Kennaway Henderson, an outstanding cartoonist fully devoted to provoking "a satire on today." Charles Brasch wrote:

To bring out an independent fortnightly regularly in this country was then (as it would be now) a heroic effort. Kennaway Henderson edited Tomorrow single-handed, as a labour of love, unpaid; he gathered his contributors, kept them up to the mark, wrote for the journal himself, and illustrated it with cartoons. A collection of these last was published shortly before his death.

Tomorrow provided an invaluable centre for political and literary aspirations. It was the most important journal of opinion which had yet appeared in New Zealand. (Landfall, No. 53, p.5)

Like the Triad⁶ of Charles Nalder Baeyertz, Tomorrow was the effort of one man's tirelessness and other selected men's ideas.

6 The Triad was a monthly magazine dedicated to music, science art, and criticism. It began in April 1893 in Dunedin and was later published in Australia when Baeyertz left New Zealand.

H. Winston Rhodes who had joined Professor Sinclair and Henderson in preliminary discussions prior to the founding of Tomorrow, said that the publication was,

...more than a journal. It was an idea, and it was Kennaway's idea, an idea that expanded and developed in the immediate post depression years and provided a focus for radical and socialist opinion throughout New Zealand. A few people gathered about him because they were impressed not by extraordinary intellectual gifts or artistic attainments, not even by editorial skill, but by the man himself. Nothing could weaken his determination, his sense of social responsibility, his firm but unobtrusive integrity. (Landfall, No. 54 p.179)

The magazine was so closely tied to the editor himself that it would be better discussed through Henderson himself. Again Professor Rhodes' words provide personal analysis of the man Henderson;

He became a Marxist by instinct rather than by profession; but always he remained the lover of beauty, the friend of the birds and the flowers, the silent witness of cloud formations and light and shadow on hills and plains. Impelled by his social conscience he concerned himself with the ugliness of a world torn by strife and hate, injustice and oppression. (Landfall, No. 54, p.180)

Kennaway Henderson was a visionary with the ability to make his visions concrete through committed political writing.

The year 1934 was one in which the literature of protest was enhanced in New Zealand by the publication of John A. Lee's novel Children of the Poor which E.H. McCormick described as enjoying a succes de scandale. Tomorrow was no less "literature of protest" informing New Zealanders of the plight, not only of the Albany Porcello's, but also of the whole moral fabric of New Zealand society. There was an evangelical determination about Tomorrow with an abhorrence of "the comforting delusions of national self-righteousness which lull many to sleep while

they drift towards war and again war, each more inhuman than the last."⁷ Tomorrow's contributors were unsubtle as they lambasted the hypocrisy and greed of capitalism. Frequently the contents were more political treatise than satire, and, often when there was an attempt at literary (rather than political) substance, the satire was particularly effective.⁸ The title of Tomorrow, which first had appeared on an undated "speciman" copy, implied the hopes of a generation that had suffered the exigencies of a depression and read of the stupidities of the previous war. Professor Rhodes says that the title meant to Kennaway Henderson "The New Age" and was synonymous with "an ideal of fearless and independent thinking."

Tomorrow was avowedly "free from any interest, any party, and any advertisements" and relied solely on subscriptions that began at six shillings and sixpence per quarter. A notable feature was the fine typography that made the publication readable and professional as Tomorrow took its stand against the bourgeois Press. Like the Tomahawk proprietors and the Phoenix writers, the editor and contributors of Tomorrow attacked the "sanctimoniousness" and "misrepresentation" of the established press and its commercial interests. Tomorrow was cherished as "an independent paper" and in its six year life achieved a durability that only the Triad had surpassed,

7 Brailsford, John, Tomorrow, Volume 1, No. 1, in an article entitled "All Peoples".

8 Tomorrow was primarily a political weekly while Landfall is a literary quarterly.

but the Triad was far less significant as a national enterprise. Tomorrow accused the Press of "cliche, suppression, misrepresentation, and false headlines." In his cartoons Henderson likened the Press to a fat ugly woman who was "free to exploit the people, and, as the tool of the reactionaries, to lead them up the path." And in his critiques he left no opinion hidden;

I have referred before to the pseudo-culture of the newspaper, its "leaders" and "literary" pages subsidised by strident and vulgar advertising. Perhaps leader writers and other hacks will learn that public posturing on a midden of rostrums is ridiculous; the deceit of attempting to talk down in the drawing room the disreputable subsistence which enters below stairs, is obvious; and it should embarrass them...

The newspaper business is a dirty one; its writers are in a false position. K.

With rising costs and the difficulty of receiving regular contributions Tomorrow was changed from a weekly to a fortnightly on March 4, 1936, with an Education number;

The new paper, which is completely reorganised consists of thirty two pages and cover. This change is in accordance with the expressed wishes of many of our subscribers, and will give a great deal more time to the staff (at present overworked) to plan and produce a better journal... As a fortnightly paper Tomorrow is enlarged and improved; those responsible for its production gladly continue to give their services voluntarily in the belief that by this change and with the help of the goodwill of the subscribers, an independent journal will be firmly established... 10

Any changes in format or policy were more intentional than realized and regular contributors remained the same - H. Winston Rhodes, Denis Glover, A.R.D. Fairburn, Frank Sargeson, and Charles Brasch among them. The publication continued to

9 Tomorrow, Volume VI, No. 15, May 29, 1940, p.477.

10 Ibid., Volume II, No. 17, March 4, 1936, p.1.

be controversial, and, following the outbreak of the Second World War, was declared undesirable by the Fraser Government. On June 17, 1940 Kennaway Henderson sent a "Notice to Subscribers" which was the epitaph to the fruition of his life's work;

It is with regret that we announce to our many subscribers that we have temporarily ceased publication. The reason for this is that last week the Superintendent of Police visited our Printer and warned him of the risk he was running in continuing to print Tomorrow. The Superintendent pointed out that the Police have power to seize any printing press and they would not hesitate to use this power if any subversive articles were printed. The Editor was similarly warned. After the visit our printer informed us that he was not prepared to print any further issues of the journal.

Readers will recall that under the Emergency legislation "Subversion" is very vaguely defined, so that almost any critical writing might be regarded as subversive. Consequently no printer is prepared to print Tomorrow, and, in effect we have been suppressed under legislation passed by the first N.Z. Labour Government. New Zealand has now no independent, critical journal.

At the moment a wave of hysteria is sweeping the country. It may be that an opportunity to commence publication again will occur in a few months. In the meantime, however, we are forced to discontinue. We thank our many subscribers and well-wishers for support in the past and hope they will do anything they can in order to make it possible for Tomorrow to reappear in the near future.

KENNAWAY HENDERSON

Editor¹¹

Henderson's hope was never to be fulfilled and on Tuesday, July 15, 1941, in a typewritten bulletin, he informed subscribers of the regretful decision "to wind up the affairs of the paper." Clearly Henderson believed he had been "suppressed" on account of the supposed "subversive" tone of Tomorrow. There is little counter evidence to doubt that

11 Ibid., Volume VI, No. 15.

Tomorrow was suppressed, however Professor Rhodes describes the publication's demise in more casual terms,

Then the blow fell. Warned by the Fraser Government printers refused to print. There was no ban, no suppression, no charge; but the paper could not be published. It died with a bang, not a whimper; and Kennaway's work was finished. (Landfall, No. 54, p.181)

Tomorrow left behind it the legacy of a one-man independent editorial policy in a paper that sustained political, literary, and social interests. In other words, it was an intellectual concern.

Another important publication to appear before Landfall was the weekly publication of the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation (originally the N.Z.B.S.), the New Zealand Listener. The Listener first appeared in 1939 and was edited by Oliver Duff.

As well as radio programmes for the forthcoming week, the Listener has regular features (film and book reviews, music, cooking, correspondence column), articles on subjects and personalities connected with broadcasts, and poems and stories by New Zealanders. Many writers, both established and aspiring, have contributed. Among the poets, James K. Baxter, Denis Glover and Louis Johnson, have been well represented. 12

In 1949 M.H. Holcroft was persuaded to take over the editorship of the weekly from Oliver Duff.¹³ Under Holcroft the Listener was noted for its fostering of the arts, and, although a commercially dependent publication, many major writers appeared in its pages.

In March 1941, The Caxton Press in Christchurch published

12 Park, Iris M., op. cit., p. 26

13 M.H. Holcroft wrote an autobiography entitled Reluctant Editor (The "Listener" Years, 1949-67), published by Reed, (Wellington, 1969). Holcroft's three essays, "The Deepening Stream", "The Waiting Hills", and "The Encircling Seas", are regarded as milestones in modern imaginative writing in New Zealand. They were later published as Discovered Isles.

the first number of a "miscellany" entitled Book. The publication presented articles, fiction, poetry, and criticism, as well as the occasional wood engraving. Many of Book's contributors would later publish in Landfall, among them; Basil Dowling, Allen Curnow, Denis Glover, John Reece Cole, James Bertram, James K. Baxter, J.R. Hervey, Maurice Duggan, and Frank Sargeson. Charles Brasch also contributed to Book. The last number (No. 9), which was devoted to short stories, appeared in July 1947, four months after the advent of Landfall. Once Landfall commenced publication in March 1947, Book ceased to exist.

Although it appeared first in October 1949, two years after the first issue of Landfall, the independent monthly review Here and Now deserves brief mention. Its policy echoed the radical tones of the thirties and tended to be more outspoken than Landfall when criticising established interests. Here and Now,

...has been founded in the belief that free discussion of politics, literature, art and public affairs is an essential part of the democratic process. Such discussion hardly takes place here at all at present--at least not in print. The people of Britain have their weekly journals, The New Statesman, The New English Weekly, Time and Tide, The Spectator, and several others, which between them provide a forum in which public affairs may be dealt with freely and honestly for the benefit of literate people. Because we have lacked this sort of journalism in New Zealand the newspapers have dominated the field. (Here and Now, No. 1, October 1949, p. 7).

The editorial panel included familiar names such as A.R.D. Fairburn, R.W. Lowry, and M.K. Joseph, while the contributing panel included Frank Sargeson, Dorothea Turner, Eric Lee-Johnson, Kendrick Smithyman, David Ballantyne, and Maurice Duggan.

Here and Now was political;

The press and broadcasting are run by businessmen and politicians with money-making and power-getting as their simple aims. It is these same influential men who run the affairs of the country as a whole. Inevitably we shall come in conflict with interests of one sort or another. (Here and Now, No. 1, October 1949, p.7).

Even the literary side of the periodical was distinctly socio-political, but, reflecting its time in a period of affluence, Here and Now was less radical than Tomorrow. Also, it only lasted for a decade while The New Zealand Monthly Review, which has already lasted more than a decade, continues the tradition of the radical thirties in the perspective of the seventies. The common bonds of all these publications were their intellectual status and their independence of commercial interests. Their common experience, except for Monthly Review, tended to be ephemeral because there was not a sufficient attempt to put each publication on a firm financial footing. A constant change of management and irregular publication also tended to be destructive to the enterprise of publishing a small magazine. Landfall overcame the problems of its ancestors by maintaining a politically cautious editorial policy; by appearing regularly four times a year; by having a firm financial basis; and by being the full time occupation of one editor devoted to its success.

It would be easy to beg questions as to how the history of the previous independent journals in New Zealand influenced the policy and format of Landfall. Only one man, Charles Brasch, is really capable of knowing the full answer, and many things he is understandably unwilling to divulge. But some tentative conclusions may be made.

Charles Brasch was a major contributor to Phoenix, and appeared also in Tomorrow. His experience with publication was undoubtedly enhanced by his association with the two journals and he comprehended both the idealistic and practical concerns of publication. His idealistic concern was to ascertain the New Zealand identity, and he agreed with Oliver Duff that,

The pioneers knew who they were and where they were going. Their grandchildren stand bewildered at the crossroads, not quite sure whether to advance or retire; whether they are strayed Europeans or white Polynesians; immigrants, travellers, or natives. (Landfall, No. 7, p. 168)

Brasch was particularly concerned with New Zealand's "national consciousness" and its "integration" with the reality of the New Zealand cultural, climactic, political, and social experience.) But he excluded the sharp radicalism of contemporaries like Glover. W.H. Oliver, the only man before Robin Dudding that Brasch trusted with the editorship of Landfall, has an interesting insight into the attitude of Charles Brasch which bears on the tone of Landfall;

- 5 Charles Brasch, in his early verse a good deal more subdued than (his) contemporaries, is comparable, though thoroughly individualistic. More cosmopolitan in habits and outlook, he was also more explicitly concerned with problems of civilisation and culture. An early title, "The Land and the People" (1939), and two later ones, "Disputed Ground" and "The Estate" (1948 and 1957) point to the nature of his preoccupations. The land and the people, at odds with each other, need to be wedded by habit and rituals which will ease the rawness of each; the country (so at one level; at another, the nature of man) is ground disputed over by the demands of its inhabitants and its own resistance to change. A man's estate is all he has to reckon with; a territory where inheritance and environment meet, conflict, and (it may be eventually) merge. 14

14 McLintock, A.H., Editor. An Encyclopedia of New Zealand, R.E. Owen, Government Printer, (Wellington, 1966), volume 2, p. 341a.

Brasch was conscious, not only of the "problems of Civilisation and culture" which are as immense as they are abstract, but also of the budding tradition of artistic achievement in New Zealand;

The beginning of such a tradition may be dated from the publication of Phoenix at Auckland University College in 1932. That periodical...brought to light most of the writers who have been prominent in the last fifteen years. (Landfall, No. 8, p. 243)

Civilization was a serious business to Brasch. The virtual lack of satire or humour in Landfall is probably due to a lack of satirists or humourists.¹⁵ Apart from the lampoons of Tomahawk, and the cartoons of Kennaway Henderson, New Zealand periodicals ignored satire as a cultural weapon. But the sense of mission, evident in Phoenix, Tomorrow and university magazines, was equally evident in Landfall. Charles Brasch knew that there was a need in New Zealand for an expression of the national consciousness of the country and its people. Only then could a native tradition develop, not as a rival to the older traditions of England and America, but as a complementary tradition that made sense of "living in New Zealand" and expressed the unique aspirations and experiences of a particular geographical and psychological context. Brasch wished to make New Zealand a "centre" of the many interlocking traditions.

Brasch stated that he had planned Landfall,

...by the light, though not (it will be obvious) in the image of three English literary journals, the most distinguished, there can be little doubt, of the past quarter of a century: The Adelphi under John Middleton Murry, The Criterion under T.S. Eliot,

15 The one collection of N.Z. humour, The Kiwi Laughs, was edited by J.C. Reid.

and, for its brief but memorable period under Christopher Dawson, The Dublin Review. These journals reflected various forms of the European tradition in its manifold richness. (Landfall, No. 3, pp.160-161)

In addition, Brasch had read Horizon¹⁶ which might be added to the three other influences. It is true that these four journals influenced Landfall by inspiration rather than example. Landfall was more limited in its policy--most notably, the exclusion of foreign contributions to its pages;

Unfortunately it has not been possible to consider (foreign manuscripts), because Landfall's first aim is to be what it says it is, a New Zealand quarterly, presenting the work of New Zealand writers. It has little enough space to do this; it has no space, at present, to do more than this. (Landfall, No. 6, p.83)

Privately, Brasch would admit that foreign contributors had sufficient outlets in their own countries (particularly Australia, England and the United States) and generally sent their poorer work to Landfall to add another publication to their curricula vitae. It is interesting to compare T.S. Eliot's policy as editor of The Criterion;

When starting The Criterion, I wished to include representatives of both older and younger generations, and opened with a contribution from that genial doyen of English letters, George Saintsbury. G.K. Chesterton was also a generous contributor. I am proud to have introduced to English readers the work of Marcel Proust. I am proud of having published work by D.H. Lawrence, and by Wyndham Lewis, James Joyce, and Ezra Pound. I am proud of having published the work of some of the younger English poets, such as Auden, Spender and MacNeice. Throughout I had always two aims in view: to present to English readers, by essays and short stories, the work of important new foreign writers, and to offer longer and more deliberate reviews than was possible in magazines of more frequent appearance. I think that both my aims were realised, and that the seventeen

16 Brasch mentions Horizon twice in his notes. First (Landfall No. 1) in quoting Orwell, and second (No. 18) to note its demise.

volumes of The Criterion constitute a valuable record of the thought of that period between two wars. 17

In retrospect Brasch could also congratulate himself for having presented work from all major writers in New Zealand in the two post-war decades of his editorship. He could also claim to have presented "a valuable record of the thought of that period" between 1947 and 1966. The ramifications of the exclusion of foreign writers cannot be gauged.

Charles Brasch was a meticulous student of the best overseas publications while he was in England as one of the wartime scholars from New Zealand and, later, after his return to his homeland. His care and concern for a high literary standard left little room for experimentation, and those experiments (the Commonwealth Letters for instance) which did appear were carefully prepared and planned.

Landfall continued the history of evidence that a special communication link would replace the umbilical cord of intellectual dependence on Britain and America. It was a dependence that the spirit of self-determination in a young state could not tolerate or sanction, and it is the experience of Canada, Australia and the United States as well as New Zealand. Matthew Arnold once wrote;

I see advertised The Primer of American Literature.
Imagine the face of Philip or Alexander at hearing of
a Primer of Macedonian Literature!...We are all
contributors to one great literature--English
Literature. 18

17 T.S. Eliot in the Preface to the Faber and Faber Limited Collected Edition (1967) reproduced from the original numbers 1922-1939.

18 Quoted by Marcus Cunliffe in The Literature of the United States, Penguin Books, (Harmondsworth, 1954), p.9.

Arnold was both correct and incorrect. No New Zealander would question that his country's literature was anything but a contribution "to one great literature"--English first and then the whole body of creative writing in the world. But Arnold was also mocking the local focus of the Primer--a focus that only the native-born or long-term resident could comprehend and express.

The New Zealand scholar Desmond Pacey, a Professor of Literature in the Maritimes of Canada, has written a book illustrating how Canadian literature reflects important aspects of the Canadian consciousness. But,

Certainly the Canadian writer, if he is at all aware of the outside world, is in little danger of falling into a smug complacency. 19

Dr. Pacey emphasizes the point that "the British heritage and the American example" have been of inestimable benefit to a maturing Canadian culture, but the Canadian "has also cause to be grateful for his Canadian environment."

The decisive point is that Canada's youth is in reality an advantage rather than a handicap. Her future is almost certain to be greater than her past, and this is the basis for the perpetual hopefulness which pervades her literature and her literary criticism. 20

The same point can be made in favour of New Zealand literature without creating a constricting form of provincialism. In the thirties the Phoenix group had attempted to create "the

19 Pacey, Desmond, Creative Writing in Canada, The Ryerson Press, (Toronto, 1961), p. 6. First published in 1952.

20 Ibid., p. 7.

focussing of contemporary opinion upon local needs" and succeeded in suggesting that the future of imaginative writing in New Zealand was full of promise.

It can be concluded from the aspirations of the young intellectuals and writers of the thirties and forties that they believed in New Zealand, both as a significant part of the English-language tradition, and as a country with unique needs and hopes in the arts, and in political, social, and economic matters. Their expressed wishes were not intended to jam the signals of international contemporary opinion. Instead, proven methods and styles from overseas would be applied to the New Zealand situation and coloured by local reference. As the inheritor of this trend of ideas Landfall set out to interpret the intellectual and spiritual nature of New Zealand.

CHARLES BRASCH AND EDITORIAL POLICY

The establishment of Landfall had higher aims than simply the publication of creative writing and critical articles for an intellectual readership. Landfall's purpose was "To re-discover a just relationship between the arts and men's other activities..."¹ While it was nevertheless "a literary review" with "its chief concern the arts, of which literature is one", Charles Brasch wrote;

But the arts do not exist in a void. They are products of the individual imagination and at the same time social phenomena; raised above the heat and dust of everyday life, and yet closely implicated in it. Any serious consideration of them is bound to involve an inquiry into their place in society and the social functions they fulfil--what part they play in life, what use they are. This in turn must lead sooner or later to questions about society itself and what it exists for, and, eventually, about the nature of man.

This might be considered as a summary of Brasch's philosophy of the arts as not only the garnishing for human life but also as the fundamental "humanizing" element in civilization. The eighty issues of Landfall under discussion illustrate Brasch's belief in this humanizing force.

Charles Brasch often gives the impression of being an evangelist who saw a vital interrelationship between the arts and the way of life in post-colonial New Zealand. But, for the arts,

Their present isolation is disastrous. They have been made to appear unreal, a decoration on the surface of life, which may be of use in whiling away a few

1 All above quotations taken from Landfall, No. 1, Notes, p.3.

leisure hours, but is scarcely worth the attention of those engaged in the serious business of mankind.

This "serious business of mankind" is the cause to which Brasch has devoted much of his life and with considerable success. While his main concern was his New Zealand homeland, his study in England had given him the opportunity to see and reflect on a wider world. E.H. McCormick describes Brasch as being,

...both attracted and repelled by the New Zealand environment: attracted by its naked grandeur (or in Disputed Ground by the aura of its Polynesian past), repelled by its untamed, alien character and the absence of historical and human associations. "There are no dead in this land", he reflects, "No personal sweetness in its earth..." As he returned to his own "starting place", his mood...may well have been one of stoical submission to an uncertain future. 2

But Brasch had the courage and the ability to attempt to make the future less uncertain by forming an artistic "humus" that would nurture a local tradition. While there was an evangelical purpose, Brasch based his editorship on the meticulous perusal of relatively successful British and Irish literary periodicals. His modesty, sense of proportion and quiet confidence are the most noticeable characteristics of his early editorship. The student-oriented Phoenix had used the model of Murry's Adelphi, and had alluded to the Criterion with mention of T.S. Eliot's words "Redeem the time, because the days are evil."³ But Phoenix was a product of the "Hungry Thirties" where anger had prompted the creative work of many writers. Such anger characterized

2 McCormick, E.H., New Zealand Literature: A Survey. Oxford University Press. (London, 1959), p. 138.

3 Phoenix, Volume 1, No. 1, p. 2.

John A. Lee's Children of the Poor and The Hunted or the well-known diatribe of A.R.D. Fairburn, Dominion.

Landfall, on the other hand, was a product of post-war enthusiasm where fighting was to be replaced by rebirth and cooperation. The depression was over, and there is almost no influence of those times in Landfall's pages. Certainly the language had become more sedate in expression and far less radical in substance. Also there was, in the minds of people such as Brasch, a sense of national awareness in New Zealand and a belief that the former furthest part of the British Empire had served its time in Britain's wars. Now New Zealand's cultural destiny was the building of a new autonomous nation to replace the colonial province.

The explicit evidence of Charles Brasch's editorial influence exists in the "Notes" which prefaced each number of Landfall. The two numbers edited by W.H. Oliver, and an experiment in later issues entitled "This Quarter", which were notes written by other people, were the only occasions where opinions other than Brasch's were expressed outside regular articles. The very careful background planning that James Bertram and Charles Brasch carried out at Oxford prior to their return to New Zealand and the establishment of their literary venture included a policy of strong editorship that had typified the British journals. Added to this policy was Brasch's sense of purpose, or, as McCormick describes it, his "quest for harmony that governs his own life..."⁴

4 McCormick, E.H., op.cit. p.138

One critic remarked sardonically that Landfall might as well have been called "Charlie's Aunt", but McCormick has a more accurate summary;

Landfall is a magnificent achievement, every number testifying to the editor's impartiality, his skill, his standards of taste and judgement. The beautifully printed, scrupulously edited volumes, illustrated and analysed and indexed, merit nothing but gratitude and respect.

The evidence behind this true statement lies in the volumes of Landfall, but there has been considerable criticism of Landfall for its failure to produce the work of unknown and fledgling poets; an omission the Poetry Yearbook adequately filled with some loss of quality. One can only give an opinion to this criticism. McCormick continues,

Landfall could have been different only by sacrificing its main source of strength, the principles of its editor. The response to its necessary limitations should have been other journals, different in scope and intention.

Alan Mulgan is less enthusiastic, but no less positive in his opinion of Landfall;

...Landfall's achievement in setting high standards and sticking to them, and encouraging new ideas and methods, is an important chapter in the development of our culture. The quarterly is a repository of significant creative work and of criticism that has often been the product of valuable research...⁵

The characteristic lack of humour in Landfall prompted Anton Vogt, after reading the second issue, to comment;

Mr. Brash (sic) hadn't read the Cheer up, Chum; His high seriousness has got him down a bit, and if someone doesn't give him an aspirin some of his subscribers are going to take a powder. ⁶

5 Mulgan, Alan, Great Days in New Zealand Writing, Reed, (Wellington, 1962), p. 137.

6 Southern Cross, July 26, 1947.

Such emetic humour would probably not have appealed to Brasch, but Anton Vogt did realize the underlying purpose of the quarterly;

...Landfall is essentially what we need, a cultural magazine with a set of values which are difficult to explain but which cannot be explained away. 7

Newspaper reviewers have, in general, been laudatory from the beginning;

The first issue of "Landfall"...has been awaited with keen interest; and only exuberant expectations will be disappointed. It does not set the Avon on fire, or greater or lesser streams and does not try to; and if those are dull readers who do not warmly respond to some evidences of the editor's wise ambitions, they will be injudicious who do not approve the obvious wisdom of early restraint. 8

Such reviewing reflects highbrow reaction to Landfall,

There is also more fluid and cosmopolitan opinion;

The first issue of the New Zealand quarterly "Landfall" edited by the well-known Dunedin writer, Charles Brasch, gives promise of being a significant force in the country's literature. Of modest proportions, it is packed with material that gives a comprehensive survey of artistic effort in progress in the Dominion, and the editor has gained the support of some of New Zealand's most important writers, who make interesting contributions to this first issue. Although largely preoccupied with all forms of artistic endeavour, the review has set itself wider aims, and the enunciation of this policy by the editor will be generally welcomed. 9

Some of the criticism in reviews made perceptive remarks which touched on the limited appeal of Landfall as opposed to its quality;

7 Ibid., April 5, 1947.

8 The Press (Christchurch), April 8, 1947.

→ 9 The Evening Star, March 29, 1947.

In the main, "Landfall" seems to be a magazine written by intellectuals for intellectuals. It has over it all the "pale cast of thought" and that peculiar melancholy which seems indigenous to New Zealand literature, if not to New Zealand life. As the editor declares at the outset, if it is to reach a wider public, "its interest must be wider." With that proviso, its future should be assured. 10

But sometimes Landfall was sarcastically condemned;

The first "Landfall": "O Paradise," sings Vasco de Gama in Meyerbeer's opera, "L'Africana" as his ship makes a mystic and beautiful landfall of the coast of Africa. "O Paradise rising from the waves, Entrancing, wondrous treasures, all hail!" But Vasco de Gama was singing about the latest of his discoveries and not about "Landfall"--the first number of which has lately been distributed to expectant subscribers all over the country. Most of them, one would imagine, have been far from entranced although they may still be mystified over the causes of its appalling dullness as reading matter and its stodginess to the eye. For neither crime is there any excuse whatsoever. It is just as hard to believe that the Caxton Press was given a free hand in laying out "Landfall's" format as it is to comprehend the editor's lack of perception in failing to realize how ripe is the time to give New Zealand something for which it is more than avid. 11

While it is doubtful whether or not Vasco de Gama ever read Landfall, it is obvious that this review is a personal attack on the editor. Brasch's "control" of Caxton's otherwise competent laying out of the format is held as the reason for the number's "stodginess". And the accusation that a "crime" had been committed in the "dullness" clearly suggests that the anonymous critic had a personal axe to grind. It is important to note that such negative criticism of Landfall usually included some disapproval of the editor.

But Landfall's unique significance and importance was not

10 The Evening Post, April 17, 1951

11 The Southland Daily News, May 10, 1947

unheeded overseas. A review of the first number in the Times Literary Supplement commented;

An editorial note, thoughtful and unaffectedly earnest in tone, on the problems of literature and society in New Zealand and the relationship of the arts in New Zealand to European tradition gives promise of a serious and well-written literary review. 12

And the Observer observed, twelve years after Landfall's genesis,

Landfall, edited by an admirable poet, Charles Brasch, is, like Meanjin, subsidised, and perhaps because of this suffers from having to cover rather too much ground--science, technology, ecology, education, as well as opera, music and literature. But its level is high, the poetry and short stories to the point, and its neat, clear appearance nicely represents the sense and solidarity of the contents. 13

Such positive criticism from respected sources also made mention of the influence of the editor, though the respective reviewers were probably unacquainted with Brasch personally. Outsiders, however, would detect Brasch's presence through the quarterly "Notes" which Christchurch poet John Summers considered mis-named;

I have always disagreed with Mr. Brasch's diminutive "Notes" as a suitable title for his own introduction and when...he becomes impassioned, rightly castigating us for our mediocre way of life, the title "Notes" 14 is almost as ridiculous as a pill box on Jeremiah.

The foregoing quotations testify to the indispensable expertise that Brasch brought to his editorship. The selection of contents may have often been "undemocratic" and probably even biased at times, though proof of this remains secret to Brasch, his enemies, and his personal letters. The strict principles to which Brasch adhered set the all-important standard that

12 June 7, 1947.

13 February 15, 1959.

14 Southland Times, February 9, 1952.

professional writers in New Zealand were unashamed to accept, knowing that it was highly regarded at home and abroad. The realization of a New Zealand literature came with Landfall and the post-war years.

Because of his personal influence as editor of Landfall, it is necessary to investigate the ideas that influenced Brasch in his poetry, and in his deep concern for "civilization" and the "serious business of mankind." Allen Curnow describes the poetry of Brasch, Glover, Dowling and Ursula Bethell as the "more deliberate art" of the "more temperate South Island."

It was poetry, too, with a regional truth for New Zealand: something quite different in mood and image and colour from the North Island poetry of Fairburn, Mason, and Robin Hyde, and (somewhat later) of Sinclair, Smithyman, and Gloria Rawlinson. Regionalism is not much respected in criticism today: but the signature of a region, like that of a witness written below the poet's, can attest value in the work. The ampler, barer perspectives of mountains, plains, and coasts of the South Island--separated from the North by the gale-threshed, ocean gut of Cook Strait--extend behind Brasch's earlier lyrics... 15

It is interesting to hear Allen Curnow, the one poet whose personal background straddles the Cook Strait with lengthy residence in both Christchurch and Auckland, talking in terms of the South Island myth. Suffice it to say that, while Curnow's observation on Brasch's earlier lyrics is correct, Brasch was far too cosmopolitan in experience and perception to be limited to a "South Island sensibility", which, in the way it has been discussed, suggests a limitation of understanding and a myopia of vision. As with Curnow, the tone of Brasch's

15 Curnow, Allen, New Zealand Verse, Penguin, (Plymouth, 1966) p.50-51.

earlier poetry is a preoccupation with the isolation of New Zealand and the sense of exile from the world;

Always, in these islands, meeting and parting
Shake us, making tremulous the salt-rimmed air;
Divided and perplexed the sea is waiting,
Birds and fishes visit us and disappear.
("The Islands")

The theme of "arrival and departure" and the sense that "distance looks our way" is strong in Brasch's work. Katherine Mansfield had departed the country, but, following the death of her brother, she admitted that "New Zealand is in my very bones." Other brilliant New Zealanders, among them Lord Rutherford and David Low, left their native land for more fertile pastures, but Brasch "arrived" again with the post-war confidence of those who wished to develop the "cultural desert" of their homeland.

Brasch's decision to return to New Zealand made the title of Landfall an appropriate personal enterprise. It was pertinent to the renewed interest of a pioneer poet in the "rediscovery" of his country. Brasch's knowledge and respect for the English tradition of art and literature, and his awareness of the essence of the American tradition, prevented him from falling into a dull, introverted provincialism. His purpose was the discovery of the meaning of life in New Zealand, a meaning Brasch was confident could be discovered through the arts and the imagination of artists. Of the arts he said;

Without them, society would in the long run be intolerable, because meaningless--its meaning (if any) could not be communicated. (Landfall, No. 1, p.4)

With such a philosophy it was little wonder that Brasch was scornfully dissatisfied with the "egalitarian" society of rugby,

racing, beer, and a stultifying "Protestant ethic" of hard work with no reflection on its purpose. With improved international communication Brasch's former sense of exile deep in the South Pacific became more a sense of exile from his countrymen and their philistinism. There is an adamant tone in the statement:

There is no substitute for the arts and their unifying, their dignifying power; and any lesser view of them can only lead to triviality, in them or in society, or in both. (Landfall, No. 1, p.4)

The belief that the British literary tradition could be sufficiently decentralized to allow for a new tradition in the antipodes became Landfall's thesis;

However the arts may develop in New Zealand, they will still be working within and must still depend on the European tradition. Of that there can be no question. But the European tradition is not static, and there are many branches of it; all the branches depend on the main tradition, but all are constantly adding to it and modifying it, and there is no apparent limit to their number and variety. In every good artist in every European society that main tradition is reincarnated. Working in his own place and time he is drawing on a tradition which has been formed in so many places and times that it now belongs to none exclusively but to all. In one sense he is working on the periphery, wherever he may be, even in London or Paris or Vienna, because at the same time the tradition belongs to and is being reincarnated in a dozen other places as well; but inasmuch as the tradition is alive for him it has become localised and he is working from a centre. There is no single centre; the Yugoslavia of Mestrovich, the Finland of Sibelius, the Ireland of Yeats, are as much centres in respect of the work of these artists as the Italy of Dante or the France of Cezanne. (Landfall, No. 1, p.5)

This is the most appropriate line to take, and the danger of a double standard of criticism is abolished by defining New Zealand as a branch tradition of the European centre;

...the first condition of good work here is that for the artist the tradition must be localized, in himself or in a group to which he has access, so that he may feel himself, just as an artist working in Europe would, to be working from a centre, and can see his subject matter, which will be local at least in the sense that he belongs to this particular time and place, quite naturally in terms of the tradition. He must at the same time reincarnate the tradition in a local form, and embody his local and personal material in terms recognizably of the tradition, however modified.
(Landfall, No. 1, p.5-6)

New Zealand's artists, growing up in their environment, with a different perspective, would create a "reincarnated" local tradition in constant touch with what Brasch calls "the centre."

Isolation and poverty: these terms can, no doubt, be applied to us, if we recognise their relativity in the world of to-day. But they are not absolute handicaps. They are limiting factors, which is something different. The Iceland of the sagas was immeasurably poorer and certainly no less isolated. (Landfall, No. 1, p.7)

In his poetry, Charles Brasch showed a preoccupation with the geographical isolation and cultural poverty of New Zealand:

Behind our quickness, our shallow occupation of the easier
Landscape, their unprotesting memory
Mildly hovers, surrounding us with perspective,
Offering soil for our rootless behaviour.
("Forerunners")

To make sense of this "rootless behaviour" was of great importance to Brasch as his Notes and the selection of contents evidence;

We cannot remain in an isolation like that of the Icelanders or the Maoris, and we therefore owe it to ourselves, when we meet other civilizations, to look for what is finest and most enduring in them, and not to be content with the obvious points of contact brought about by politics and trade. (Landfall, No. 1, p.7)

This is the cosmopolitan view of Brasch that would never be completely fulfilled while the policy of "New Zealand contributors only" existed for the editing of Landfall. However the motive of that policy is understandable and was a far cry

from cultural chauvinism.

In 1961 an important symposium was held in Auckland. It was entitled "Distance Looks Our Way" from a line out of Brasch's poem "The Islands." The symposium came to terms with the effect of New Zealand's geographical isolation on the national psyche. Phrases such as Dr. Roger Duff's "peripheral survival" characterized the geographic situation, while Professor Robert Chapman described New Zealand as being "part of the world-wide dialogue of European civilization." The antipodean situation of New Zealand placed the country at the extremity of the dialogue with Europe.

C.K. Stead described New Zealand's new tradition as the "inheritance of experiment in forms", from the vagaries of political movements to the security of the welfare state, the country gradually developed a culture that transcended the myths of the South Pacific and its own first decades as a European offshoot.

Yet, despite this formidable inheritance, realized and discussed by the country's intellectuals and artists, the strangest attitude prevalent in New Zealand is the obliviousness of the Pacific reality. Asia is still described by the British term "far East" while it is a near neighbour, and New Zealand soldiers made a greater mark in the Second World War in Europe and Africa than they did close to home in the Pacific. From the first issue of Landfall, Charles Brasch makes continual reference to the Pacific but, as the quarterly developed, it became clear that the "neighbourhood" would be viewed occasionally and selectively through New Zealand-based European eyes;

No Pacific country is even half as real to us, in the sense that we know not only its superficial characteristics but the quality of its people and their civilization, as the British Isles. But the particular form which the European tradition takes here is likely to be richer or poorer according to our knowledge of the completely different traditions of those neighbours who have most to offer us in this way; China, Japan, Indonesia, Mexico--and India, for India will be felt in the Pacific.
(Landfall, No. 1, p.7)

There is a dichotomy between New Zealand's South Pacific location and the spiritual attachment to Britain and the United States. Just as Robinson Crusoe made landfall on a virgin landscape and brought with him the salvaged tools of the world from which he had come, so the first settlers who came to New Zealand brought with them the cultural inheritance of the Old World. Many of the first settlers brought with them ideas for reform from the post-Industrial Revolution, post-Reform Bill Britain of their experience. They most notably adopted Chartism, the modified movement of syndicalist forces. And the continued economic dependence on Britain for markets and manufactured goods oriented New Zealand thinking, naturally, towards the Mother Country. This was also true of the writer and the artist;

For the writer in New Zealand the tradition of his own tongue, as embodied in the great writers among whom he will choose his models, must be sought overseas. That is, in part, what our immaturity means.
(Landfall, No. 3, p.160)

For this reason the Pacific neighbours were "less relevant" than a country half a world away and, until the post-war era began, New Zealand's main interests in the Pacific were usually British interests.

In 1952 Brasch reiterated his attitude towards the Pacific in a political context;

New Zealand is a Pacific nation and its nearest great neighbours, apart from Australia, are China, Japan, and India, yet there is little provision in New Zealand, except in such private bodies as the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Institute of International Affairs, for the study of Pacific and Asiatic affairs. This may help to explain our lack of informed opinion on the subject; it does not excuse the apathy which allows politicians and ministers with little more specialized knowledge than the general public to commit the country to this or that policy, and so determine its future, secure from challenge. (Landfall, No. 22, p.87)

New Zealand's literary connections with the three Asian giants have been scant but significant. Charles Brasch's personal interest in the Chinese, Indian, and Russian civilizations is evident through the commissioning of several Landfall articles and book reviews discussed in another chapter. The three most important Asian "correspondents" are Robin Hyde, James Bertram, and Rewi Alley. The connection with India is mostly James K. Baxter's. But,

...from a New Zealand point of view it is an absurd anomaly to provide for the study of the history and languages of Britain and Europe and to ignore those of neighbours with whom our future will be so closely involved. (Landfall, No. 22, p.88)

In 1952 the Maori Affairs Department produced the illustrated quarterly Te Ao Hou (The New World). On this occasion Brasch refers to the link the Maori people form between the Europeans in the South Pacific and Asian peoples;

...the better Pakeha and Maori understand each other the easier shall we find it to meet our Chinese and Japanese, Indian and Indonesian neighbours across the Pacific. (Landfall, No. 24, p.260)

This might be considered as a classic form of wishful thinking

on the part of a visionary since such a connection has not materialized to the present day. But it was typical of Brasch's commendable idealism even though Landfall could only accept the European view of the Pacific.

In theory, Charles Brasch sought a Pacific and Asian identity for New Zealand without cutting off the familiar historical roots in European civilization. On the one hand Europe had given New Zealand a special character and acceptable institutions. On the other hand new and strange post-colonial civilizations exerted their influence increasingly on New Zealand out of sheer size. Of all the major countries in the Pacific only Japan and Thailand had no history of European colonial domination. And while most New Zealanders remained oblivious of the Pacific reality, Brasch had constructive suggestions;

...Australia and New Zealand ...are now suspended between the poles of east and west. Their spiritual origins are in Europe, but they are likely to be influenced more and more by their nearer neighbours, the other great reservoirs of civilization, India and China, which with revived political independence are showing their attractive power again.

New Zealand, it is plain, has no future as a watered-down tasteless Britain of the South. It is as a genuinely Pacific society of mixed blood mediating between east and west, that we may hope for its emergence in time to come with gifts of its own to offer the world. If we can free ourselves of some of the obsessive preoccupations and limitations of the present day by looking back to our origins and considering our place in the life of man--by taking a view of history that leads to freedom and not to servitude--we may come to understand our situation better and find what work for the future we can as a people most usefully undertake.

(Landfall, no. 26, p.92)

Such hopes have been also a part of Canadian history, though that country's xenophobia parallels New Zealand's with reference

to Asia. The "view of history" is Brasch's expression of a changing attitude.

On a smaller scale, in a closer context, Brasch distinguishes New Zealand from Australia by contrasting the "continent myth" with the "island myth".

Australian writers are able to identify themselves with society because their society is relatively large, broad-based and diverse, and wealthy and secure enough to be fairly tolerant. It does not have to demand strict conformity of thought and behaviour; it can find room for artist and writer; up to a point it allows them to work and sanctions their difference.

(Landfall, No. 29, p.3)

With this "fairly tolerant" society "Australians are obsessed by the notion of size." So are some Canadians. The vast snowy prairies of Frederick Philip Grove and the Gargantuan mountains of E.J. Pratt give Canada its myth of The Sleeping Giant, and its aura of immense and imposing size. In a sense both Australians and Canadians can rely on this "size" to maintain a native tradition simply because of the scope that seems available. But New Zealand writers, aware of the smallness of their country, both in population and territory, turn towards the resources of a larger tradition than the one they feel they can create;

New Zealand writers...are over-conscious of society, but they do not claim to speak for it, nor do they look to it for a large approving audience: on the contrary, they are critical and impatient of society, and write only for themselves, which means for any audience they can find whether at home or abroad. That is why they feel themselves to belong, if distantly, to the English or Anglo-American literary world and tradition. They have little urge to break away and set up independently their isolation would then be too complete and vulnerable. (Landfall, No. 29, p.4)

Charles Brasch saw his own society as "only half alive intellectually and socially." It was a difficult arena within which his intense ideas of personal and artistic order might be tested. Pseudo-European antipodean New Zealand, when garnished with Asian spices, might change sufficiently to become competent to contribute an original view of humanity;

A society can be said to have come of age when it begins to live by the light of an imaginative order of its own. The creation of such an order is generally slow; it may proceed as the society discovers and establishes an identity which, from shadowy beginnings, has been taking form and assuming personality until it becomes mature and distinct; and it survives its creator, as the light of a vanished star continues to travel through the heavens and fall upon bodies unknown at its nativity.

The process by which maturity is reached is hard to trace. It is clear however that an imaginative order, which might be called the spiritual form of the society that creates it, can be brought into being in a number of different circumstances. It may come, for instance, with the development of language, or the growth of new art forms, with political independence or the expression of a particular religious impulse. (Landfall, No. 32, pp.248-249)

The poet who regarded the European tradition with great admiration planned to bring about a metamorphosis of New Zealand culture;

In older countries, where an imaginative order already exists, new works of art and literature need only embellish or extend or re-define that order. But in a raw colonial society much more is demanded of them; they have to create order for the first time, in a wilderness that is without form and very nearly void. (Landfall, No. 32, p.249) 16

The "embryo order" of post-war New Zealand's imaginative writing formed the basis for Brasch's confidence in an "imaginative" future, and stimulated the desire to edit Landfall. In 1947 he

16 This passage, and many others, owe a great deal to Eliot's earlier essays, particularly Tradition and the Individual Talent.

could see that the "void" in the New Zealand imagination was due to a lack in communication. An organ for such communication was therefore essential.

In a lecture reminiscent of Emerson's "American Declaration of Literary Independence" (The American Scholar), Dr. J.C. Beaglehole spoke at Canterbury College of a New Zealand intellectual revolution from colony to province.¹⁷ Charles Brasch praised Dr. Beaglehole's Emersonian pronouncement, and stated that,

The struggles of literature and art in a young society, however confused, are never without purpose; they are always governed by that obscure urge to create an imaginative order, without which all material order, the everyday life of society, is empty and barren. (Landfall, No. 32, p.249)

But, while Brasch had certain cultural ideals he would not compromise, he was also cautious to specify the practical objectives of the "struggle",

The history of colonial societies suggests that no overseas colony of a great civilization, even after long independence (if it survives), is likely to reach higher distinction than that of a provincial variant of the parent body. (Landfall, No. 26, p.91)

With the example of the United States obviously excluded, Brasch realized the limited scope for a new imaginative order when the influence of an inherited culture was considered. Kendrick Smithyman has doubts about Brasch's attitude. With reference to Allen Tate's ideas in The New Provincialism Smithyman states,

...by Tate's canons Brasch appears a provincial man moving towards the perception of a regional outlook. ¹⁸

17 Beaglehole, J.C., The New Zealand Scholar, Canterbury University College Press, Christchurch.

18 In A Way of Saying Smithyman noted that the development of New Zealand literature parallels that of the literature of the Southern American States. Hence the reference to Tate.

Smithyman's attitude towards tradition opposes Brasch's "Provincialism": "Provincial, we may suspect, keeps about it an unhappy air of disparagement."

(Brasch cannot be accused of being "a provincial man" when his quarterly notes are studied. He certainly followed closely the cultural trends of England and Europe, but his consciousness of Asia made him far less "provincial" than others who were preoccupied simply with America and Europe. As editor, he did not accept foreign contributions because he believed that there were sufficient journals overseas for such contributions. But New Zealand writers had no reliable vehicle for publication. Landfall's existence was primarily to create "an imaginative order in New Zealand", but its volumes were an integral part of the international imaginative order.)

When Landfall was extended in scope the extension was not entirely successful. The Commonwealth Letters, for example, were designed to show parallels of cultural development between New Zealand and other Commonwealth countries (Canada, Australia, South Africa, and India.). Brasch was concerned that,

...the four colonies have noticed one another only for some passing advantage of politics or trade; each has gone its own way, and in the arts they have generally ignored one another's existence. (Landfall, No. 34, p.103)

Brasch's recognition of a "Commonwealth literature" was a good idea, but the scope was way beyond Landfall's limitations. The Commonwealth Letters were spasmodic and superficial, and confirmed the original policy that it was better to deal with New Zealand writing in detail than to treat international writing superficially.

The term "Commonwealth literature" was accepted officially at the first Conference on Commonwealth literature held at Leeds University in 1964. Sir Roger Stevens, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds, wrote in a foreword to the published proceedings of the Conference,

English is no longer the language of an Empire. It has become a major international medium of communication. Among other things it is the language which enables the members of the Commonwealth to maintain contact and develop initiatives. And one of the most welcome indications of the vitality of the Commonwealth is to be found in the growth and diversity of literary traditions in the English language throughout the many communities which compose it. It is perhaps to be expected that those Commonwealth countries for whose societies English is a mother tongue should use the language for creative purposes, and contribute enrichment and new traditions to the great body of English literature. But in communities where English is not a mother tongue, in Asia and Africa, in societies which have a long heritage of literature in other languages, English is also being used creatively with increasing vigour and independence. All this inevitably adds new dimensions to the study of English language and literature. 19

This comment confirms the idea of decentralization, but it is significant that, only ten years before, Charles Brasch had used the word "colonies", without the adjective "former", to describe the countries of the Commonwealth as it was prior to 1956.

The first Commonwealth Letter was contributed by Vance Palmer following a visit to the writers' conference in Christchurch, May 1951. It was a summary of Frank Hardy's novel Power Without Glory and therefore specific rather than general about Australian writing. Several more Australian letters followed, and in June, 1955, the first Canadian letter appeared.

19 Press, John, (ed.), Commonwealth Literature, Heinemann, (London, 1965), p.ix.

The letters showed a concern for the question of "identity" in the Dominions.

What is Canada? what is New Zealand? It is one of the first questions that people ask themselves in a young country, so soon as there is any leisure for asking questions. Once a first rough answer has been given--in Canada primarily by painting, in New Zealand by literature--this elementary matter can be caught up in an approach to problems which writers and painters are concerned with at all times.
(Landfall, No. 34, p.104)

While the Commonwealth Letters were interesting notes of capsulized information they were too general to make explicit a worthy comparative survey of international literatures.

The difficulty faced by Vance Palmer in Australia; Roy Daniells and George Whalley in Canada; and Jack Cope in South Africa was that of briefly presenting the national artistic scene of their respective countries. Their contributions, while interesting, were not particularly enlightening. But it must be noted that the idea of the Commonwealth Letters was sufficient proof that Brasch was not a provincial man in the "disparaging" sense.

In one of the most important lectures of his career²⁰ Brasch spoke of the "number of scattered notions" that had been part of his thinking for several decades. These notions are revealing of both Brasch the editor and Brasch the poet;

...when man makes a work of art his purpose is the work itself; and while that work has no apparent practical use such as a nest or a tool has, it serves the more insistent but non-instrumental practicality of allowing him by creating it to

20 The lecture was presented to the Auckland Gallery Associates on 2 November 1965. Entitled Present Company (Reflections on the Arts) it was later published in a slightly revised form with the assistance of the N.Z. Literary Fund. In a note to the pamphlet Brasch said his intention was to "bring into some sort of order" his notions of the arts.

glimpse his own most inward nature and so to orient himself in reality.

Brasch's concept of the individual expression of art provides a base for discovering the New Zealand identity;

It is in creating the world that we discover the world, and ourselves in it, and what we discover is something that exists, that must have existed always, because we are discovering the nature of the world, of the cosmos, of being itself.

This world becomes New Zealand;

...this uneducated land--this land of uneducated hearts--with its barbarously ugly towns and cities and its barbarous treatment of its great natural beauty.²¹

Such harsh criticism of a society yet only a hundred years old and still wearing pioneer clothes is counterpointed by Brasch's effort to change the "uneducated" aspect of New Zealand, if only by presenting a journal that appealed to a small minority of New Zealanders. The honesty of his sentiment is balanced by the admonition earlier expressed "...we must cultivate our gardens, make something of ourselves."

But the problem of expecting a transplanted language and transplanted institutions designed for another place (and perhaps another time) to fit the realities of "these islands" has yet to be resolved. Brasch's impatience at the incorrect use of the English language guided the standard of his editorial decisions. While he had not forsaken "this land of uneducated hearts" he expected its people to rise to his level.

Brasch was a perfectionist when it came to written and spoken English. Like many New Zealand intellectuals he was

²¹ Brasch, Charles, Present Company, Paul, (Auckland, 1966) p.14.

appalled at the poor pronunciation of his countrymen, a short-coming he blamed on the education system and a lack of interest in imaginative literature.

The English language faces two dangers in New Zealand today. Ordinary speech is continuously at work modifying the sense of words and idioms, degrading and wearing out some, dignifying and refining others, and at the same time creating fresh ones; language begins and ends in speech. In the past, writing--literature--has probably had less effect on speech than speech has had on writing, even allowing for the great influence of such works as Dante's Comedy, Luther's translation of the Bible, and the English Authorized version, in crystallizing their respective languages at a formative stage of its development. Today there seems some danger that the corrupt writing of journalism and advertising, cheap magazines, radio and film scripts, may seriously corrupt speech. 22

While "egalitarian" New Zealand had abolished many of the social abominations of the Industrial Revolution, it had created also a plateau of intellectual mediocrity that showed in speech;

Many New Zealanders are guilty of furthering the abuse of language because they are afraid to use it well; to be caught speaking with precision, with care and pride, would convict them of trying to appear better than their fellows. And that is virtually treason in our tight little tribal society whose sense of insecurity is expressed in its remorseless pressure to conform; so we may not say exactly what we mean, nor demand exact meanings of other people; rough and ready communication is permissible, but understanding--never; it would be perilous, even subversive. 23

It is well known that school children are alienated from their fellows if they speak the Queen's English instead of national language "Newzild." 24

22 Notes, Landfall, No. 23, September 1952, p.167.

23 Ibid.

24 A book entitled Newzild: And How To Speak It has been written by Arch Acker, Reed, (Wellington, 1967). It is "A Kiwi's answer to Strine"--the Australian language equivalent.

Brasch's discontent, echoed by other scholars such as Margaret Dalziel and Bill Pearson, was not empty intellectual snobbery. But the crusade against "the half-educated majority" was a battle won only among the converted. To this day Landfall has a circulation rate not exceeding two thousand, and it is probable that there are no more than three or four readers to each copy sold in New Zealand. Landfall's real impact has been its representation of New Zealand scholarship and intellectual thinking in foreign libraries. Anyone overseas who wishes to learn about New Zealand can usually gain access to the collected volumes of Landfall in main libraries. The two main dangers noted by Brasch were poor speech and poor teachers and both subjects come in for much comment in the first eighty issues of Landfall.

The teaching of English in New Zealand was one of the irritating shortcomings Brasch saw in the education system. He tried to rectify these by exemplifying high standards of editorial scrutiny;

These social and temperamental forces that operate against the writing of prose are serious enough. But another circumstance works against it too, a far more disturbing one. New Zealanders are not being educated to write and speak English well, or to appreciate it. They are not being given a command of the English language, except at a very simple level and not always then. Both average and exceptional children leave school, many of them, not only innocent of grammar, but so ignorant of common English idiom that one would think they never met it: when they have to write plain English, their use of idiom is liable to be surprisingly and alarmingly defective. If they cannot write, how can they understand, and how can they make themselves understood, except in the simplest terms or in a very hazy approximate fashion? (Landfall, No. 37, p.4)

One of the reasons for Brasch's insistence on a good command of language was political;

How are men to distinguish between the claims of political parties, between communism and capitalism, between totalitarian and democratic forms of government, if they cannot understand exactly what is being said to them? They will be taken in by every specious and tendentious appeal, swept by waves of unreasoning panic, and led into courses of action that betray everything they believe in. (Landfall, No. 37, p.5)

While the conclusion is overwrought the recognition that language has political and social overtones is important. It is also typical of a society conscious of its own insufficiencies when compared with a more experienced society. British children grow up naturally in their language--at least those who manage to ride the crest of that country's class structure. New Zealand children, like those of Canada and Australia, must be educated in the intricacies of good speech. But, as Brasch also emphasised, if the teachers are bad they will be continuing a vicious circle of bad teachers forming bad students.

Brasch concluded;

Our methods of teaching English, in short, are in danger of cutting us off from our past, and incapacitating us for the world we live in. New Zealand children are leaving school as cripples: they are crippled for life by an inadequate command of their own language: crippled by the methods which have already crippled many of their younger teachers. (Landfall, No. 37, p.5)

Joan Stevens of Victoria University College, Wellington, took Brasch to task for his accusations against the education system.

Your editorial put two matters before us. You lamented that New Zealanders do not use the language well, as may be seen in our writing, heard in our speaking. I agree, and we should mend our ways, as far as we can. You find the cause of our insufficiencies

to lie in certain practices in our schools. I disagree.

Much of what you allege is, I believe, only partly true, and not typical. Even if all were as you say, the school teaching of English is only one factor in a very complex situation. (Landfall, No. 38, p.170)

While Professor Stevens' statement is correct, the ideals voiced by Brasch concerning the poor use of language were based on a sound premise of personal judgment. As editor of Landfall, Brasch judged literacy in the highest terms because it was vital to a healthy culture. It is impossible to determine how many manuscripts sent to Landfall were rejected because of a poor use of language, but it can be inferred that the number was considerable. It is impossible to condemn Brasch's zealous concern for correct speech when Landfall's outstanding quality and standards are considered. By setting high standards Brasch also set a new level of attainment to which the best writers in New Zealand would aspire.

Closely related to the subject of literacy is the academic business of education. Charles Brasch expressed his opinions of the education system in New Zealand, and generally chastised public indifference towards education as a liberating force. Specifically he claimed that education should set people

...free for a fuller enjoyment of human living and a bolder search for truth, in social relations, in the arts, in every field of knowledge, in religion. (Landfall, No.50, p.111)

Education, as far as Brasch was concerned, was a critical element of civilization. But,

Our own society, only half alive intellectually

and socially, sunk in a dream of lotus-eating, is in danger now of being mesmerized by technological invention and falling slave to the tyranny of mere things. It will command no hearing and receive no tolerance in the world unless it can show that it treats wealth and comfort not as ends in themselves, but as means towards the good life, pursued steadily both at home and in its dealings with other people. This is the context in which our educational problems have to be set. (Landfall, No. 50, p.111)

Such extension of the purpose and effectiveness of education had prompted Joan Stevens, among others, to reiterate the realities that confined education to the scope of available material and human resources. But Brasch was not wrong. Literacy would be the supreme achievement whereby men liberated themselves from ignorance and communicated their creative ideas. The only problem lay in allowing the process, whereby literacy was achieved, to be made available to all people according to their personal requirements to the extent which Brasch demanded.

An article by Phoebe Meikle on New Zealand education, sets out an argument remarkably similar to that implied by Brasch in his "Notes",

...scientific studies are endangered by contempt for and ignorance of the humanities. Should their English teaching be poor, as it often is, or should English teachers commit that worst of all crimes, la trahison des clerics, by saying to the Science Sixth, "English isn't an important subject for you people" (instead of, "Because you are scientists, English is your most important subject"), these girls and boys often do not bother to learn how to use their language exactly, coherently and economically for scientific purposes. If they are not taught foreign languages, they are cut off from very much valuable scientific work, since foreign scientists, reprehensibly, prefer to write in their own language. (Landfall, No. 55, p.259)

If there is the feeling of the pendulum swinging too far in the opposite direction it is because of the strong terms used by

such education reformers. Their hopes are still far from fulfillment.

In words reminiscent of the outspoken Tomorrow Brasch wrote;

An education system comes to be everyone's target sooner or later, and rightly so: what do our lives hang on more? Landfall's barbs have been aimed chiefly at the teaching of English, a subject passed over in the Report of the Commission on Education... It is a yawning omission that the Report gives no sign of recognizing the special, central place of English in education: that English is not simply a subject in itself, but is also the medium of teaching: all teaching includes, tacitly if not explicitly, the teaching of English...

The Report referred to was published in 1962 and R.A.

Copland wrote a brief commentary describing the "massive summary of hundreds of opinions;"

The Commission, to judge from its report, seems to have been content with the fact that English as the centre of the "compulsory core" is undoubtedly going to be taught at all levels. It appears also to accept as desirable the division of English into "the compulsory communication English" required of less gifted pupils and "the optional literary English" available at the School Certificate level... (Landfall, No. 67, p.282)

The acceptance of the English syllabus without recommendation for change appeared to him to be a false emphasis--"Nowhere is there any positive acknowledgement in the Report of the English language as the very coin and currency of our civilization." Professor Copland uses words in conclusion that are as strong as any used by Brasch and very similar;

Only the inheritance of the past, especially of the literature which it hands on to us, secures our civilized survival. Only a recognition of this will ensure that the creative literature of our own time and place will be properly nourished so that our obligations to the future are fulfilled.

Ironically the need is greater than ever for the student to discover "the best that has been (*italics*) thought and said in the world" for it is more than ever apparent that the alternative to "culture" is "anarchy". The Commission has perhaps been aware of this, but its awareness is usually silent. Because practice in a state institution will follow rather from the letter than from the spirit it is disturbing that the Recommendations in this matter are not more specific. (Landfall, No. 67, p.285)

Brasch was not only driven by certain personal ideals, but he was also involved with social and cultural improvement in New Zealand affairs.) His influential editorship, guided by specific personal standards of excellence, proved that the ideal of literacy could be achieved and maintained. The number of qualitative lapses to be found in the first eighty issues of Landfall are too few to warrant mention if one is to avoid being destructively critical.

Brasch's desire to communicate literary expertise to the majority of New Zealanders has not been fulfilled by Landfall because in New Zealand, as in most other countries, only a minority have the knowledge and critical ability to view culture in terms of standards and craftsmanship. Brasch's editorial objectives were to provide New Zealand's literary and intellectual minority with a journal of merit, and to provide New Zealand with a record of a cultural era. The fact that Landfall has existed in the post-war years as one of the major publications in the British-American-Commonwealth tradition, and that Landfall under Brasch's editorship, has given New Zealand a cultural identity, can be considered as an achievement of profound cultural significance.

LANDFALL AND POETRY IN NEW ZEALAND

It is impossible to identify with certainty the trends evolving in New Zealand poetry since the war. But it is possible to illustrate, through a survey of selected Landfall poetry, that certain concepts and attitudes exist in poems written since the war which reveal a development of poetic consciousness. It can be ascertained that, while post-war poetry written in New Zealand is no longer concerned simply with the sense of isolation and colonial observations evident in earlier poetry, the new universalism in poetry is still tempered with a local consciousness.

The objectives of this chapter are, first, to show that the former concern for regionalism and a pastoral myth has developed into a more universal and cosmopolitan outlook. And, second, an attempt will be made to show how poetry written in New Zealand since the war reflects the increasingly urban character of the country. A study of this kind is in no way meant to be qualitative or comparative in terms of English literature. It is, as the rest of the thesis is meant to reveal, a study of imaginative writing in the unique New Zealand cultural context.

A Study of Landfall's poetry must briefly acknowledge previous collections of poems that led Allen Curnow in 1945 to assert that New Zealand verse "had begun to be recognized as purposive, a real expression of what the New Zealander is and a part of what he may become."¹ Anthologies of poetry have

1 Curnow, Allen, A Book of New Zealand Verse 1923-45, The Caxton Press, (Christchurch, 1945), pp.14-15.

appeared in New Zealand since 1906 and can be divided into two types; the regional anthology,² and general surveys of New Zealand verse. The introductions to these anthologies are the milestones illustrating an increasing interest in poetry as the country's imaginative legacy. In 1948 Charles Brasch, while dedicating an issue of Landfall to six poets "under thirty", boldly announced that the issue "makes plain for the first time the existence of a whole generation of poets to succeed those represented in Allen Curnow's Book of New Zealand Verse, 1923-1945."

The first major anthology of New Zealand verse was W.F. Alexander's and A.E. Currie's verse collection. The co-editors wrote,

In these islands...first colonized by Europeans less than seventy years ago, and with a total population numbering in 1895 only nine hundred thousand souls--no more than one of the smaller of the world's cities counts--there has existed right from the beginning a tradition that it was a good thing to write poetry. 3

A second revised edition of the anthology appeared in 1926⁴ with an addition of "forty three new pieces" and "eighteen new contributors." In 1930, Quentin Pope edited a verse collection entitled Kowhai Gold, an anthology criticised by Allen Curnow in his introduction to the 1945 edition,

- 2 Examples of regional anthologies include W.P.Reeves two editions of Canterbury Rhymes (printed by the "Lyttelton Times" Co. Ltd. 1883); O.T.T. Alpers The Jubilee Book of Canterbury Rhymes (Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd. 1900); The Old Clay Patch (1910) edited by F.A. de la Mare and S. Eichelbaum, "a collection of verses written in and around Victoria University College;" and A.E. Currie's A Centennial Treasury of Otago Verse, (Caxton, Christchurch 1949).
- 3 New Zealand Verse, Scott Publishing Co., (New York, 1906).
- 4 A Treasury of New Zealand Verse, Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd. 1926.

There were good reasons of an historical kind for the bulk and inclusiveness of the Treasury of New Zealand Verse (1926) chosen by W.F. Alexander and A.E. Currie, but those reasons are not available now, nor were they available to justify Kowhai Gold.⁵

In 1956 Robert Chapman and Jonathan Bennett published An Anthology of New Zealand Verse and curiously disregarded Allen Curnow's 1945 anthology by writing in the introduction,

The last anthology devoted to surveying New Zealand verse from its beginnings appeared in 1906.⁶

Chapman and Bennett considered Curnow's anthology to be too selective for an historical anthology, one which, presumably, should print good poetry with bad poetry provided that all was representative of a time and a place. Curnow had intended "to provide some ground upon which the worth of our verse can be estimated," and it is this aim of an evaluation of poetry rather than representation that Charles Brasch carried on in Landfall. The notion of representation, sometimes at the expense of evaluation, was continued in Louis Johnson's Poetry Yearbook, which provided an important alternative to Landfall's qualitative selection of poetry. This will be discussed later on.

Curnow, Chapman, and Bennett, all regard the mid-1920's as "a turning-point in the development of New Zealand poetry."⁷ The self-conscious imitation of a borrowed heritage so evident in the early anthologies changed when the New Zealand poet became, as Robert Chapman remarks, quoting Sir Herbert Read,

5 Curnow, Allen, op. cit., p. 14.

6 Chapman, Robert, & Bennett, Jonathan, An Anthology of New Zealand Verse, O.U.P., (London, 1956), p.xix.

7 Ibid.

"insensibly part of an integrated community." Allen Curnow described the most significant poet of the 1920's, R.A.K. Mason, as New Zealand's "first wholly original, unmistakably gifted poet."⁸ And, in the introduction to The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse, Curnow said of the next decade that "the thirties released--or tapped--a spring."⁹ The proportionately large number of anthologies in a small country attests to the interest shown by a small audience gradually increasing in size. In 1965 Charles Doyle wrote in an introduction to a new anthology,

The work of these writers is chosen to represent a period of considerable interest and development. They have followed the poets of the thirties in regarding poetry as "an acknowledged function of the country's life". Some of them have extended that function. Some will extend it even further. Among their work we can find poetry of real distinction. Some of them at least will give us the distinguished poetry of the future. ¹⁰

Doyle attempts to provide both wide representation and some "poetry of real distinction" in the choice of poets for the anthology. His combination of representation and quality is a phenomenon typical of the post-war years when material for selection has been more extensive and the outlets for publication more critical.¹¹

The concern for standard and quality has, in the past,

8 Mason, R.A.K., Collected Poems (with an introduction by Allen Curnow), The Pegasus Press, (Christchurch, 1963), p.9.

9 Curnow, Allen, published by Blackwood & Janet Paul, (Auckland, 1960).

10 Doyle, Charles, Recent Poetry in New Zealand, Collins, (Auckland 1965), p.15.

11 The most recent anthology is Vincent O'Sullivan's An Anthology of 20th Century New Zealand Poetry, 1970. It is described by the editor as a "report on how New Zealand poetry stands now."

given rise to an insidious idea that deserves brief mention. The idea of the "double standard" in literary criticism presumes that New Zealand poetry should be judged in isolation from the poetry of other countries. It is also presumed, under the tenets of the "double standard", that nothing written in New Zealand could equal in excellence anything written overseas. The idea is insidious because it forms a barrier instead of a balance between regionalism and universalism in poetry. In 1951, Lawrence Baigent commented in a review of Ursula Bethell's poetry that "the time is not yet come when criticism of New Zealand literature can profitably dispense with a double scale of values."¹² However, in 1959, E.H. McCormick wrote, "in these islands and with increasing frequency beyond their limits a new accent is becoming audible, the native accent of New Zealand."¹³ And, in 1968, A.L. McLeod wrote, "in just a century and a quarter New Zealand has developed a characteristic culture."¹⁴ It becomes clear from these three comments that a double standard of criticism exists when New Zealand writing is compared with the style and standard of overseas literature. But, when the "native accent" and "characteristic culture" of New Zealand are considered in their own right as the expression of a politically sovereign country, the double standard disappears. Perhaps Curnow's

12 Landfall, Volume 5, No. 1, March 1951, p.24.

13 McCormick, E.H., New Zealand Literature, Oxford, (London, 1959).

14 McLeod, A.L., The Pattern of New Zealand Culture, O.U.P. and Cornell University Press, (Ithaca, N.Y., 1968).

1945 anthology can be regarded as the omen of a native accent that sacrifices nothing to quality or standard, and, certainly, the post-war years have all but dispensed with the idea of the double standard. If any publication has achieved a single standard in New Zealand's literary terms it is Landfall.

The study of Landfall's poetry must be selective in order to stay close to the objectives previously stated. Five poets, Curnow, Baxter, Smithyman, Glover and Sinclair, will be considered in some detail since each has been widely published in Landfall and elsewhere, and each has been concerned intellectually with the national identity of New Zealand. Other Landfall poets will be discussed when their poetry reflects a subjective response to life in New Zealand. It is interesting to note that, apart from introductions to the anthologies previously mentioned and reviews in publications like Landfall, very little criticism has been written on the subject of poetry in New Zealand. Allen Curnow's introduction to A Book of New Zealand Verse 1923-45; Kendrick Smithyman's A Way of Saying¹⁵; and parts of E.H. McCormick's survey¹⁶ are still the most significant works of poetry criticism. More recently J.E. Weir has published a short work on Baxter's poetry,¹⁷ and such critiques will probably appear more often in the future due to the increased interest in New Zealand literature. Smithyman suggests a reason for the dearth of critical studies;

15 Collins, (Auckland, 1965).

16 McCormick, E.H., op. cit.

17 The Poetry of James K. Baxter, Oxford University Press, (Wellington, 1970).

Since our poetry is more astonishing in its bulk than in its quality a shortage of critical studies has been probably not a severe loss. 18

And R.A. Copland says of the years prior to the second world war;

As far as the thirties are concerned, and in fact as far as all our earlier literature is concerned it still seems in greater need of being read than written about. (Landfall, No. 51, p.280).

It is clear, however, that times have changed since 1945. Criticism is essential to any literature, and Landfall's unqualified success since 1947 signals the post war maturity of New Zealand writing.

An important event in the history of New Zealand poetry took place in 1951 with the founding of the New Zealand Poetry Yearbook. Its editor, Louis Johnson, wrote in the introduction to the first Yearbook that the collection of poetry was "not... in opposition to other annual verse collections."¹⁹ Johnson added, with indirect reference to Landfall, that

Our best poetry reaches print through the pages of a few periodicals, none of which has the scope or space of Poetry Yearbook. 20

It is likely that Johnson had Charles Brasch in mind when he wrote in the same introduction;

Real criticism cannot exist if editors choose only those points of view they favour, and here the aim will be simply to provide a place for discussion,

18 Smithyman, K., op. cit.

19 Volume 1, A.H. & A.W. Reed, (Wellington, 1951), p.7.

20 Ibid.

Johnson's disapproval of certain aspects of Landfall and Brasch's editorial policy was revealed in an article which appeared in 1963²¹ Johnson, himself an outspoken journalist by reputation, was attacking a comment by Mr. Bernard Teague of the Urewera National Park Board. Mr. Teague had criticised the State Literary Fund grant of two hundred pounds given to Landfall. Mr. Teague wondered why money was wasted on "a miserable publication of appeal only to introverts." Johnson used the occasion to condemn Mr. Teague's philistinism and to criticise Landfall which he described as adhering to "the prevailing general attitude toward cultural activity and the arts" which used to exist "some twenty years ago." Johnson debated the pros and cons of Landfall by quoting a remark attributed to Professor F. Sinclaire of Christchurch that "Landfall reminded him of an absent-minded professor talking in someone else's sleep." But,

Landfall, if somewhat solemnly, has devoted itself, for over 15 years of existence, to the premise that New Zealand should have a full cultural life.

Johnson did not criticise the motives behind Landfall's establishment, but he did comment on the result;

I would be the last to maintain that Landfall was beyond reproach. I would agree at times that its pages strove too fondly to be intellectual--that it has often been unbearably self-conscious, and that too much of each issue is devoted to telling us what we should think, and even how we should think.

Johnson was attacking Landfall's editor who appeared to him

21 The article has been retained in a folder of reviews of Landfall held by The Caxton Press. It appeared first in the Wellington Dominion under the title, "Landfall, the Arts or National Parks?"

to be authoritarian. He also criticised "the prissiness of tone" which "is an almost inevitable fault of taking oneself seriously in what is virtually a desert." Johnson's opinion is important because he, as Yearbook editor, chose a different policy by selecting many "new" writers whose work often showed more inspiration than excellence.

The difference in approach between Brasch and Johnson has never been completely resolved. As late as 1970, Arthur Bates, editor of Arts Festival Literary Yearbook, echoed Johnson's opinion by writing in the introduction to the university publication;

Advocates of a New Zealand Literature--as against literature in a more valid, non-geographical sense--will find numerous crimes here. What they will have to look harder for is the exquisitely-carpentered, predictable and frankly uninteresting work which too often appears in the establishment journals. ²²

Bates' comment reflects both the new universalism in New Zealand poetry advocated by Johnson in Yearbook, and a misunderstanding of Landfall (the only such publication ever accused of being "establishment"). Another supporter of the Yearbook philosophy was Eric Schwimmer, editor of Arachne,²³ who wrote against aspects of the New Zealand experience advocated in Landfall,

In order to interpret the peculiarly New Zealand experience--for experience cannot be raised into poetry before beliefs are evolved which endear the experience--a myth was created concerning a lonely island desert, discovered by navigators and developed by baffled explorers, which was identified with New Zealand.

22 Published by N.Z.U. Arts Festival Committee. p.8.

23 See Iris M. Park, New Zealand Periodicals of Literary Interest, National Library Service, (Wellington, 1962), p.34. Arachne superseded the Wellington magazine Hilltop in 1950.

This myth was never widely believed in by New Zealanders: in fact, only a handful of literati were ever touched by it. This, however, does not detract from its importance, as myth-makers have always tended to be a social or intellectual elite and the people have followed by accepting the myth. Yet it may well be that the Curnow-Holcroft myth of New Zealand will never be accepted by the people. The consciousness of the internationalisation of culture is too vivid in New Zealanders who are vulnerable in the extreme to all political and economic developments abroad. 24

The spirit of Schwimmer's statement is valid in that it condemns provincialism in New Zealand literature. But, like other advocates of New Zealand literature in a "non-geographical sense", Schwimmer fails to recognize that poets such as Curnow would probably agree with most of the universalist thesis. Curnow, among others, has concerned himself both as critic and as poet with the unique characteristics of the New Zealand experience.

E.H. McCormick described Allen Curnow as "that rarity among writers, a poet whom it is profitable to discuss in terms of influences..."²⁵ Curnow's introduction to the 1945 anthology was the most important piece of poetry criticism to have appeared up to that time. Curnow's influence has been to identify the regionalist aspects of poetry, which he claimed could not exist in a "state of weightlessness", and this idea no doubt prompted Johnson and others to adopt the idea of "non-geographical" poetry. As a poet, Curnow has published a few collections of

24 Johnson, Louis, New Zealand Poetry Yearbook, op. cit., pp.65-66.

25 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p.117.

poems and is still published in Auckland's New Zealand Herald and the Christchurch paper The Press under the pseudonym "Whim Wham". As a critic, Curnow has made many original statements on poetry and has accurately identified both trends and excellence in poetry.

The first Curnow poems in Landfall, "Four Allegories and a Picture," are darkly suggestive of biblical symbolism. In his New Zealand the poet discovers a strange land in all its primeval fascination;

Original sea, no breath or bird, the eyes
Nourished their unborn sun; upon the face
Of waters wary of love I moved: I praise
The evening and the morning. Now the voice

Made birds of the dumb salt, I heard
Aeonial Phoenix and interpreted,
'Be fire in me, be death and birth'; the third
Day pain was made, we saw that it was good,

Walking with difficulty, speech failing,
On the hill passing the stone pillar, man
And woman sole on earth, erect or falling,
Compelling, pitying. Trumpets the next dawn

Sounded above the levelled flood, we came
To the Garden, giving each beast and tree a name.
(Landfall, No. 1, p.9)

By giving a specific nomenclature to "each beast and tree," a New Zealand idiom is achieved by writers such as Curnow.

Curnow is capable of moving on two levels in his poetry. The first is the mythological realm of a poet fascinated by his psychological and geographical landscape.

My dear earth's distance, though her heart descry
With how mad steps, her moon, I climb the sky.
(Landfall, No. 1, p.9)

Myth is intrinsic to the creative imagination. Northrop Frye

remembers Aristotle and describes myth as "...a form of verbal art..." which "...deals, not with the world that man contemplates, but with the world that man creates..."²⁶ It is through this creative process that an inanimate landscape assumes an animism necessary for its "soul." It was the Maori who first gave New Zealand a spiritual personality through his cosmogonic myths--an achievement the pakeha writer has not yet even approached in excellence and beauty. To the Maori,

Natural phenomena and conditions are treated as entities, as sentient beings, and these beget personifications of other conditions. From the primal period, termed the Po, an expression that implies, night, darkness, and the unknown, were gradually evolved light and all other conditions, all matter, all beings. The ancestors of our Maori folk, in their strivings to discover origins, apparently thought out what they deemed a probable or feasible line of evolution, and then taught the same in the form of allegorical myth. 27

The remarkable similarity between the motives of Curnow's verse and the myths of the Maori is significant. The two races of New Zealand people sought a personality for their adopted land.

The second level of Curnow's poetry is the objective satiric level of which he is a unique master in New Zealand. The satiric locality becomes the new country of Whim Wham land;

Whim Wham land is an odd country. The Author loves it notwithstanding. He has devoted (if that is the word) half a lifetime to the study of its history, its language and literature, its arts, its flora and fauna, its social traditions, and its national institutions. He has lived among the People and observed their quaint customs. He is an acknowledged authority on their folklore. 28

26 Frye, Northrop, Fables of Identity, Harcourt, Brace & World inc., (New York, 1963), p.31.

27 Best, Elsdon, The Maori As He Was. N.Z. Board of Science and Art, (Wellington, 1934). p. 34.

28 Wham, Whim, Whim Wham Land, Paul (Auckland, 1967). A Note In Collusion (between the Author and his Publishers.).

The folkloric quality is fundamental to the poems of Whim Wham Land. Curnow is capable of detachment as well as commitment in his verse, as demonstrated by the satiric poems. But the search for the culture of New Zealanders and the "personality" of the country is an element of much of his work. The mythic quality of "Genesis" becomes a kindly satiric illustration in,

Who were the Pioneers, my Boy,
That tamed the Wilderness,
The Pioneers who braved the storm,
In such peculiar Dress?

Oh, they were of the labouring class,
The Servants and the Trades, Sir.
They came our Here to better themselves, 29
They weren't of the Upper Grades, Sir.

In two simple quatrains the Wilderness is tamed by pioneers and the seeds of the egalitarian society are sown in a land of promise. Curnow has the capacity to write topical as well as vigorously durable poetry. He is as much a poet of the 70's as he was a poet of the immediate post-war Landfall years. It is easy to agree with J.C. Reid's summation that Curnow's "...poems are attempts by a New Zealander to fashion a lasting experience out of his own awareness of his country's past and landscape, finding it "something different, something/ Nobody counted on."³⁰

If one can agree with E.H. McCormick's claim that Curnow's satiric verse concerns "...a petty race in sublime surroundings" one must also agree that Curnow "...had found in the New Zealand past a theme worthy of his maturing talent."³¹ The creative

29 Ibid., p.3.

30 McLeod, A.L., op. cit., pp.25-26.

31 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 117.

present could only be constructed on a fertile and experimental past, realized in the thirties by the Phoenix writers, and carried on by the Landfall writers. Curnow sought to create a legend for New Zealand using its Maori past. "Songs from the Maori",³² translated with the help of R.S. Oppenheim, chose one of the richest legendary sources--New Zealand's Polynesian heritage. Just as ancient Polynesian navigators had identified New Zealand from the Pacific ocean by the shadows radiated by the long white cloud above the three islands, so Curnow sought to discover New Zealand poetically through given phenomena. The three poems translated, "Lament of Rewa for Mokoewera", "Song by a Puhī for her Wrongdoing", and "Lament for Te Aoturoa" are among the very few examples of translated Maori legends. Curnow's play The Axe dramatizes the intermarriage of Polynesian and European cultures, and part of the Penguin anthology of New Zealand poetry is devoted to "A Note on New Zealand Verse and the Maori Tradition." Curnow is one of the very few writers who has attempted to close the gap between New Zealand writing in English and the oral tradition of the Maori.

An important critique of Curnow's A Small Room with Large Windows was written in 1963 by C.K. Stead. The title of the verse collection suggests New Zealand's attention to "overseas" traditions and Stead describes the growth of Curnow's work as "organic." The first artistic premise is cosmic;

Simply by sailing in a new direction
 You could enlarge the world.
 ("Landfall in Unknown Seas")

32 Landfall, volume 16, No. 1, pp.20-22.

The second premise works from a specific local context;

Two islands pointing from the Pole, upward
From the Ross Sea and the tall havenless ice:
("Not in Narrow Seas")

These two premises are not contradictory though they do pronounce the dichotomy of "regionalism" versus "universalism" which seems to divide older poets from younger poets. Stead makes the valid observation that,

Mr. Curnow's critical method...has been to look for the common experience of which the poems he values are the visible record. In this he is, I think, insisting upon the priority of the experience over the poetry it initiates. (Landfall, No.65, p. 27)

The priority of experience refers to its a priori status, not its importance. Curnow's critical desire to state this experience in addition to writing poetry about it differs from those poets who do not wish to be critics. It should be noted that Brasch's ideas, and those of many of Landfall's contributors, were akin to those of Curnow. However, the preoccupation with New Zealand's identity was tiresome to those less concerned with regionalism. One such poet is James K. Baxter.

James K. Baxter is generally regarded as the leading new generation poet in New Zealand since the war. John Weir talks of Baxter's mythologising where the poet expresses "the human condition in terms of his own experience."³³ Such a concern with the priority of experience has been shown to be intrinsic to Curnow's sensibility. Baxter's first three Landfall poems, which appeared in the first number, all deal with the physical

33 Weir, J.E., op. cit., p. 16.

environment of trees, animals, and storms. In contrast to the situation of R.A.K. Mason who, twenty years before, had thrown two hundred copies of The Beggar into Waitemata Harbour, Baxter found a more interested and informed audience for his verse.

Baxter has frequently discussed poetry in talks and broadcasts. In 1951 he addressed the New Zealand Writers' Conference (Commented on in Landfall, numbers 18 and 19) on "Recent trends in New Zealand poetry", and furthered his topic with the Macmillan Brown lectures, later published as The Fire and the Anvil. In a talk for the New Zealand Broadcasting Service in 1955, later published in the New Zealand Poetry Yearbook, Baxter discussed the "qualitative side" of New Zealand poetry by insisting that, in the first place, "we must be sure that the animal really exists."³⁴ And about the subjective aspect of being a poet, or of "the man I see in the shaving mirror", Baxter said,

The most dangerous time for him is the day he first uses the word "adolescent" to describe the things he does not like; when he rejects one half of his universe to make the other half safe. 35

Baxter's attitude towards New Zealand poetry is realistic, as exemplified by his statement; "its future is quite incalculable." But in his own work he has provided a "focus of highest hopes for the future."³⁶ Charles Doyle describes

34 Johnson, Louis, op. cit., volume 5, 1955, p.8.

35 Ibid.

36 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p.141.

Baxter as a "commentator" and a "prophet" and, in New Zealand, as the "most natural and talented spinner of parables among our writers."³⁷ An example of the strength and versatility of Baxter's earlier Landfall poetry brings the climax of a storm within the scant lines of a sonnet;

Behind the hill rose cloud like smoke and frowned
 Pregnant of old eruption, desert dry.
 Lightning and thunder-crash; the sun was drowned.
 Lightning and thunder-crash; in the dark sky
 A gaunt gull flew, daring the cloud-horizon.
 Lightning and thunder-crash; low overhead
 The air split wide, the gongs of shivering iron.
 And hail exploded, fell; direct as lead--
 Perpetual, vertical. The leaves are torn
 And ragged petals bruise. Then rain returned
 And sea was slate, the clay banks water-worn.
 Where the red gum and yellow wattle burned
 Shrill birds hide chirping. And the spiders run
 Mending their dragged nets to snare the hidden sun.
 ("Storm", Landfall, volume 1, No. 1, p. 26).

Such an electric power in a trinity of "thunder-crash" terminating in the fragile strength of a spider's web illustrates the harmony of the poem and the sensitive craftsmanship of the poet.

In a review of Curnow's At Dead Low Water Baxter describes Curnow as requiring "...the reassurance of tangible material to balance that state (the occupational disease of artists) which psychologists term negativistic withdrawal."³⁸ Curnow's "island myth" poems and occasional verse are full of "tangible material"-- but this is no less true of Baxter's Landfall poems.

Trees move me as no man or animal
 Green and young like a girl of air
 where the wide hills lean to the sun;
 and cloudy winds fall
 with Spring to stone mounds and a brown river.
 ("To a Poplar Tree", Landfall, No. 1, p. 27).

37 Ibid.

38 Landfall, volume 4, No. 2, June 1950, p. 166.

Baxter's verse is full of images of colour, natural phenomena, and human beings. While the girl is personified creation there is nevertheless the admonition of a populated landscape--a factor less true of Curnow's landscape. In these earlier poems Baxter has not yet begun such writing as,

Sisyphus, unhappy one,
 Mechanic of an old fraternity,
 To whom the simple and unchanging
 Processes of day and night
 Seem but a cage, a treadmill motion--
 ('Sisyphus', Howrah Bridge, page 36)

The poet had yet to come to terms with the familiar visualized realm before moving on to more psychological, symbolic, and religious realms,

Take back the grecian and the gothic stone.
 My soul is lost and buried here
 where the wind breathes on barren farms
 or inland waters, waves on worn shingle.
 And you more young than these
 who need not even innocence
 sway to the black sun of crumbling winter
 green and young like a girl of air.

O grow in my dreams.
 ("To a Poplar Tree", Landfall, No. 1, p.27)

Baxter has dug deep into the soil of his experience, reflecting influences of his environment in an intense psychological soliloquy;

The whole weight of the hill hung over me;
 Gladly I would have stayed there and been hidden
 From every beast that moves beneath the sun,
 From age's enmity and love's contagion:
 But turned and climbed back to the barrier,
 Pressed through and came to dazzling daylight out.
 ("The Cave", Landfall, No. 5, p.27)

Where myth and New Zealand are combined with the human and historic reality, Baxter succeeds excellently as a profound and committed poet;

For symbol take the maori coffinhead
 Seen under glass, proclaiming perilous
 The grief and horror of an older season
 Purged perhaps long since by the mission cross;
 Yet big with death, emerges from the tangled
 Archaic night, dwarfing our human love.
 ("Sestina", Landfall, No. 10, p.106)

The Maori spirit achieved a greater sense of belonging to the land, and, if the history of "our human love" is "dwarfed" by the "archaic night" of a polynesian past, there is no apology as far as Baxter is concerned. The use of "night" as the period of time before the Maori people were "purged...by the mission cross" is an imposition by the poet, excusable because of Baxter's clear sense of truth. His belief in Christian truth is not all propaganda;

May Time season our too wincing love
 With the humour of the Cross, sparing your fortunate head
 And in a perilous age our skein of peace untangled.
 (Ibid., p. 107)

The "humour" or personality of Baxter's religion is an anchor for the exploration of personal sensibility.

I took the clay track leading
 From Black Bridge to Duffy's farm,
 In no forefarer's footmark treading,
 Thus free, it would seem, from any harm
 That could befall me--the kind of ill-luck charm
 That clings to a once-fair steading--
 (Landfall, No. 17, "The Fallen House")

As a pioneer in this "personal sensibility" Baxter's poetic universe illustrates a harmony of images in an often terrifying environmental universe;

Swept clean of leaves, with stripped boughs, the garden
 Lifts black arms to the wan sky of winter.
 Mater Dolorosa: the orchid house
 Shuttered, and no birds by the pond's clear glass
 Where the boy and dolphin stand, to summer constant
 Rapt yet in the daze of an archaic dream.
 (Landfall, No. 18, "Cressida", p. 102)

"Sestina" shares "our inconstant waking dream" of a cosmos that, on the one hand, announces itself in thunder-claps and "the wan sky of winter" and, on the other hand, is atomized in the poet's imagination and reconstructed as an edifice of symbols, desires, and "...sight, sound, touch" which are the "substance of that dream."

Baxter's words, often lyric, often metaphoric, always part of a personal quest, are part of a progressive pattern that is constantly embellished. The sense of timelessness is evident in much of his poetry bearing on the absoluteness of the truth he seeks and knows to exist in the imagination;

De Berry's Book of Hours: the four seasons
 Frozen in equipoise on the coloured page.
 Always above, the sungod's molten chariot
 In a vault of indigo; below, the pageant
 Of man and beast, community of labour,
 Order of heart and hand--O pastoral dream
 Of Renaissance spring! imagined, never actual
 In this or any age.

("The Book of Hours", Landfall, No. 22, p.145)

Life is seen as a "pageant" wherein exists an "order of heart and hand"--a utopian ideal, fostered by the calm New Zealand experience, which warrants expression even if it is never experienced. But such romanticism is tempered with a realism approaching the "negativistic withdrawal" Baxter saw in Curnow;

Our lives are surely a winter fable
 Told in the dark with bedtime near,
 Quagmires all...

("The Leavetaking", Landfall, No. 28, p. 257)

In contrast to such lines is the Christian ethic of Baxter's belief;

Stranger beloved, all roads lead it seems
 To that great tree planted upon a skull.
 ("To God The Son", Landfall, No. 36, p.293)

With imagery almost reminiscent of William Blake, or Hopkins in the "terrible sonnets", Baxter's The Clown's Coat places the poet's trust firmly in the hands of "the strong Redeemer;"

Man-Maker, on the anvil of the years,
 Lord Light, forging my heart, a sinewy blade
 From black and obdurate iron--Thou knowest my fears;
 (Landfall, No. 38, p. 135)

The unmistakeable power of such lines confirms the sincerity and commitment of Baxter's poetry.

A poetic fantasy in the form of a radio play in which "the debt to Dylan Thomas is obvious enough" was printed in Landfall in 1956. "Jack Winter's Dream", ringing with the tones of Under Milk Wood, was written for "the speaking and singing voice":

Is the play meant to be historically real? God forbid. But there is one notion that lies behind the play, and in a sense accounts for it: that the shedding of blood christens a place, makes it part of the soul and imagination of man; that the natural world shares in our guilt, agony and perhaps redemption.

(Landfall, No. 39, p. 180)

The Messiah's crucifixion which made this "place" a "part of the soul" is the redemption in a macrocosmic sense which the play reflects in a microcosmic setting. Again it is a dream, as though hope and imagination were the most suitable ways of interpreting "the natural world."

First experiences of childhood are portrayed constantly in New Zealand writing (cf: Canadian, Australian, and United States writing for similar themes) as a form of "rooted sensibility." M.H. Holcroft's Islands of Innocence³⁹ suggests

39 Published by A.H. & A.W. Reed (Wellington, 1964). First presented as The Macmillan Brown Lectures given at the Victoria University of Wellington in April 1964.

more the theme of the "child is father of the man" than that of the ingenuous person puzzled by a looming world. Baxter's "The Return" is a childhood reminiscence of the "...humpbacked roads and the piddling schoolhouse." The poem is nostalgic, perhaps even sad, while the poet regards this memorable place "Where once was unequivocal peace and pain." "The Return" is characteristic of Baxter's multi-dimensional vision, simple in imagery to match the mind of the child, and simple in syntax to reflect the simple thoughts uncomplicated by knowledge.

Rigid Mars,
 Demon of the middle earth, leprous
 Chewer of continents, was a boy tumbling
 In a ditch with a bloody nose.
 (Landfall, No. 41, p. 34)

For once Baxter puts his sense of quest in abeyance, as though questioning the direction of his maturing poetic ability;

I have no skill to set down
 The perils of a late journey
 Made to get back a full sight of loss.
 Many miles from here my youth died
 In northern warrens, stifled by invisible
 Cloths of delirium and habitual greed.
 (Landfall, No. 41, p. 34)

There is no secret about his temporary depression and nostalgia:

Delivered from a false season
 To the natural winter of the heart
 One may set foot with the full weight of man
 On shell and stone and seabirds's skeleton.
 (Landfall, No. 41, p. 34)

Lyricism is more characteristic of Baxter than the "natural winter" of "The Return." The humour of the poet, delicately balanced with the omnipresent mythology of older and timeless civilisations, creates a formidable and excellent incongruity. In "The Descent of Orpheus,"

Grum Sisyphus, who takes to heart
 All that ever happened,
 Nudged by your singing. (*italics*)
 Lets the stone of conscience spin
 Savagely downhill
 Among the mangroves crashing.
 The drugged daughters of the well
 Let their dribbling sieve spill,
 In frilly skirts and sashes
 Jive, rock-and-roll,
 Prodded by your singing. (*italics*)
 (Landfall, No. 43, p. 190)

Ancient and modern are intermingled in a specific place "among
 the mangroves." Growing in the inhospitable habitat of coastal
 mud flats the mangrove symbolises the victory of existence
 over torment--as, in effect, does the toil of Sisyphus.⁴⁰

The imagination can contain the "nudge" and "prod" and
 visualise the incongruous images mixing into a harmonious song.
 The counterpoint to this lyricism is the elegaic tone of the
 thirteen-line "On The Death of Her Body."

It is a thought breaking the granite heart
 Time has given me, that my one treasure,
 Your limbs, those passion-vines, that bamboo body

Should age and slacken, rot
 Some day in a ghastly clay-stopped hole.
 They led me to the mountains beyond pleasure

Where each is not gross body or blank soul
 But a strong harp the wind of genesis
 Makes music in, such resonant music

That I was Adam, loosened by your kiss
 From time's hard bond, and you,
 My love, in the world's first summer stood

Plucking the flowers of the abyss.
 (Landfall, No. 58, p. 111)

40 The legend of Sisyphus, so appealing to absurdist writers
 like Albert Camus (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*), attracts Baxter.
 See also the poem "Sisyphus" in Howrah Bridge, O.U.P.,
 (London, 1961). p. 36.

Baxter is a craftsman of first rank who reaches levels of precision when his visions, which produce much ordinary poetry as well, are focussed by a specific experience.

Baxter's visit to India was well documented in his poetry. His Indian poems appeared in the 1961 collection Howrah Bridge. Seven of these poems were published in Landfall, (Volume 14, No. 2, June 1960) under the title Seven Poems from India. It is notable that "At Shalimar" and "Nizamuddin" did not appear in Howrah Bridge under their original titles. "Nizamuddin" became "This Indian Morning" in the collection. The Indian poems add another dimension to Baxter's cosmic preoccupations. W.H. Oliver makes a valid observation in assessing them;

Baxter sees man in apocalyptic religious terms; he is more concerned with mankind self-exiled from heaven than with New Zealanders isolated in the South Pacific. 41

But a critic might be exc used for suggesting that Baxter's cosmic sense of man "self-exiled" has interesting parallels with a country whose inhabitants live, by choice, half a world away from a cultural centre they so avidly admire (from a distance) and with which they identify. Baxter is always honest about himself. In the series in Landfall entitled Beginnings, Baxter admitted that "...a sense of grief has attached itself to my early life, like a tapeworm in the stomach of a polar bear."⁴² It was this "...sense of grief-- even at times a sense of grievance--(which) helped me to write

41 McLintock, A.H. (editor), An Encyclopedia of New Zealand, R.E. Owen, Government Printer, (Wellington, 1966), p. 342a.

42 Landfall, Volume 19, No. 3, September 1965, p. 237.

poems." In everyday experience "What happens is either meaningless to me, or else it is mythology."

There is an admitted sense of alienation felt by Baxter in relation to his society;

...there was (a) greater difference between my own socialist-pacifist family and the semi-militarist activities of the people round about as the country moved towards war.

Baxter also wrote:

I think that various factors combined early to give me a sense of difference, of a gap--not of superiority, nor of inferiority, though at times it must have felt like that, but simply of difference--between myself and other people.

His cosmopolitanism was an integral part of this "sense of difference." And the "Leftist ethos" which once "...burst in the middle of my desert like a nuclear device..." had lost its punch for a poet who had imagined "a secret tribe of friends and lovers who waited, guns and poems and contraceptives in their hands to welcome by coming of age."

The setting of Baxter's life in antipodean New Zealand (at least "antipodean" as the British see it) combined with a sensitivity to art everywhere became part of the poet's duality of myth and setting.

It seems to me, looking back, that the negative aspects of my growth were in the long run of most help to me as a writer. They tempered the axe of the intellect, as it were. A writer cannot avoid the task of exploring and understanding the private hell which lies just below the threshold of his own mind. I doubt if he can begin to understand the threefold aspect of the modern world--monotony, atrocity, anarchy--if he has not first done this. But while this growth was going on, I was of course a very quiet New Zealand lad doing this and that in a quiet New Zealand town.

The "quietness" of the New Zealand experience seems to have

had little "negative" effect on Baxter's recognition and comprehension of the world beyond. In fact it probably allowed him more leisure with which to observe and meditate. His travels fulfilled any lack of necessary cosmopolitan experience.

The liberated verse of Arthur Rimbaud was another influence on Baxter, who translated "Seven Year Old Poet" and "The First Communion" in Landfall.⁴³ Baxter's own work never reaches the cynical level of;

It makes me want to laugh, those country churches
Where fifteen kids like ugly ducklings
Dirty the pillars, quack, talk back
To an old daft priest in greasy shoes:
Being instructed!

And the sun glitters through leaves;
Light roosts in the windows like broken loaves.

But the sentiment may be often shared. At least the stereotypes of Church and School in the ancient European countries do not exist similarly in New Zealand as targets for satire. New Zealand has its own quirks and can blame Europe for the shortcomings of the institutions that are imported into the new country. Stanley Burnshaw sees Rimbaud's youthful rebellion as existing within the complicated context of French society;

Rimbaud at seventeen was filled with dreams of liberation from the constraints of family, provincial life, studies, the conventions of the poetry of the past, and political and social conservatism. 44

Baxter, too, reacted against a constricting "social conserv-

43 Landfall, Volume 18, No. 4, December 1964, pp. 309-315.

44 Burnshaw, Stanley, The Poem Itself, Pelican, 1960, p.21.

atism" but the pressures were fewer in New Zealand, though the task of liberation was no less difficult. His conversion to Catholicism was an ultimate personal liberation even though the authoritarianism of the Church must have raised questions in his mind.⁴⁵ But Baxter finds a certain truth in the powerful, translated, scornful verse of Rimbaud;

O Christ, Christ, You have taken our strength from us!
 You pale God, nailing to Your altar bone
 Since Golgotha the women You turn to stone,
 Chained to the earth in grief, mounted by the incubus.

The last of Baxter's poems printed in Landfall while Charles Brasch was editor show the firm commitment of the poet to Christianity. "To My Father in Spring" and "Mother and Son" both combine autobiographical and religious content. There is a double meaning in;

Well, father,
 in a world of bombs and drugs

you charm me still--no other
 man is quite like you! That smile
 like a low sun on water

tells of a cross to come--

("To my Father in Spring", Landfall, No. 80, p.365)

Baxter's great achievement is his ability to combine spiritual revelation with terrestrial reality. John Weir praises the mythologising which Baxter admitted in Beginnings is a vital part of his work;

At its best, especially when his poems are strongly rooted in the New Zealand scene, this practice creates a genuine universality. 46

45 A biographical sketch of Baxter's life and family background is presented by J.E. Weir in his book The Poetry of James K. Baxter.

46 Weir, John, "Some Reflections on the Poetry of James K. Baxter," Comment, April 1970, No. 40, p. 23.

Baxter's "mythology" is akin to Curnow's "non-condition of weightlessness" whereby the New Zealand experience is "rich" enough to endow the perceptive man with a vision of the universality of human existence.

Kendrick Smithyman is probably the most cryptic of the older post-war poets who has published in Landfall. Whatever a critic might be tempted to say about Smithyman's poetry, he could not generalize about it, apart from noting its complexity.

Smithyman's poetry appeared in every issue of the N.Z. Poetry Yearbook, many issues of Landfall, and many smaller publications.⁴⁷ Such is his omnipresence. In the eighth number of the Yearbook (1958-1959) Louis Johnson wrote that "only four poets have appeared consistently in each of the eight issues."⁴⁸ One of these was Smithyman, and no critic has so far accused him of sacrificing quality for quantity.

Smithyman's Landfall poems escape the categorical broadside of Baxter that Landfall verse is "anaemic in substance, intricate in form-wire and glass structures, light-weight, like the mobiles they hang up in a pub lounge."⁴⁹ It cannot be

47 In the front of The Blind Mountain (Caxton, 1950) the following publications are listed: Kiwi, Rostrum, Book, Hilltop, Meanjin, Albion (England), Arena, Image, Poetry Australia, Arts Year Book, N.Z.M.R., Poetry Yearbook, N.Z. Listener, Numbers, Matrix, Argot and Dispute. Listings also in Flying to Palmerston, (OUP, 1968).

48 Johnson, L. (ed.), op. cit., No. 8, 1958-59, p. 9.

49 Ibid., Volume 10, p. 13.

determined from available research material which poems, if any, were rejected by Charles Brasch,⁵⁰ but those that appear are not noticeably at variance with those published by the Yearbook or other periodicals. At "Headstone Bay", for example, illustrates a common theme;

Nothing here is out of the sea's reach,
 least of all the century dead marked below
 fallow stone, who swept in these fathoms
 once, but drew away. The convict shaking
 in terror's outrage lonely on these cliffs
 saw freedom something harshly to him blown
 and blown away. No freedom here assume.
 (Landfall, Volume 2, No. 4, p. 269)

The images here, like those of Curnow and Baxter, are both antipodean and mythic. The precipitous cliffs in a lonely country provide no freedom but rather an obstacle. Smithyman's duality (antipodean and mythic) appears again in "Emblems, A Casual Shire" (Landfall, No. 15, p. 221) as on "Cook's desert coast my childhood played."

For I was born into such raw settlement, dying
 from one wild active day into a day returning
 upon the pulse of soft machines, and to the flying
 cloud which endures and to labouring sun burning
 summer away, and all the remains of our regard.

The poet's vision, aware of "raw settlement, dying..." searches the horizon for "The fathers lying elsewhere...", for the heritage that legitimizes humanity in a new land. What could be more reminiscent of New Zealand than...

Hobson, Rodney, Otamatea
 now folded deep under the risen
 summer moon, of day's heat shriven
 your flats, remembered hills, declare

50 Significant correspondence belonging to Charles Brasch is now under seal at the Hocken Library in Dunedin. It is not available in the foreseeable future.

this broken speech down tributary
 waterways, nostalgic testament--
 I could pray my son sometime has heart
 to make his passions local as mine now,
 northern their course where counties lie
 folded, wind-shaded, calm, moon held,
 sheep bedded on their uplands' bent
 and stertorous herds upon their low
 alluvial pastures, coast to coast.

The picture of the new cherished landscape, painted with the
 colours of an old world, and the preoccupation with a local
 region, do not diminish the sense of a much wider context,

Name them (*italics*). The river murmurs, nets
 within its flux the weather beaten stars
 and casts its net upon the natural man,
 stranding his arid works against that grass
 flickering, soughing as the king tide sets
 derelict of his demon and his arts.

"Journey Towards Easter" captures a new idiom. An
 introduction to the poem sets the scene as "Peter Radford,
 priest of a North Auckland parish, waits for the train bring-
 ing him his new curate."

They will reject him as they rejected me,
 in their hearts. When the priest dies
 there is no god.
 When the god dies there is
 no priest.

(Landfall, No. 20, p. 268)

The priest is Smithyman himself, dressed in recognizable garb,
 a prophet alienated from his god ("The god is dead in me")
 and his fellow men.

See. I am left to walk alone this morning
 end to end of the platform. The porter ignores,
 signalman ignores me. I am not part of their clay.

The lines combine familiar and mythological worlds. The myth,
 to paraphrase Frye, is the replacement of the historical
 element by the philosophical element. The dimensions of this
 poem go beyond the platform (earth) and the priesthood (poet)

to the god which embodies all that is open to question and all that is creative in the questioning process.

Smithyman's two poems from "Discourse on Settlement" are both concerned with the search for the pedigree of his native land. The ancestral line in the new country poses provincial and universal questions,

I sit by night alone, on a ramshackle island,
My sons in Dunedin, generation in my head,
Puzzling the responsibilities of a male line--
To whom responsible? Not, surely, to the dead,
And as little likely merely to oneself.
 (Landfall, No. 29, p. 15)

The concern with inheritance as the pedigree of citizenship and the legitimizing of local settlement are both essential to Smithyman's "reconstruction" of history. Typically the premises end in a question of Cartesian intensity as in the poem "Inheritance";

Tree, paddock, river: plan
landscape for a child
who shall inherit all,
and grow, to be a man--
but when does manhood's wild
ordinance of downfall
first rack him?

Inheritance, connected with the Augustinian idea of original sin, is the cause of this question. The question is the norm of doubt, but Smithyman remains noncommittal; about religious belief, and about his role as poet--"I am not a "writer"; I am a primary school teacher."⁵¹ At this point the rooster crows three times, and later the truth of Smithyman's personal feeling is revealed;

That was what I thought. But one gets involved,

51 Landfall, Number 53, March 1960, p. 68.

and tired. Tired by the day and the cumulation of days, and involved with--shall we say, diffidently?--conscience? If not conscience, then, with the concern that the job shall be at least interesting in some way. 52

Honesty is this poet's policy, and he never begs the question of his own professionalism.

In a review of Inheritance, Wystan Curnow wrote that "...Kendrick Smithyman's frequent contributions to a variety of literary and political journals have brightened an otherwise rather dreary period for poetry in this country."⁵³ Smithyman can be counted on for originality and expertise in his creative work.

In November 1961 Louis Johnson wrote of Denis Glover that he had "always had a weather-eye cocked for comment on what happens in the world about (him)."⁵⁴ The contribution Glover has made to New Zealand letters has been outstanding. Landfall's establishment was in large part due to the establishment of the Caxton Press in Christchurch, which had begun as a club at Canterbury University College, in 1934. Glover's own account of his brainchild, written for An Encyclopedia of New Zealand, is exceptionally modest considering the high typographical standard of the enterprise which considered printing an art rather than a business:

The work was undistinguished at first--there was

52 Ibid.

53 Landfall, Number 67, September 1963, p. 290.

54 Johnson, Louis, N.Z. Poetry Yearbook, Volume 10, 1961-1962. Pegasus Press, (Christchurch), p. 11.

no money for foundry types, and the linotype faces available to the trade were Century, Textype, and one Old Style without italic. In 1936 the Caxton Press was put on a modest business footing, and continued to build up types for eventual full book production. Right from the beginning an emphasis was given to the publication of New Zealand literature in the best attainable formats, though it was not for some years that a trade setter could be persuaded to put in the matrices for 11-point Baskerville with italics and small caps. The Caxton Press has been practically alone in printing books for the sake of printing. These include an Areopagitica and a Boccaccio stroy hand set in Caslon, Hero and Leander hand set in Perpetua italic, and numerous smaller books produced with an indifference to selling price. Its two type specimen books were something new for this country, combining pleasant literary extracts with colourful display. A fine edition of The Ancient Mariner, illustrated and embellished by Leo Bensemann, was produced, together with a couple of books of that artist-typographer's own work in various media. 55

Glover's high standard of printing encouraged writers to present their work for professional publication. His "weather-eye" had noticed the necessity for a press to print the new wave of creative writing. McCormick praises Glover's efforts of the thirties;

In this decade it became possible to produce local books whose format was no longer a reproach to their country of origin, and though a London imprint still retained many advantages, one of the barriers to publication--and therefore to writing--was removed. It was owing to the existence of these presses... that its two most widely divergent cities became New Zealand's cultural centres. Auckland, with its

55 Page 872. In an advance note to the publication of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner professional terminology was in use: "In production now at the Caxton Press, is a subscriber's edition of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by S. T. Coleridge. This work is being hand-set in 16pt. Poliphilus with marginal glosses in 12pt Blado Italic, and it will be printed on Hayle Mill handmade paper. Size demy 4to, 44pp. Price three guineas. Publication in March 1952. A prospectus is now available."

larger, more cosmopolitan population, its freedom from strong traditional shackles, and its closer touch with America, maintained the leadership it had assumed with the publication of Phoenix. The junior partner was Christchurch, still retaining in its isolation a hold on the ideals implanted there by the Canterbury pilgrims. 56

McCormick describes Glover as the "enfant terrible of New Zealand letters" in the thirties. Glover has always been an iconoclast who left few stones unturned in articulating the inadequacies of his homeland. His establishment of The Caxton Press proved his practicality, and his poetry makes him one of the leading post-war New Zealand writers--"(His best work has been done since 1940."⁵⁷ Glover's first Landfall poem echoes the cultural shortcomings of New Zealand in comparison to the "light" of the music of Lili Kraus, who later adopted New Zealand citizenship.

Walking an unfamiliar road by night
 Your playing broke upon me like a light.
 Folly and fury and the corroding dream
 Were overborne. I voyaged on a stream
 Miraculous; and tree and tower and field
 On music's Orinoco stood revealed.
 Lili, emotion leaves me quite dismayed:
 If I'm on fire I call the fire-brigade.
 Your music gave me much; I'll say no more,
 For like the kiwi I decline to soar.
 But in that given and forgiving hour
 I breathed the air where the sonatas flower.

("A Note to Lili", Landfall, No. 2, p. 84)

But, like Charles Brasch, Glover was sufficiently confident in his country's potential to become a pioneer in the new literary branch of an older tradition--which he had witnessed at first-hand in Europe during the war. He created two prototypes from the New Zealand environment whose characters

56 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 110.

57 Ibid., p. 120.

animated the rough landscape within which they lived.

Arawata Bill, in real life the prospector William O'Leary, was a pseudonym, while Harry was a fictitious character who has much in common with Glover himself. These personae, and "Dirty Mick" Stimson, are the nearest approaches in New Zealand poetry to the bushrangers and riders of the Australian outback. Their loneliness, courage, and stoic understanding are also reminiscent of the heroes of the American West. Apart from James Mackenzie⁵⁸ Glover's personae are among the very few pakeha pioneer heroes in New Zealand's legendary history. Like the ballad, native legends have not flourished in this country.⁵⁹

The balance between brute force combating a brutal landscape, and the refinement of visionary observation, is threaded through Glover's poems.

Mountains nuzzle mountains
White-bearded rock-fronted
In perpetual drizzle.

Rivers swell and twist
like a torturer's fist
Where the maidenhair
Falls of the waterfall
Sail through the air.

The mountains send below
Their cold tribute of snow
And the birch makes brown
The rivulets running down

58 Mackenzie, the sheepstealer who gave his name to the Mackenzie Country, first emigrated to Australia and returned there after an unconditional pardon. He is the subject of a recent book and television production, both by James MacNeish.

59 The most comprehensive selection of New Zealand ballads and songs is Shanties By The Way, edited by Bailey and Roth, Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., (Christchurch, 1967).

Rock, air and water meet
 Where crags debate
 The dividing cloud.

In the dominion of the thorn
 The delicate cloud is born
 And golden nuggets bloom
 In the womb of the storm.

(from "Arawata Bill" --the scene)

And in "Portrait and Song", where the hero is "Leo Bensemann's
 Olaf", the duality of the adventurer reflects the schizophrenic
 universe;

Half lout half dreamer,
 Here's one who fought the waves
 And thinking murder fun
 Would burn a city, colonise a coast,
 Urging his sullen oars
 Beyond the rim of the world

.....
 Calling the just unjust,
 He's barbarously fair.

(Landfall, No. 6, p. 119)

The most attractive aspect of this example of Glover's poetry
 is its honesty of expression. It is no spoof on Leibnizian
 optimism, It is,

What shall we sing? sings Harry.
 Sing all things sweet and harsh upon
 These islands in the Pacific sun,
 The mountains whitened endlessly
 And the white horses of the winter sea,
sings Harry.

The motivation behind Arawata Bill in the land of gold is
 similar to Glover's in the land where "the kiwi declines to
 soar."

Where are you off to, Bill?
 Surely the river's too full.

Me and my billy don't worry:
 We take the track for the sea,
 And there's no hurry.

But why are you leaving, Bill,
 When you've just fetched up?
 Stay for a bite and a sup
 Or a few square meals.

I've tea and sugar and flour,
 And inside the hour
 I'm heading into the hills.

Bill, have you struck it rich?

No--but you never saw such
 Promise of colour, not a doubt
 Of it--till the cloudburst
 Drove me out of it.

(from "Arawata Bill" --conversation piece)

Such is Glover's stoic optimism and sympathy for his hardy character. The dichotomy of the "Sweetness" and "harshness" of "these islands in the Pacific sun" is the choice available. The finale of Bill's quest is death in "a bed in town", and the moral of his story;

You should have been told
 Only in you was the gold:

Allen Curnow describes Harry as "a sort of Shakespearian sad fool." His pilgrimage, like that of Arawata Bill, was to find "a treaty between the man and the elements," in the locale of New Zealand. The Canadian poet, E.J. Pratt, often placed man in a dwarfed perspective when surrounded by Canada's Gargantuan geology and extreme seasons. Glover in New Zealand reflects a temperate perspective. Compared to Canada and Australia his New Zealand is manageable and more hospitable.

Another example of Glover's desire to interpret the New Zealand experience was his writing of a verse commentary for the National Film Unit production of The Coaster;

How would New Zealanders react to verse commentary on a theme touching their everyday lives? As it had

not been tried, no one knew. But I knew, when I first saw the film in the studios. ...I knew that I was wildly off target. I knew that what I had first done, without seeing the film, would be greeted at best with bewilderment, at worst with remarks far from poetic. 60

Glover's habitual "humility" precluded a claimed knowledge of filmmaking, but he used his catholic abilities to interpret his world through different media. The contrast between man's quest for security, a quest perhaps more adequately realised in New Zealand than in most other countries, and the combat with the elements, is illustrated by the imagery in The Coaster:

In from the hazardous sea lies the harbour,
Smooth carpet for keels
Where peninsula hills
Cushion the shock of Pacific
With ramparts of rock.

Violence and peace intermingled in the poetic text while the film visualized shipboard life. It was a multi-media experience featuring the element connecting faraway New Zealand with the world:

One produce is wool
From the lush land, the bush land,
Hoisted aboard it goes
This cargo coastwise bound

--Gone off to other ships
Following the sunset west and away
To London, Glasgow, Amsterdam or Brest...

In carrying it the coaster plays its part
Feeding the ships that feed the distant world.

Glover with Curnow has been the doyen of successful satire in post-war New Zealand. Several humorists have published work,

notably Barry Crump in The Good Keen Man, but on literary merit Glover is unexcelled. McCormick describes Glover's "youthful" Arraignment of Paris (1937) as "the one piece of sustained literary satire produced in this country".⁶¹ Thoughts in A Suburban Tram, which appeared in Landfall (No. 20, p.265) were a weaker form of satire. It is notable that Charles Brasch printed a series of somewhat unrelated aphorisms, some of which were beneath Glover's poetic stature, and some of which were decidedly poor. But the best were curt insights into Glover's New Zealand;

Apart from the reintroduction of hanging, one of the worst penalties of the law in New Zealand is that for certain offences you are prohibited from attending race meetings.

It has often been suggested that too little humour appeared in Landfall's pages. Glover's satiric spirit proved to be the exception.

The commercial appeal of some of Glover's works, which had prompted the film score for The Coaster, was solicited by "an airline company" which commissioned Glover to write "something about the air, as you see fit."⁶² With the humorous anecdote that Glover was paid two shillings a line--"higher than the prevailing rate for New Zealand verse"--making a sonnet worth twenty eight shillings, Glover wrote an expurgated ("no mention of crashes, burnings, explosions, or other accidents.") series for aviation;

Sky-reacher, sweeping your wings against
The cobweb cloud, asking the sun's proximity,

61 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 119.

62 Landfall, No. 30, June 1954, p. 110.

You intimate of thunder,
 What rich plunder
 Do your instruments pluck from the skies.

This is bad poetry, but the commercial context of the operation is significant, and the piece warrants publication in Landfall as an example of "commissioned verse". The airline company, however, complained that the final lines "failed to achieve a climax;"

Only will and skill
 Can make mountains less tall,
 Curving the course with the rainbow
 Over the world's wall.

Clearly the poet's achievement is the irony of understatement, lacking the jingoism of an advertiser's script, but Glover's sense of irony was probably satisfied by this project.

Glover's next Landfall poem, "Towards Banks Peninsula", is an accomplished synthesis of natural phenomena and their reaction on the mind;

Here from your chosen Port Levy
 There was not one bay of the bays
 Wouldn't baffle a navy
 To fish or to sweep without help:
 Every flaw in the weather divined,
 Every reef, rock, steep point,
 Anchorage, kelp,
 Bank and current
 Engraved on the chart of your mind.

The landscape's "engraving" is the fruition of the understanding of nature--and more specifically a locality of New Zealand. As in "Arawata Bill" and "Sings Harry" the geography of a region has psychological connotations. It is this synthesis that forms an aspect of the New Zealand imagination perhaps as an initial (rather than a fully developed) form.

Natural metaphor--even "landscape metaphor"--is typical of Glover's criticism. In a review of Three Poems and Strange Rendezvous by A.R.D. Fairburn, Glover utilizes geographical simile;

A comprehensive review of Fairburn is a task not easily and dispassionately to be carried out. One might as well try to shovel the Southern Alps into the ocean with a teaspoon. For like the Alps Fairburn has many peaks, higher or lesser, and many ravines and riverflats, excitingly wooded or just plain good and stony. He presents, in himself, a wider landscape than any other New Zealand writer; and the publication of these two books within a few months of each other is the most important event in our poetry for a number of years. 63

But "Fairburn's landscape is no landscape per se--it is a peopled environment, the reverse of inanimate."⁶⁴ The challenge to writers and painters in New Zealand has been the peopling of the landscape. Glover achieves it through the solitary adventurer surrounded by vast expanses of natural phenomena--both geographical and meteorological. Glover's personality is not at variance with Fairburn's whose "nostalgia for an Arcady (is) situated somewhere on the Hauraki Gulf." It is the same creative process whereby Mason's "farpitched perilous hostile place" becomes a populated and humanized environment. Landscape metaphor is not mere provincialism. It is, like the frescoes in ancient cathedrals, a method of illustration for abstract concepts and sensitivities. James K. Baxter writes;

The peculiar power of Mr. Glover's landscape poetry rises from the fact that mountain, river,

63 Landfall, No. 27, September 1953, p. 203.

64 Ibid.

bushland and sea assume in it the proportions of animistic powers; and the chief importance of "Arawata Bill" is that it constitutes an extension of this frame of reference. Arawata Bill moves and perseveres in the arena of indifferent, even antagonistic spiritual forces; he is the dilapidated demigod of a nature myth. In that "wicked country" prayer is legitimate, but a packhorse a more suitable companion than a man. Virtues count less than tactics. 65

The process, as seen by Baxter, is the mythologizing of the landscape by poetic imagination. And the process is common to other countries, from one of which an expatriate New Zealand scholar writes;

The distinctiveness of Canadian literature thus far has been almost wholly an inevitable response to a geographical, climatic, and social situation, and this it should and must remain. 66

The "animistic powers" are stimulants to the imagination which through a form of "photosynthesis" blends the human element with the natural. That this is a universal phenomenon from the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright to the short stories of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn should be an encouragement to New Zealand writers and artists who fear their search is "provincial" or "chauvinistic." Landscape metaphor is common to the work of Brasch, Curnow, Glover and, in a different way, of Smithyman and Baxter.

If rugged elements are part of Glover's experience, so is the peaceful surrounding; the balance of "harshness" and "sweetness". "Saturday on the Farm" is delicate pastoralism;

Now the bare hills stand guardian
Over the homestead scene
And the smoke from the musterers' hut
Ghosts grey against purple-green
(Landfall, No. 50, p.149)

65 Ibid., p. 215.

66 Pacey, Desmond, Creative Writing in Canada, Ryerson Press (Toronto, 1967), p. 3.

And images of "The Tiger Moth topdresser" testify both to the date of the poem (c.1959) and the advanced methods of New Zealand agriculture. These two poems are in light relief to Arawata Bill's "...stones thaw-loosened/ leap from the precipice/ Into shrapnel snow-cushioned."

Glover's poem "Printers" supports McCormick's observation that the poet "has a special feeling for those who work with hands and brain..."⁶⁷ As typographer, Glover was a technical craftsman who would;

...speak now of printers and bookmen,
Praise men acknowledged great
Whose business has been display of words
Fragile as bones of birds,
Careful of how hyphens mate,
Considering each comma, establishing
A style as precedent for the mile-
Wide errors of author's laughters
At their own inaccuracy.

(Landfall, No. 71, p. 203)

This is the language of the practical man who must fit words to ideas.

Glover's knowledge of the Pacific was utilized in a review of Sir Joseph Banks' New Zealand journal edited by W.P. Morrell. Charles Brasch was, as usual, careful to choose a reviewer with special knowledge of the field. Glover brought also his colour of personality, perhaps disagreeable in the snide remark about Australian Aborigines;

The best part of this book is Banks's "Account of New Zealand". It was the first detailed record. It made no wild guesses, and some very reasoned deductions. It told of the people and their customs, and compared them with other islanders (though we shall have to await Dr. Beaglehole's editing of the

67 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 119.

whole journal for his remarks on that vastly more civilized people, the Australian aborigines." 68

Banks stood rebuked. Another article in Landfall (No. 41, p.60) was a review of Dr. J.C. Beaglehole's editorship of Cook's Journals and the background of the greatest navigator in Canada's, New Zealand's, and Australia's Pacific history.

Dr. Beaglehole's monumental achievement receives a Glover quip;

Dr. Beaglehole does not give us the important figure of her ("Endeavour's") draught--11 to 13 feet?⁶⁹

Glover's versatility is his most notable attribute. As an accomplished poet he contributed to the humanizing of the natural landscape of his native land. As a typographer he might be regarded as significant to the logistical basis of Landfall as Brasch was to its literary standard. As a critic he is colourful and capable, showing a scholarly knowledge as well as humorous and creative detachment. As a satirist, which singles him out from most of his imaginative countrymen, he adds another dimension to a sometimes prim literary tradition. His satire, reminiscent of Fairburn's "Dominion", is highly effective in, for example, "The Astronomer Distraught";

In the hundred names of God
Magnificat confusion;
Trafficated snarliness and lunch tin music,
Expense accountancy, flip jokes,
Side swipers, mill stern wheelers, dead sea watches,
Bugles and bells, flop joints, escape-proof cells,
Damned and decorated usurers
Pill swallows and free ointment smells,
Hairpin benders, no hoppers, never enders,
Bitch fiddlers, crutch puddlers,
Egg fanciers, pot wallopers, coffee drinkers,
Serious thinkers, hem stichers,
Houha politicians, department store

68 Landfall, No. 52, p. 372.

69 Ibid., No. 41, p. 62.

Corrupters of the kids, mumble-bum magistrates
 Shitty-witty in court,
 Newsprint botchers and relishers
 Of robbers and rapers in daily papers,
 Stock and share jobbers, breeches buoy bandits,
 Plausible vocateurs with mandates
 For religious and advertising creeds,
 Panders to our needs, granters of wishes,
 Sowers of thistles and bright-flowering weeds--
 (Landfall, No. 79, p. 227)

But the tone is less heavy than Fairburn's.

Glover's attitude towards literature--particularly poetry--shows a basic optimism tempered with a grasp of the difficulties and discouragements of writing for a small population still clinging to "practical ethics".

Outlook for poetry--unsettled. A deep depression is advancing over Parnassus, and scattered sonnets may be expected in isolated areas. Tomorrow's outlook--windy. 70

His belief and confidence in "an emerging national consciousness of poetic destination"⁷¹ is what New Zealanders want to hear--especially from a person whose realistic perceptions had scanned the hills and valleys of possibility. Glover identified the Poetry Yearbook, Landfall, and "Mr. Hoggard's gallant little Arena" as "the present strongpoints of our poetry."⁷²

Glover was elected a member of the State Literary Fund Committee, an essential sponsor of artistic pursuits in New Zealand--particularly Landfall. Glover found the Committee "...cautiously poking (poetry) with sticks to see if it will utter shrill cries of ecstasy or burst into bloodcurdling obscenities." An example of the deep-rooted opposition to

70 Johnson, Louis, editor, op. cit., Volume 5, 1955, p.9.

71 Ibid.

72 Johnson, Louis, N.Z. Poetry Yearbook, Volume 5, 1955, p.10.

the extraordinary or questionable in New Zealand writing was the disagreement between Poetry Yearbook and the Reed publishers. Yearbook later turned to the Pegasus Press in Christchurch. For example, as Glover stated,

"...can a government-appointed committee subsidize such a poem as Fairburn's 'Dominion', would it subsidize political satire, or an attack on the church; would it subsidize the blistering invective, even pungent obscenity, which is often the poet's only way of dealing with the obscene complications of modern life which are equated with normality and decency?" 73

The voice of the iconoclast is the exposition of Glover's satiric personality. One might hope for more rare satire, but Glover, like R.A.K. Mason, hibernates from time to time. If his belief that "literature thrives on adversity" is firm, Glover may yet, with Curnow, be the most effective satirist writing today in New Zealand. He has few competitors. McCormick finds that Glover "throughout his career...has shunned anything savouring of the prophetic or the portentous." 74 Glover defies categorizing, and, on "tomorrow's outlook" the forecast is simply "windy."

From his vantage point as historian Keith Sinclair's poetry has frequent reference to the story of New Zealand's past and its relevance to the future. The simplicity of Sinclair's early Landfall poetry shows an original form and style uninfluenced by poetic traditions elsewhere. An admonition such as,

73 Ibid.

74 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 118.

...all your life is living in my bones,
 we are our own New Zealand;
 while our minds
 breed futures from the touch and breath of love
 we are our own safe island,
 and hold our world of cliffs and towns
 and bush and farms all whole,
 alive and integrated in our arms,
 granting a little life from every kiss
 to impregnate this rock, and know
 our island virtues are all outside storms
 and any death will knock in vain.

(Landfall, No. 2, p. 103)

from "Te Kaminara", is classically bare of pretence. And, while it might be considered naive in thought, it embraces the sense of belonging that is vital to native poetry written in "our own safe island."⁷⁵ "Te Kaminara" is specific place--as is "Waitara" where the Settler and the Chief meet in 1859 for one of the most important historical events in New Zealand's history. The island brings promise, at least, for the powerful newcomers;

We need a harbour where the breakers melt,
 We need a door-way that our ships may leap
 From the sides of the possessive land
 Against the resistant bars of the great waves,

And fields without one black barbaric tree;
 Meadows, and a harbour to the abjured past,
 To build a people nearer to our needs
 In the unbaked clay, the unconsecrated waste.

O nightful men, we come and are bearing gifts
 For the fallen tribes, a nationality
 More gracious than your counterfeited kings,
 Or the five-fold unity of your long canoes.

But the native New Zealander opposes the advent of European
 Domination:

Leave us alone, for when you come
 Among us we are nothing,
 We have no voice any more. 76

75 "Our own safe island" refers to the Welfare State.

76 "Waitara" appeared in Landfall, No. 8, December 1948, p. 259. Sinclair discussed the Waitara purchase in his historical work The Origins of the Maori Wars, N.Z. University Press, (Wellington, 1961).

The chief is Wiremu Kingi te Rangitake of the Ngati Awa of Taranaki who, in 1859, contested the "sale" of Maori land in Waitara, the crossroads between Taranaki and the Waikato. On March 17, 1860, the Taranaki war began, a war that still weighs on the conscience of pakeha New Zealanders. Sinclair's poem concerns the profound human question of Maori/pakeha relations. It is written in two parts and covers two centuries of New Zealand's recorded history. The first part balances the tones of two "cultures" with a careful use of words effecting an idiom;

The Chief

Although you have floated the land
I will not let it go to sea,
Lest the sea-birds take flight
Since we have no resting place.

The Settler

The land must be opened with sufficient speed,
Sold at a sufficient price,
And the tribes given sufficient faith for salvation
Where nothing is sufficient

The second part employs images as the poet uses the perspective of history and retrospect to treat the moral of the situation;

1948

.....
No people can possess a land,
Where every single sod and stone is strange,
An alien to the blood, who waits to oust
The bone cells, in the crucible of earth.

Sinclair's sympathy and understanding for the Maori people is well-known, and yet the poem condemns neither side in the local land dispute. In one sense the very land coveted by the European for financial reasons and by the Maori for traditional reasons is "...our cross, exotic to our hands." And the acquisitive motivation tells more about values than about existential reality; "For our loyalties are fathered in the mind."

The poem is an example of Sinclair's dimension--historic fact mixed with imaginative and magnanimous understanding and carried to a transcendental reality;

Your fellowship is a new fellowship
And old like a hundred years.

"Waitara" is an important poem as it contains a store of relevant ideas within the confines of poetic form.

Sinclair's earlier poems in Landfall implied a poet's interest in "What is it to be a New Zealander?" It is an old familiar question of identity, but no less a necessary one to answer. In an "in memoriam" article on T.H. Scott, an Auckland teacher killed on a climbing expedition to Mount Cook, Sinclair wrote that Scott "...saw the answer as lying in the formation of an individual's sense of what is "reality" in terms of his local experience."⁷⁷ The writer's task is to make this "reality" a common understanding and this has been the pre-occupation of post-war New Zealand literature; at least until the mid-sixties.

Sinclair reveals his preoccupations in criticism as well as in poetry. In a discussion of Katherine Mansfield he wrote;

We come thus to an enduring theme of New Zealand literature, with which our novelists from Satchell to Sargeson and our poets from Bracken to Brasch have all been concerned in some measure, the isolation of the settler, the recurrent nostalgic theme of exile. It is a colonial theme not because it is unique in the New World, but because colonial conditions emphasize in so many ways the tenuous nature of social bonds. The early migrant to New Zealand, the wealthy at the beginning of this century, the intellectuals of today, all tend to

77 Landfall, No. 54, p. 185.

feel cut off from "society" from Home. ⁷⁸

The "post-war dream" of discovering "Home" has been carried further since Sinclair wrote these words two decades ago, but it is significant that isolation of a geographical, social and intellectual variety became synonymous with the New Zealand experience. The "isolation theme" transcends the colonial to become man in the universe. But the symbolic microcosm can most effectively succeed in the New Zealander living in New Zealand. The theme is as old as Robinson Crusoe or Beowulf, but it has specific reference to Sinclair's imaginative writing. New Zealand is "...a high, silent country..." in which the poet sings "of our youth/ And the fierce gladness of being in the beginning."⁷⁹ The "silence" from a brief history is no disadvantage for intellectual pioneers while the contrast with older lands is marked;

Pastures where sheep graze in a dream of green
 Have known the ripe rye billow
 In the wind; but, not, beneath the grass,
 The ground rise from a tremble to a gigantic tempest--
 Tugged by a molten moon in the globe's core--
 To far towns falling and a rabbit's close scream.
 ("The Shepherd", Landfall, No. 43, p. 235)

Self-analysis was no longer an adolescent enterprise, but instead a factor in self-improvement and autonomy of culture. In his mythological poetry Sinclair muses on self-renewal;

The moa-hunters' feast is done and heavy
 Sleep descended. I cannot hear the song
 They painted in caves in that long-silenced time.
 Here we begin again--but the Muses sang
 When Thrace was young.
 (Landfall, No. 43, p. 234)

78 Landfall, No. 14, p. 137.

79 Ibid., No. 43, p. 235.

Sinclair considered himself "more of a "muse" poet than a "landscape" poet..."⁸⁰ And he consciously attempts an alternative to the poetry of the "South Island Myth":

The first of my own verses to attract any attention, "Waitara" and some others appearing in early numbers of Landfall, I thought of, in part, as repudiating "the South Island myth", which I detected especially in the writings of Curnow, Holcroft, and Brasch, and which revolved around the doctrine that we are strangers in a hostile or indifferent land still mentally resident in Britain. I believed that their sentiments arose from a colonial inferiority complex. ⁸¹

This is a misrepresentation of the poetry of Holcroft, Curnow and Brasch, but it reveals the sentiments that were at play in the minds of many poets until very recently. Sinclair himself has not completely escaped from the landscape.

"Memorial to a Missionary" (Landfall, No. 22, p. 146) has been described as Sinclair's "outstanding work" when considering "his imaginative exploration of the past"⁸² The poem evolves around the story of "Thomas Kendall, 1778-1832, first resident missionary in New Zealand, author of The New Zealanders' First Book (1815), grandfather of the Australian poet, H.C. Kendall." Kendall, much maligned for his morality (or lack of it), set up the first school in New Zealand for Maoris at Rangihoua in 1816.⁸³ The poem is ripe with proper names giving it a question-begging clarity--Cranmer, Calvin, Maui, Hawaiki. But the poetic insight blends effectively with factual material;

80 Doyle, Charles, (editor), op. cit., p. 152.

81 Ibid.

82 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 146.

83 Education, Volume 20, No. Four, 1971, p. 5.

Instructed to speak of God with emphasis
 On sin and its consequences, to cannibals
 Of the evil of sin, he came from father's farm
 The virtuous home, the comfortable chapel,
 The village school, so inadequately armed,
 His mail of morals tested in drawing-rooms,
 Not war, to teach his obscure and pitied pupils.

With parallels to the story of Brebeuf among the Hurons of the Five Nations, Kendall's missionary purpose, cheered "in Clapham" and prayed for "in Lincolnshire", is metamorphosed in the strange new land by Maori people;

In following their minds he found the men
 And reached for a vision past his mother-land,
 Converted by heathen he had come to save.

Sinclair's sympathy and affection for Kendall is the supreme historical judgment of the poem. Kendall ceased to be a "pakeha" to the people he came to understand;

Did he fall through pride of spirit, through arrogance
 Or through humility, not scorning the prayers
 Of savages and their intricate pantheon?
 He lacked the confident pity of his brethren.
 To understand he had to sympathize,
 Then felt, and feeling, fell, one man a breath
 In the human gale of a culture's thousand years.

The frontier symbolism is effective as New Zealand, in Kendall's hands becomes "...Christ's, / New clearing..." where Kendall's "mistake" prevents him from returning "...to teach his countrymen..." It is with such real personae (cf: Glover's fictitious personae) as Kendall that Sinclair "populates Brasch's austere landscape."⁸⁴ and Mason's "hard-assaulted spot".

"The Ballad of Half Moon Bay" is a rare type of writing in New Zealand. Australia's history of ballads and bushrangers

84 Doyle, Charles (editor), op. cit., p. 152.

perhaps had small impact on New Zealand as ballads have played only a minor role in this country's literary history. But Sinclair's ballad translates the Australian bushranger of the outback into a New Zealand "castaway sealer" of New Zealand's 'butback"--the sea. This prototype features in several New Zealand ballads; "David Houston"; "Come All You Tonguers"; or "New Zealand Whales", for example. The comparison between the outback in Australia and the sea around New Zealand refers to an important psychological distinction between the two countries. In Brasch's words, "Continent and island. The idea of the one haunts the Australian imagination as that of the other does the New Zealand imagination."⁸⁵ Brasch concludes that, "because different qualities are evoked by these two ideas", the writing of each country has "been drawn so markedly in different directions." For this reason the ballad is a rare form in New Zealand, and, when it is used, concerns a seafarer rather than a "voyageur" of the interior country. But both aspects centre around the feeling of "extreme isolation."

Sinclair the historian plays his part in "The Ballad of Half Moon Bay." Edward Edwards, a kind of "lower class" Everyman by name, "...fled from a pressgang or a midland slum;" "lived in sin" with a woman (like the missionary Kendall); but cared "for two orphans that seamen left." The pioneer lives in the remotest part of New Zealand, Stewart Island;

Halfmoon Bay was the bottom of the world,
Bitten from the land by the teeth of the pole,
A base for the hunters who tracked the wake
Washed so wide where the bull whales roll.

85 Landfall, No. 29, March 1954, p. 3.

Store for supplies when far from their station,
 Trying-out or recruiting seamen,
 A round of grog or a rest ashore
 Taking turns with the native women.

(Landfall, No. 27, p. 174)

The other characters of the ballad are old salts, tough in stature, with nicknames appropriate to their characters. The tone is reminiscent of Lawson whose visit to New Zealand, according to David McKee Wright, "added to the tang of the gum-leaves something of the salt of the great southern ocean."⁸⁶ While all the major settlements in Australia and New Zealand are on the Pacific, Tasman, or Indian seabords the sea has had a wider wash on the New Zealand imagination than on the Australian. A note describes the ballad as being "based on the literature of the convict and whaling days as well as on oral tradition"⁸⁷ but the genre is rare in New Zealand. Ballads grow from the empirical soil, but New Zealand has always had about it the aura of "a temporary whaling station" from which people emigrate--physically as well as psychologically. Sinclair's ballad reveals in traditional form the insight of a cosmopolitan native, who sees it as an appropriate medium for legendary expression.

Sinclair's love poetry, though obscure, is rhythmically accomplished. The mood of "The Lovers" is fleeting;

O rare and desired, desiring pair,
 Twin parakeets, feathered with tropical fire,
 Tracing your parallels in the air
 To meet in an infinite everywhere

(Landfall, No. 29, p. 20)

86 Lawson, Henry, Poetical Works, Angus and Robertson, (Sydney 1968), p. ix. Another interesting record of Lawson in New Zealand is W.H. Pearson's Henry Lawson Among the Maoris, Reed, (Sydney, 1968).

87 Landfall, No. 27, September 1953, p. 180.

On the other hand "The Sleeping Beauty" has a mystical symbolism reflecting the dream from which;

Sleeper, awake! I bring love's breakfast in.
(Landfall, No. 33, p.17)

The sensuality effects a delicate mood, but the above line is not typical of Sinclair's best poetry--which is generally the historical poetry. Sinclair can write fine love poetry;

And so I came fish-eyed from Eros,
Chaos' child, to the war-god's daughter;
Followed my life-line (by the mountains of sin
And fair Astarte, through a maze
Of persimmon, past lemon lanterns,
Across the lawn) like a silken stream
Where it rose from a fount of love and fell
From the tallest window of my towering dream
And climbed a rope of sleeping hair.
(Landfall, No. 33, p.16)

This is unique in standard and reference. The mood is more of a mythological sensitivity than of a physical experience. Or, one might compare some lines from "Impossible Loves";

How she walks, an incantation of walking,
Through a grove of gods, to a far sistrum,
To hold a drugged moment in time's pain,
One silence in a whispering world...
(Landfall, No. 58, P.122)

with lines from "Notes from the Welfare State";

After a perspiring, preparatory dance
The middle-aged set free their super-egos
In ritual flight, to a Laurentian drum,
Twittering through a forest of empty riggers;
Then wait, in rigid, alcoholic trance,
For a load of goods from a port beyond oblivion,
A consummation guessed at, or a life lost,
Possessing everything but not possessed.
(Landfall, No. 61, p.18)

The reader is returned from the climax of the lovers to the New Zealand reality of rugby and beer. There is the academic tone in Sinclair's poetry of social criticism, but this does

not detract from the engagement implicit in his muse-influenced work. While some of his poetry tends to beg the question of who will "set us free again";

And Mill's majority of happy Jacks
Have pirated the blue-prints of Tocqueville.
Rostow prescribes our economic choices
In the age of mass consumption of high-class trash.
(Ibid., p.19)

Sinclair's accomplishment is the creative realization of certain aspects of the New Zealand experience tempered by a perceptive and intelligent mind. An interesting diversion of Sinclair is his categorizing of "...the vague idea that the New Zealanders were a new branch of the British people."⁸⁸ as the South Island myth.

It is worth noting that almost all the writers whose work expresses this attitude were South Islanders. It is a regional myth, which has little appeal in the North Island, with its monuments to ancient Maori occupation and its denser population. It should also be remarked that this South Island myth has been rejected in recent years by younger men and women who have accepted their roles as writers without worrying unduly about being New Zealand writers. 89

There is little evidence to show that the "monuments to ancient Maori occupation" have had any real effect on the "North Island myth", or that Allen Curnow's life in Christchurch made him an alien in his adopted Auckland, or that the Cook Strait is a cultural division. No good poet ever stamps a Kiwi on his work, but all good poets, from both major islands, seem to be commonly involved in trying to make sense of the New Zealand experience. The trend in recent poetry has been

88 Sinclair, Keith, A History of New Zealand, Penguin, 1969, p.318.

89 Ibid.

in a cosmopolitan direction, but it should not be presumed that this is a North Island instigation. Professor Horsman once commented that Landfall was "a South Island magazine".⁹⁰ Charles Brasch replied, "look at the contributors." The rivalry is healthy, perhaps, but it is notable that the one internationally-available literary quarterly from New Zealand which has succeeded has been a Christchurch-Dunedin venture as far as editing and publication have been concerned. As far as contributions have been concerned it is a national effort with no obvious geographical preoccupations. The "South Island myth", if it ever existed, was the foundation work leading to the literary and cultural autonomy which contemporary writers can help to mature.

There has been talk among ("new writers") of a 'South Island myth', held to be in large part, I understand, Mr. Holcroft's invention; but 'myth', as I have said elsewhere, is a curious term to use for what is simply a way of looking at history, to be judged as such and upon the effectiveness of its expression. 91

These words of Curnow are a fair defence. Sinclair adds dimension to his own "way of looking at history" with the style of a craftsman.

Apart from translations of foreign language poetry, and the poems previously discussed, the work of about eighty New Zealand poets appeared in Landfall under Charles Brasch's editorship. The common characteristic of this work is, in

90 In private conversation with the writer.

91 Quoted by Smithyman in A Way of Saying, p.38.

general, its highly personal quality, often competent, but less significant to the socio-cultural scene. Several of these poets, however, merit discussion as they add dimensions to the poetry of the post-war period. They will be discussed more or less chronologically to show how Landfall expanded the network of poetic contributions.

Hubert Witheford has the capacity to mingle landscape symbolism with visions of the imagination. This enables him to animate his poetic environment with mythological creations. "Again I Come", for example, presents a dream-like mixture of sharp contrasts and metaphoric sensitivity;

Again I come, this many thousandth time
To a strange place where by mind's falling sun
Sleep, my new country, show its mad terrain.

This is the clime of storm and summer-song,
My time's hot heart that fuses in its frame
Memory's first relic and its final trophy.

Here the wild range of memory juts out
From the distorted earth against the sky
Troubled by monstrous and familiar clouds.

Clouds that as shadows on the earth descend,
Shadows to forests change far off from me,
Down leaf-strewn paths into their depths I sink.

(Landfall, No. 3, p.167)

Certainly this is far from great poetry, but it is chronicle poetry revealing the "nature preoccupation" that is a first step to a more mature and sophisticated poetic awareness and expression. The maturity frequently assumes a subjective and introspective preoccupation which makes much New Zealand poetry opaque and obscure. Witheford's sense of frustration is given a universal reference;

From elemental strife within
Come the contending images.

and the situation of existence, far beyond the control of human beings, is interminable;

From polar stress of earth and sky
The sequence of our days proceed.
("Earth and Sky", Landfall, No. 11, p.242)

This poetic landscape is barren. Nature and the forces of the universe are primeval and there is no mention of civilization which, for better or for worse, gives to humanity a history and a story. "Mid Winter" is a depressing poem placing man at the "nadir" of possibility;

Some newness of the heart I would discern
Imaged upon the nadir of the year.

Continuous cold, the palely flashing sun,
The chill white powder on the dark-brown earth

Proclaim to man, dispirited against them,
An ebb more total than his human weakness.

Then may he dream of a despair
In whose still clime such winter-roses bloom

And know a decline purer than his life,
A course for all the ruin in his blood.
(Landfall, No. 17, p.42)

There is a sense of desolation in this verse--a desolation caused by the absence of spirit or belief when winter shrouds the landscape. In a review of Witheford's first collection of verse, Ruth Dallas wrote that "He is more concerned with the meaning that things hold for the mind than with his environment for its own sake..."⁹² Witheford's "sensuous images" and "directness" (to use Miss Dallas' terms) are, however, stimulated by a response to the environment. Elsewhere, George Turner finds that, in Witheford's maturing style;

92 A review of Shadow of the Flame (1942-7 Poems), Landfall No. 17, pp.67-69.

...an object represents something beyond its appearance, something rather more dynamic than the symbolist's beauty, a life which moves perhaps to different rhythms from our own. 93

Such a comment would apply equally to Smithyman and Baxter, among others. It is the point where imagination and idea take over from pure empiricism. R.A. Copland finds no "Creswellian bitterness" in Witheford's increasing dissatisfaction with "this country's special insufficiencies". The poet's "self-imposed exile" in England is caused by "...life itself, the nature of the human predicament, which produces both the aspiration and the despair." 94

Witheford is an adequate rather than a brilliant poet. His honesty is part of a deep sense of bewilderment which drives him to the centre of Europe where he finds no answer. His verse is not empty structure but rather "...it is as if one were invited...to participate in painful but obscure mysteries whose inner purport is known only to the poet-priest himself." 95 But Witheford does not know, and seems more uncertain of the meaning of life than his contemporaries.

Life Witheford, Ruth Dallas appeared in the first volume of Landfall. A native of Southland (now resident in Dunedin) she discovers her poetic truth in the structure of a familiar landscape;

Once I thought the land I had loved and known
Lay curled in my inmost self; musing alone

93 Review of The Falcon Mask (New Zealand Poets 2), The Pegasus Press. Landfall, No. 22, p. 154.

94 Review of The Lightning Makes a Difference, Paul's Book Arcade. Landfall, No. 65, p.77.

95 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 144.

In the quiet room I unfolded the folded sea,
 Unlocked the forest and the lonely tree,
 Hill and mountain valley beach and stone,
 All these, I said, are here and exist in me.
 ("Deep in the Hills", Landfall, No. 3, p.185)

The statement of this sonnet is simple, yet profound in meaning. Dallas is not an exile in an alien land. She has lived and absorbed to the stage where the land "acts" in the sense that it is symbiotic with the human beings which inhabit it. McCormick writes that in Dallas poetry;

Nature is neither hostile nor friendly...it has
 its existence apart from man, it is indifferent,
 and it is always changing. 96

And yet,

I could weep for these autumn mountains; skin and bone,
 Deep-wrinkled, hollow-eyed, burned by the sun,
 Old women who wait for a death that never comes.
 ("Autumn Landscape", Landfall, No. 3, p.186)

The personification of this nature "apart" is hardly "indifference." It flows in the blood of the poet because it is basic to the mechanism of reality;

So much has happened here in root and sap
 The space between the veins of hands and leaves
 Has widened; trees from childhood only hinder.
 ("Entering Beech Forest", Landfall, No. 8, p.247)

Dallas poetry shows living creatures and geography in sharp relief, and tempers them with an imaginative perspective. She creates a vital historic perspective;

All that once was here for ever seems
 Hurrying away to be a tale
 Told on a sunny doorstep, like the tales
 Old men tell of vanished bush and mill,
 That only children listen to and ponder.
 ("The World's Centre", Landfall, No.12, p.305)

Life, death, nostalgia, meditation, and expression align with concrete images in such poems as "The Sea",

Bone with my bone is every abandoned shell;
 Calm the water lies as in a well
 In open pools along the unresting shore;
 In hollowed bone I hear the seas roar
 Telling of what is past and still to pass
 A voice among voices like the voice of grass.
 (Landfall, No. 30, p.92)

And when the landscape is crowded with the inevitable monuments of man's occupation there is always the knowledge that,

North or south, there are days
 When to stay in the city is to seem
 Inanimate as a bolt, a nut or a screw.
 The land calls me, as to others the sea calls.
 From the country I return stored
 Like a jar with a distillation
 Of field and peaceful sky.
 ("South and North of the City", Landfall, No.80
 p.357)

Ruth Dallas, as far as her Landfall poems represent her as an artist, accepts her situation with an embracing understanding of her surroundings. She is neither optimistic nor pessimistic, but the significance of her poetry is the simple personal statement of contentment. She accepts her position--with a reservation;

I am fastened to the earth,
 Travelling.
 Where?
 ("Night", Landfall, No. 80, p.360)

W.H. Oliver is, like Keith Sinclair, a historian/poet. He assumed the editorship of Landfall for two issues in 1957 (numbers 42 & 43) while Charles Brasch was overseas. Oliver is a logical metaphysical poet for whom life, death, and the universe are main subjects cast in a naturalistic mould. For example;

All else was made but the dark. In the original
Fore-part of time there was chaos and no light
Marrying waters. Earth, air and the stars,
The magical sun itself, were waiting their birth.
("The uncreated Dark", Landfall, No. 8, p.256)

Oliver's preoccupation with sleep suggests a dreamworld of
shrouded images where reality is metamorphosed into a supra-
reality;

Slow walker, when your steps have gone to rest,
And all your body's stress merged with the firm
Shape of the earth below you, night will yearn
Like a star's shadow to your dreaming breast,
And every essence be your minutes guest.
("Night-Walker on the Edge", Landfall, No.8, p.257)

There is a surrealistic tone about "The excellent death of
flowers, the rotten bough/ That suddenly drops and breaks the
forest sleep." It is an effective image of "Man with the pride
of stallions..." living and moving amid "eccentric forces" and
under an "unimagined heaven." Oliver's world is a Tolkienesque
landscape, suggestive only of New Zealand in its return to
"the beginning."

"From 'The Tempest'" deals with the pre-storm of
Shakespeare's drama. The dream of unreality strikes Prospero;

Awakened by the island's carol
He who could remember the salt wave
Pressing his eyeballs, now did not know
Whether the pasture and the populous trees
Were a new heaven or the deep sea's floor.
(Landfall, No. 15, p.189)

Oliver's dream universe is the source of his visions;

Then in my dream I saw an attic grace
Naked and warm asleep, not grieved or grown,
Nor held with any lock of love or pain.
My hand's touch chilled her coursing blood; her face
Twisted and still within a prism of ice,
Became a crystal where a fate was run;
Lakeside and tree arose, a shape of man,
Pictured within that cracked and cloudy glass.
("In a World of Ice", Landfall, No.22, p.141)

Descriptive words like "prism", "ice", "crystal", and "glass", testify to the mental picture in the poet's mind. The first line, reminiscent perhaps of Bunyan and Sargeson, presents a situation of supra-real images. Images of colour are, interestingly, absent, but there is no lack of quality in this "black and white" world.

An extract from a longer poem, "A view of The City", specifies an urban New Zealand context;

If I should need to make a paradise
Some part of Wellington should be included,
For praise belongs to that most impermanent city
Lodged on a flat shore between two headlands,
Ambling away from the tide over hill and gully
Where we walked night and day...
(Landfall, No. 31, p.165)

This "impermanence" built proudly on an earthquake fault prepares for the glamour of lost cities like El Dorado and Atlantis;

The image is always constant: a city sailing
Perpetually to a lost land of pleasure...

Oliver's later Landfall poems, "No More Pastoral Poetry", "Oxford", or "Homage to J.H. Newman", are more academic and lose the spontaneity of his earlier, more naive work. Perhaps this is due to Oliver's recognition of the city as a stimulant for his poetry.

According to E.H. McCormick, Basil Dowling "belongs to the generation of the thirties rather than to their successors."⁹⁷ Like other Landfall contributors, Charles Spear and W. Hart-Smith Dowling share "the poetic terrain of Canterbury". While much of their poetry is nature poetry influenced by the Canterbury landscape there is evidence that the landscape is no longer a

97 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p. 148.

cause for loneliness. Instead, the landscape becomes a stimulus for personal introspection and reflection on life. Dowling's respect for Ursula Bethell⁹⁸ in a poem "Extreme Unction" (Landfall, No. 8, p.275) testifies to the centrality that Christchurch once enjoyed and which provided Landfall with influential contributors. But the urban influence of Auckland and Wellington had some effect on the sensibility of such South Island poets as Dowling. Allen Curnow writes,

Not many of these poets have placed themselves at so many removes from the subject of their own land, their physical environment. It has provided, as we have seen, argument and objective stuff for much good verse. And while they have tried to domesticate what Basil Dowling calls "that raw harsh landscape in my memory", they have also felt the pressures of the growing cities where most of them live... 99

Charles Spear has been described by Curnow as a poet of "conscious elegance". Spear exemplifies the difficulty of placing poets in regional "schools" because,

His modern subjects are deliberately and precisely distanced; atom bombs are ornamental, but may be triggered the next moment, somewhere off-stage. A romantic historicity is also part of his vision but it is offset by his own special brand of anti-glamour. 100

Spear's single contribution to Landfall, "In Time Like Glass" is esoteric in its beauty of expression,

Ovals of opal on dislusted seas,
Skyshine, and all that indolent afternoon

98 In Landfall No. 8 (Notes) Brasch recorded that Ursula Bethell had taken a "keen interest in the long-discussed project for the establishment of this journal."

99 Curnow, Allen, The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse, Paul, (Auckland, 1960), p.55.

100 Ibid., p. 54.

No clash of arms, no shouting on the breeze:
Only the reeds moaned soft or high their empty rune.

The paladins played chess and did not care,
The crocus pierced the turf with random dart.
Then twanged a cord. Through space, from Oultremer,
That other arrow veered towards your heart.
("Memoriter", Landfall, No. 5, p.21)

McCormick described poets who wrote like this as being among "the ranks of the South Island metaphysicals." While such a description may be true of Spear, it is hard to apply it to Hart-Smith who writes in the poem "Burning Off",

Don't heed them. Those fires are tame
burning over the hill. The tethered dogs
lie with chain slack, sleeping. The smoke
is invisible, it is something in the air
makes all day's colours sombre, a fragrance
subtle, nameless. And you may have noticed
the early stars are not of the purest water
and do not twinkle. The grass, the grass is dry,
the roof-metal shines like steel
under a paring of moon. Like a procession
of torchbearers going on some pilgrimage,
the lines of flame on the hilltop.
Leave the door open. Come inside.
The night grows cold. Light the lamp.
(Landfall, No. 25, p.18)

Landfall's early poems reflected the centrality of Christchurch in the literary realm, Brasch edited Landfall from Dunedin and was more likely, in the early stages, to select contributors close at hand. But, as time progressed and Landfall gained its reputation as a national magazine, the influence of the urban North Island made its impact on Landfall.

Alistair Campbell and Pat Wilson, both of Wellington, responded to the "poetic stimulus of the capital" (McCormick). McCormick described Pat Wilson's poem "Staying at Ballisodare" as a work of "superb virtuosity". The poem is dedicated to Alistair Campbell.

And now a fortnight here I've stayed
 At Ballisodare, and these rhymes made.
 High Knocknarea I climbed last noon--
 The wind up there plays a draughty tune
 And romantic Yeats is dead and gone,
 And the great queens, and the god-like men--
 All my old ones. Goodbye, goodbye, then.
 (Landfall, No. 32, p.268)

Compared to Hart-Smith's "Burning Off", the climb, unlike the fires "burning over the hill", is a poet's search for subjective reality. The realism of Hart-Smith's poem is replaced by the more abstract sense of Wilson's.

Alistair Campbell presents only two poems in Landfall, an elegy to a friend killed in the Alps and "Against Te Rauparaha". The latter poem provides a strong imagery tempered with the poet's understanding of human nature,

The records all agree
 you were a violent, a pitiless man,
 treacherous as an avalanche
 poised above a sleeping village.
 Small, hook-nosed as a Roman,
 haughty, with an eagle's glance,
 Caligula and Commodus
 were of your kin.

Campbell's powerful simile, and the final line "Madman, leave me alone!" purge the violence of the Maori warrior with the poet's voice. It can only be regretted that Campbell did not publish more in Landfall, but it is possible that North Island poets preferred other media for their work.

Charles Doyle, an Englishman of Irish parentage, was also a Wellingtonian. His poetry is often strange,

The lucid Summer
 Writes her history
 On the baroque or
 Rococo sky
 (Landfall, No. 26, p. 107)

sometimes blatantly New Zealand,

We waken for the thirteenth Sunday morning
 Of anno nineteen hundred and fifty six
 In the Antipodes (one before Easter Sunday).
 From thoughts' unmapped antipodes returning
 Homeward to the familiar, the more mundane
 And minor isthmus of our daily living;
 From deep night; from the wind's and minds' antics.
 ("Sunday Morning", Landfall, No. 40, p.317)

McCormick describes Doyle as "a post-war migrant who traces... his experience of social and spiritual adaptation."¹⁰¹ Charles Doyle, who appeared ten times in Landfall, is aware of the New Zealand myth of isolation, but his residence in Wellington makes him more an urban poet than a rural poet.

Louis Johnson contributed ten poems to Landfall under Brasch despite his editorial disagreement with Landfall's editor. Curnow describes Johnson as

...the irritable poet of New Zealand suburbia, who might wish to draw the curtains tight and set the clock to Greenwich Village mean time, but the Cook Strait gales keep rattling the windows...¹⁰²

Curnow's observant comment about Johnson's adoption of the "village voice" and American themes might be compared with Johnson's sense of Wellington's cosmopolitanism in the New Zealand context. Without a doubt, Johnson's urbanity has contributed much to the organic development of post-war New Zealand poetry. An example of Johnson's urban consciousness might be the poem "Artist"

He dreamed of spires and sudden miracles
 Of brilliant portals breaking his black slum,

101 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p.145.

102 Curnow, Allen, (Penguin), op. cit., p.55.

And all the sleeping night would burn awake
 Knowing the passionate fever of his fancy.
 (Landfall, No. 8, p.252)

The subjective, reflective, personal mood of Johnson's poetry fulfils the quest that Kendrick Smithyman found to be common to New Zealand poets,

Among the most obvious and most forceful of stresses evident in this country's writing are those very notions, the understanding of empirical reality and the quest for value ideas tenable in our situation. 103

The "quest for value ideas" is made through intensely subjective writing symptomatic of urban writing elsewhere. But the New Zealand poet can still balance his subjectivity with the landscape, a landscape which continues to predominate over the New Zealand urban experience. C.K. Stead, for example, writes empirically and subjectively in "Night Watch in the Tararuas",

No death more vivid than that waking, yet
 In rock and thorn, night-settled dust, a land
 Watered by one uncertain stream that's brought
 From the white, religious mountain, I understand
 The choice we make binding ourselves to love:
 And know that though death breeds in love's strange bones,
 Its fading flesh lives warmer than the stones.
 (Landfall, No. 31, p.153)

And David Elworthy, a poet of Stead's age, writes undaunted about the classic sheep station,

There is not a breath of wind.
 The shearing shed stands winter-still and silent.
 Soon the dogs will begin, and the snuffling sheep
 Will rattle their feet on the hard dry concrete:
 A kitchen voice will crackle from the cookhouse,
 And the sun extend long fingers into frost
 And singe in white triumph the last reluctant shadows.
 (Landfall, No. 31, p.164)

So, while urban poetry and the subjective preoccupation are

103 Smithyman, Kendrick, op. cit., p.11.

typical of post-war New Zealand poetry, there is still the older pastoral tradition of landscape writing.

M.K. Joseph of Auckland, who appeared four times in Landfall, wrote "The Lovers and the City" in 1953. This poem is probably the most significant urban poem to have appeared in Landfall, and is described by McCormick as "not merely a highly accomplished poem but also a work of scholarship."¹⁰⁴ Joseph expresses a sense of personal and social identity in the section of the poem entitled "Song of the City and the River",

I am stone I am tree I am shadow
Walls of my towers will tell my pedigree
And men who made me: I am not lonely.
(Landfall, No. 27, p. 171)

The urban environment tempered with the fluid motion of the river is Joseph's image,

Sing waters sing
Fall man and tower
Singing and falling
River and city.
(Landfall, No. 27, p. 172)

Such a synthesis of urban and nature symbolism has become more characteristic of New Zealand poets writing since the war. But while the modern trend is urban and cosmopolitan, reflecting the universalism of contemporary young (and not-so-young) New Zealand poets, the landscape and regionalism are not entirely forgotten.

Fleur Adcock's Landfall poem "The Lover", whose very title reflects a subjective element similar to Joseph's in "The Lovers and the City", expresses the urban-oriented momentum,

104 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p.146.

The climax never came; he might have cooled
 His flesh utterly in the sudden river,
 Or found long satisfaction in a haven
 Made solitary by hills; but gradually
 The challenging lust ebbed back unfulfilled.
 Now, set apart, he lets the city's plan
 Absorb him calmly; only now and then
 Stares at the harbour, at the vivid sea.
 (Landfall, No. 39, p.195)

And, Gordon Challis' "The Shadowless Man" inhabits the
 night streets of the city; streets lit through the hydroelectric
 power of a distant lake,

You have to be quick to stamp out your own shadow.

So first I got to know my shadow's ductile tricks
 Of transformation: jet-black dwarf, diluted giant--
 Sometimes both at once--rotated slowly
 Like clock hands as I passed
 Beyond the last street lamp toward the next one,
 Keeping double reckoning. Every time I pounced
 My shadow dodged adroitly, ducked or swerved aside.
 If only I could see one jump ahead, if only
 I could beat his perfect sense of timing!

Then one day I used my lethal steel-stud boots
 And caught him napping, flat-footed in full sunlight,
 Got him good and hard right in the guts. He disappeared,
 Went underground, a goner and good riddance.

People said: "See here this man without a shadow,
 A man through whom the light shines, lies all around him,
 A man more pure than rain and more transparent."

I however fear another explanation:
 What if I have not fully stamped him out?
 Perhaps his absence is a mere delaying...
 What if the lakes are low, the power failing,
 And it is my own night that keeps him waiting?
 (Landfall, No. 50, p.114)

Challis acknowledges that man is contingent on nature for
 power to live, but his concern in this poem is personal identity
 and subjective vision amid "my own night"

A final example of the modern trend towards the urban
 context in New Zealand poetry might be Peter Bland's "Poem at

Oriental Bay", published in Landfall in 1963.

A man-made beach, a human tip
 trucked each summer with city sand;
 (gulls like enamel, transistors, towels,
 patching the perved bay), here, we unpack
 our borrowed bones...lying duly vacant
 among bikinied buttocks and bare hills.

(Landfall, No. 66, p.140)

There is an important conclusion to be drawn from these selective quotations. New Zealand poetry since the war has adopted an urban consciousness without ignoring the landscape. The landscape and pastoral concerns are made relevant where they touch on the urban concerns. But, above all, the urban consciousness has developed an increasingly subjective style in the poetry so that the sense of identity is not one of being a "New Zealander" so much as one of being a man, "shadowless" or "lover". The rural and urban realms harmonize the individual's sense of identity in two contexts. First, the local experience of lakes and "bare hills" or "street lamps" and "man-made" beaches, and, second, the individual, spiritual, timeless sense of being human. Within these two contexts and beyond exists the new universalism in New Zealand poetry, a universalism never alienated from the immediacy of local experience.

When Colin Newbury writes,

Our destiny ends here;
 Our world is wide as a man can plough in a day.

(Landfall, No. 33, p.8)

he recognizes his limitations, not simply as a New Zealander, but as a man. And Iain Lonie in "Letter From A Distance" sees the universal spirit in a "local" experience,

Though our desire should never know that bed
 Where limbs' brief touch flares forth a world of light

Whose substance swings beyond the envious waters,

Still must I search, till in a narrower bed,
Unfound my fancied world, your proper light,
I lose both in death's separating waters.

(Landfall, No. 23, p.182)

These ideas are not exclusive to the post-war years. They are simply symptomatic of the era.

Landfall's contribution to poetry in the post-war years is measureless. The high standard of contributions might be partly due to the poets' security of having a reliable vehicle of publication to which to submit their work. In the later years of Brasch's editorship an increasing number of younger poets was published. Apart from the frequent contributors, thirty two poets appeared only once; fifteen appeared twice; and four appeared three times in the first eighty numbers of Landfall.

The foregoing discussion cannot hope to be conclusive in identifying trends, but an attempt has been made to illustrate certain developments in post-war New Zealand poetry. Most of the quotations are taken from Landfall, and the whole spectrum of these quotations is generally representative of all types and styles of poetry being written in New Zealand. Most major poets appeared in Landfall, and several other poets probably gained a reputation by publishing in the leading literary quarterly in New Zealand. As has been mentioned, there was a shortage of work by younger poets, but the most successful of those who published in other magazines such as Poetry Yearbook usually found their way to publication in Landfall. Landfall poetry, therefore, can be considered as representative of the post-war era when the "double standard" was abolished as a

premise in New Zealand literary criticism, and the term "New Zealand literature" could be used without apology or explanation. Landfall proved that poetry in New Zealand had achieved a new universalism, and this poetry reflected the fact that New Zealand was becoming more urban, if not metropolitan.

LANDFALL & THE SHORT STORY IN NEW ZEALAND

On New Year's Day in 1936 a former Governor-General of New Zealand sent a message to open the New Zealand Authors' Week (April, 1936). Viscount Bledisloe wrote, from Lydney Park, England,

I have read with profound delight of the wise decision to initiate a New Zealand Authors' Week. Believing, as I do, that there is no more fertile soil, no more congenial atmosphere throughout the British Empire, in which to foster the vigorous and healthy growth of true culture in its many manifestations than the lovely, God-favoured land of Ao-Tea-Roa, the scheme has my whole-hearted sympathy, accompanied by the fervent hope that it may give a salutary fillip to the love of good literature among all classes in the Dominion and much-needed encouragement to those of her intellectually and spiritually endowed sons and daughters who are best able to provide their compatriots--and indeed the whole English-speaking race--with invigorating and inspiring mental pabulum.

Bledisloe's patronizing attitude, by most accounts, was sadly appropriate to the consideration of New Zealand fiction in the mid-thirties. There had been few significant achievements, and no great ones, up to this point, and New Zealand critics were the first to agree with the Englishman that the cultural soil was "fertile" but unharvested. E.H. McCormick wrote,

The growth of culture in a new soil is unpredictable; it follows no established sequence, is subject to no universal law. All one can assert with certainty is that it requires time for germination and the indispensable seeds of talent. Thus at the close of the nineteen-twenties there was no obvious sign that the years ahead were to be the most fertile in New Zealand's literary history. ¹

And Alan Mulgan, writing under the journalistic pseudonym "Quivis", was equally unwilling to predict a New Zealand

¹ McCormick, E.H., New Zealand Literature: A Survey, Oxford University Press, (London, 1959), p.108.

literary renaissance in 1939,

The corpus of New Zealand literature over a century is large enough, but not a great deal of it is of the highest quality. Nor, if we are to be honest, are there signs of any great and genuine improvement. 2

The most conclusive study of New Zealand fiction up to 1939 was made by E.M. Smith. The study of fiction was made "...from 1862 to the present time with some account of its relation to the national life and character."³ Smith discussed development of fiction, themes from history, satire, the Maori in fiction, women writers, and the influence of criticism, but he was forced to conclude that,

No honest critic, however enthusiastic and anxious to praise New Zealand, can pretend that the country has yet produced writings qualifying as "literature". Looked upon as a whole, they exhibit a mediocrity which, while it is disappointing to the student hopeful of discovering some hitherto neglected genius, is only to be expected because of the geographical and social conditions of the country and their influence upon the temperament and outlook of the people. 4

Smith was aware that the occupational exigencies of a developing country precluded cultural pursuits.

Pre-war observers of New Zealand fiction stood at a cross-roads in New Zealand's cultural development. As they looked back over the first hundred years since Waitangi there seemed little to praise. But these observers, like Viscount Bledisloe, sensed that invigoration and inspiration would improve a bleak

2 From an article in the Evening Post (29 April, 1939) entitled "What About It?: New Zealand Literature: Can Anything Be Done?"

3 Smith, E.M. A History of New Zealand Fiction, A.H. & A.W. Reed, (Wellington, 1939), frontispiece.

4 *Ibid.*, p.10.

picture. At the time, Alan Mulgan had a definitive answer to the problem;

The main thing, in my opinion, voiced over and over again, is to have a suitable medium for serial publication of fiction and regular contributions of short stories and sketches. There is no suitable medium here at present and some say there is no chance of such a periodical paying its way. I am not so sure. There is a good reading public in New Zealand, if the founder of a periodical, weekly preferred, would only go for it and not try to run a high-brow affair that cannot possibly acquire a circulation sufficient to carry it along and pay contributors something for their work. It is useless to look for the wealthy patron; people with money are seldom literary-minded. If those who are genuinely concerned for the future of New Zealand literature could cooperate...to run a periodical of wide appeal, it might be done. 5

To some extent, Tomorrow fulfilled the role of periodical, but Tomorrow was predominantly political in orientation.⁶ Also, some of the smaller publications discussed in the first chapter touched on Mulgan's wish, but the fulfilment of the wish was to come in 1947 with the establishment of Landfall and the quarterly publication of fiction.

With the same kind of hindsight that recognizes R.A.K. Mason as New Zealand's "first wholly original, unmistakably gifted poet", E.H. McCormick sees retrospectively that, in the twenties and thirties,

The requisite talent was present, as we now realize; for the most part, however, it had revealed itself as yet only in obscure places or lay dormant, awaiting the necessary conditions for growth. The nature of these conditions, again, cannot be simply or certainly

5 Alan Mulgan in the Evening Post, 29 April, 1939.

6 In the introduction to Sargeson's Collected Stories (1964) Dr. Bill Pearson notes that Tomorrow "had published about thirty sketches" by Sargeson by the end of 1939.

stated. It is perhaps enough to say that the most fruitful literary decade of New Zealand's first century began with a depression and ended with a war. In a few agitated years a handful of men and women produced a body of work which, in an intimate and organic sense, belonged to the country as none of its previous writings had done. They created the nucleus of a literature where there had existed before only isolated achievement.⁷

It was this nucleus of the nineteen-thirties, formed most significantly by Frank Sargeson, which became the "fertile soil" that gave Landfall its content after the war.

The thirties were, therefore, New Zealand's "most fruitful literary decade: and there were evident signs of "great and genuine improvement" especially in poetry. The birth of New Zealand "fiction" (as opposed to either "English fiction written in New Zealand" or colourful documentary prose) might be traced to 1935 when Frank Sargeson's "modest and deceptively inconsequential sketches appeared with any frequency."⁸ Dr. Pearson explains that,

Before Mr. Sargeson, those writers born into the imaginative desert of pre-depression New Zealand and unable to afford the release of expatriation, available to Katherine Mansfield and (temporarily) to Jane Mander, had been able to accommodate themselves to their situation only by finding expression in free-lance or spare-time journalism, book reviews and the uncertain recognition of an occasional magazine story, and, if⁹ they were lucky enough, in books published in London.

And, while pointing out the contingencies of leisure and publication which plagued imaginative fiction writers in New Zealand, Dr. Pearson notes the crucial change in attitude that

7 McCormick, E.H., op. cit., p.108.

8 Sargeson, Frank, Collected Stories, Paul, (Auckland 1964), p.7.

9 Ibid., p.8.

was taking place;

A newer generation of writers, driven by the depression to question the rigid but hollow orthodoxies of their society, was conscious of an outlook distinct from that of London, and was no longer content to see it either as their spiritual Hawaiki or as their spiritual Mecca. 10

This new generation of writers,¹¹ most notably (in terms of this discussion of Landfall fiction) Ted Middleton, Phillip Wilson, Maurice Duggan, Roderick Finlayson, and Maurice Shadbolt, found an increasing interest in their work on the part of a significant, though small, New Zealand audience. All the short story writers of the post-war period who achieved a standard of excellence appeared once, or more often, in Landfall. But, even with Landfall's soliciting of short stories and encouragement to writers through payment and prestige of publication, fiction writers faced difficulties and frustrations. In 1956 Charles Brasch, after announcing a Landfall-sponsored prose award, observed,

Gifted young writers in New Zealand turn to poetry rather than to prose at present. If young poets are not exactly as thick as blackberries, they are more plentiful than writers of prose; they also write better, in general, than their contemporaries who work in prose. And they are more various: they are not afraid to be their high-spirited, eccentric, inventive selves, while too much of the prose now being written exudes a tired smell of orthodoxy, a dull, spiritless, conforming sameness.

(Landfall, No. 37, p.3)

Brasch agreed with Bill Pearson that "spare-time journalism"

10 Ibid.

11 In 1953, in Landfall, No. 25, several "new generation" writers praised Sargeson's influence. They were, David Ballantyne, John Reece Cole, James Courage, Dan Davin, (Erik de Mauny), Maurice Duggan, Roderick Finlayson, Janet Frame, A.P. Gaskell, G.R. Gilbert, Bruce Mason, O.E. Middleton, Bill Pearson, Helen Shaw, Greville Texidor, and Phillip Wilson.

and the "uncertain recognition" of the pre-war years was partly to blame for the lack of good fiction;

It derives in part from that rough western equivalent to socialist realism, making its bow to Hemingway, which was popular in the thirties, and in part from the reportage adopted by many writers during the war, a valuable form of art at its best, but often no more than muddy journalism. Its staple, certainly, is everyday experience.
(Landfall, No. 37, p.3)

The Landfall prose award was "intended to draw notice to the state of a depressed industry, and to offer it some little encouragement."

There is no doubt that Landfall was the vanguard, in 1947, of New Zealand fiction both in its publication of short stories (where no other medium of real note existed) and in its reviews of novels. Publications like Book had short story numbers, but published little or no criticism. Apart from Landfall's reviews and articles there was very little fiction criticism until the fifties and sixties when fiction became a major cultural concern. There was, in 1939, E.M. Smith's history of fiction, and in 1951 John Gries presented an as yet unpublished doctorate thesis to the University of Auckland entitled "An Outline of Prose Fiction in New Zealand." But the breakthrough in fiction criticism came in 1959 when E.H. McCormick published his historic survey of New Zealand literature, and, in 1961, when Professor Joan Stevens published her important critical work The New Zealand Novel (1860-1960) (since revised to 1965). These works, together with many introductions to prose collections, and an increasing number of critical articles on fiction, changed the situation of New Zealand fiction once and for all. At last

novelists and short story writers had achieved a status equal to that of the poets, and New Zealand literature was a fact instead of a fiction.

The following discussion of Landfall fiction does not attempt to investigate short stories from the point of view of their relevance as an art form. Nor does it try to provide an exhaustive examination of all short stories and all short story writers that appeared in Landfall. Instead, this discussion is designed to illustrate the social attitudes and cultural awareness inherent in a few Landfall stories. The Landfall stories of three major writers (Sargeson, Middleton and Duggan) are discussed in some detail since these writers can be regarded as outstanding in terms of both New Zealand culture and literature in general. And, as in the case of C.K. Stead, a single story will be discussed when it is regarded as an item of considerable importance to the New Zealand socio-cultural context. The sociological/intellectual approach to Landfall's short stories seems to be a valid one because Landfall's aims were extra-literary, as are the aims of this thesis.

An important proponent of the sociological approach to imaginative literature is Professor Robert Chapman of Auckland. In his often-discussed Landfall article, "Fiction And The Social Pattern", Professor Chapman investigated "some implications of recent N.Z. writing." The article, written in February 1952, was "an extended version of an address delivered to the N.Z. University

Students' Association Congress in January 1952." Professor Chapman emphasised the importance of a sociological approach to creative writing in a country like New Zealand;

The fact that the writer elucidates the (social) pattern by writing of it at the same time as he depends on the recognition of the pattern to elucidate his own work does not simply convert the contemporary writers into pioneer sociologists. But the slow emergence of colonial cultures into self-consciousness, when compared with the more exactly established patterns of Europe, requires a body of criticism which recognizes and elaborates this additional sociological context and function of the writer here.

(Landfall, No. 19, p.227)

This comment, made after the Writers' Conference in Christchurch (1951), revealed Chapman's personal wish that critics should "be interested in literature while professionally occupied with the analysis of society in some aspect or other." Chapman does not imply the superiority of sociological criticism of fiction over aesthetic criticism. Instead he recognizes "the need to explore the standpoint of sociological criticism."

So each author is driven to be his own sociologist, patiently observing the unrecognized majority pattern as well as the minor variations of which there will be all too few. For the New Zealand pattern is of a piece. Place New Zealand society behind the hierarchical time-cut fretwork of English society and its lower middle class would nearly cover all our variety with some allowance for the middle class (our upper few) and the exceptional, the man alone, the unfortunates who have fallen through the New Zealand pattern. ...And if fiction here sounds like a report it may be that the reader's mind selects out what there is in it of report because that report has not been made elsewhere and is needed.

(Landfall, No. 25, p.30)

Chapman makes two points that are vital to the understanding

of post-war New Zealand fiction.¹² First, he identifies the unique opportunity and obligation of the short story writer (and novelist) to observe the unique characteristics of New Zealand society, and, second, he emphasizes the need that such observation by creative writers be reported to New Zealanders. Social experience, therefore, becomes the stimulus for the writing of fiction, and creative writers earn recognition as interpreters of the social pattern.

Chapman boldly accepts the direct influence of society on the writer in New Zealand who experienced both a depression and a war, and was still young enough, in the post-war years, to become a pioneer short story writer.

The overturn in social conditions broke up the crust of complacency, allowing artists to see into what lay beneath. At the same time the disturbed conditions upset the pattern of normal lives and made some men, who might otherwise have taken a more usual course, into artists or apprentice artists forced to look below that broken crust.

(Landfall, No. 25, p.28)

These pioneer artists faced the challenge of the new medium of the short story, and it is no wonder that the first successful pioneer, Frank Sargeson, was so eagerly received by his contemporaries.

But there remained the question as to how the medium of the short story was to be effectively used to convey the artists' visions of life beneath the "broken crust". A study

12 At the beginning of "Fiction And the Social Pattern" Chapman says that "...possibly it is not too much to say that the bulk of considerable fiction produced here (leaving aside Katherine Mansfield) has been printed since 1946, and undoubtedly has been printed since 1940..." He recognizes the post-war years as a new stage in the development of New Zealand literature.

of Sargeson's Landfall stories will help to answer this question, but, before that study, another of Chapman's observations becomes most relevant;

When my review of Sargeson's "That Summer" was written in 1947 (Landfall, No. 3) it seemed to me then, and reviewing and reading other New Zealand fiction has confirmed me in the impression, that the writer here must as a first step achieve the illusion of realism; must detect and present what would be taken for a photograph of reality by an audience which has neither an album nor so much as a snap.

(Landfall, No. 25, p.31)

Further on in "Fiction and the Social Pattern" Chapman observes that "the bulk of New Zealand fiction has had nothing of the esoteric or cryptic about it." But, despite the implied simplicity of this writing, "it is ignored by the public or resisted quite as much as if it had been thrown down from the highest of ivory towers."

The reason is obvious enough. The more clearly the writer produces the illusion of reality, the more exactly he probes for the nerve ends of life here, the less likely he is to be read as long as a great many of his potential public are trying to forget, to ignore, to cover their defeats. Against the intensity of the creative writer's exposure of what lies beneath the crust of everyday is pitted the full conservative strength of the pattern. Where it is not ignored the clinical report of the writer on the state of his patient is answered by the charge that the writer is perverse and unhealthy in mind for having noticed anything amiss.

(Landfall, No. 25, p.53-54)

The New Zealand writer, therefore, loses on two fronts. First, he cares sufficiently about his environment to see its faults, its puritanism, its self-righteousness, and its hopes, and he cares enough to write about it in vernacular terms. Second, when the writer dares to criticise his New Zealand countrymen

he runs the risk of banishment from their minds or open hostility to his ideas.

An example of a writer who dared to criticise his society is Bill Pearson, whose article "Fretful Sleepers" appeared in Landfall in 1952 (No. 23) and also in Landfall Country (1962). The article is highly critical of "New Zealand behaviour" and apathy towards social change and improvement. Pearson comments on the "realism" mentioned by Chapman in "Fiction and the Social Pattern".

In the New Zealand metaphysic reality is something unpleasant and ugly and though we protect our women and children from it, we know in the long run it is unavoidable.

(Landfall, No. 23, p.216)

And Pearson agrees with Chapman that, as far as the writer is concerned, the achievement of the "illusion of reality" in literature is the best way to give substance to fiction.

So there is an aching need for art in our country...But we need an art to expose ourselves to ourselves, explain ourselves to ourselves, see ourselves in a perspective of place and time.

(Landfall, No. 23, p.212)

But, as Pearson states so honestly, "There is a dimension of experience the New Zealander does not know. Because he is afraid of that accursed self of his that might get off-side of his norm-ridden society." The reason, according to Pearson, is that New Zealand has not broken the umbilical cord with European culture;

...we are a cultural colony of Europe and always will be: the importation of our culture has always meant an accompanying unreality. The expectation of unreality has been confirmed by popular fiction, films and one-act plays. No artist can work without an audience willing to co-operate; if he is to be honest his audience must be honest; they must be prepared to speculate about themselves. This is something New Zealanders will not do.

(Landfall, No. 23, p.212)

It is the aversion to self-appraisal that causes Bill Pearson to call his fellow New Zealanders (from faraway London!) the "fretful sleepers." These are people who "fret" about upholding the social norm while they are "asleep" to cultural "reality". The "implications for the artist" of such indifference might be akin to those difficulties which faced Brebeuf and his brethren among the hostile Huron Indians of Canada;

For us who are trained in a sophisticated self-conscious tradition of art it is very difficult (to communicate) because the audience we would like to reach will never read us even if we were to start back with folk-tales...But there is no other way if we hope to create anything that is not like so much else in New Zealand a makeshift but something our grandsons will thank us for. Some sense of isolation is inevitable, some detachment and discrimination, but that is the occupational hazard of every artist and especially of the novelist who must always be, so long as there are conflicts within his society, something of a spy in enemy territory.

(Landfall, No. 23, p.230)

Pearson's iconoclastic article emphasised the personal opinion that "the New Zealander's ideal state is half-consciousness." The critics' response was both nebulous and hostile. A critic for The Southland Times wrote,

Peering as they so often do through a haze of good fellowship, New Zealanders do not customarily see themselves clearly. Detached self-analysis they avoid as they would a public display of sentiment. Yet, knowing ourselves is important, especially if we are to become a nation with a purpose. We must look inward as well as outward to discover where we are going, and why. "Fretful Sleepers,"... is worthy of attention for the effort it makes to hold a mirror up to the national character. Generalizations are always dangerous and the author, Bill Pearson, is much too sweeping in some of his charges. But his rather disordered sketch contains some frank and accurate assessments, and the New Zealander who will not admit to catching at least a likeness of himself is being palpably dishonest.

Hypocrisy, purposelessness, standardization, inertia, and smallness of mind--these are the principal traits seized upon by Mr. Pearson. 13

And with the type of reaction that prompted the critical comments of both Chapman and Pearson, a critic for The Evening Star revealed his aversion to self-appraisal;

An unusually candid--almost bitter--assessment of the behaviour of New Zealanders provides the principal feature in the September issue...Writing from London, to which city he has escaped from the frightful bourgeoisie life in New Zealand, the writer bluntly pours out "home truths" in terse prose. There may be a good deal of fact in what he says, although it is difficult to believe that the people of this Dominion are as unimaginative as he claims, or as hostile to learning or culture, or live as vegetable an existence as he suggests. He gives the impression of a person, arrogant in his desire to be different or superior, who had some bitter experiences and is still young enough to smart under them...It would be interesting to await his later findings on whether the advanced civilisation to which he has migrated is very much better, or even much different. 14

This was a common reaction to "Fretful Sleepers", and it reinforced the point that criticism of the New Zealand national character by a native-born New Zealander was still a hazardous occupation. If the articles by Chapman and Pearson reflect the common intellectual opinion of the early fifties it can be inferred that a sociological approach to post-war New Zealand fiction is particularly relevant. Both articles reflected the social environment in New Zealand and the resulting effect on the writers. Also, both Chapman and Pearson saw fiction as being, in one major sense, a critique on certain social realities.

An interesting narrative story by T.H. Scott, From Emigrant

13 October 29, 1952.

14 October 4, 1952.

to Native, is akin in spirit to the articles of Robert Chapman and Bill Pearson. The two-part story, which appeared in Landfall numbers four and six, bears brief mention as a "creative" approach to sociological criticism. Scott is at pains to render a picture, as vividly as possible, of a definite and recognizable form of rural community. The invented community, Te Whenua, is described in terms of its social habits and customs, and in terms of environmental influence on local philosophy. Vernacular expressions are used in quotation marks to identify the terminology of "low-country dairy farmers" and the idiomatic phraseology of local people; "when the "hills look close" "there's rain about", and the first snow on the tops means the drawing in of the days." (Landfall, No. 4, p.250) Scott attempts to illustrate the interrelationship of Te Whenuans with their locale so that the "dialogue" between man and nature is made the first step in the metamorphosis from emigrant to native;

Te Whenua lies on a plain between the mountains and the sea. Though standing close along the horizon to the south-east, the ranges are felt to be remote. Indeed the man who has "been into the ranges" pig-hunting or deer-stalking takes on special individuality. (Landfall, No. 4, p.250)

The first part of "From Emigrant to Native", therefore, shows the process whereby the landscape affects human activity and social consciousness,

...local topography and climate and a local present work subtly in the mind and are felt sharply, magnify and extend east and west and backwards and forwards in time. Together they make up the central sector of consciousness and provide grounds for judgment, giving the basis of those things which are recognized as valid and important in life. When a Te Whenuan

encounters other parts of New Zealand, or the world beyond, or fumbles in the past, these form the roots of his understanding. Every technique, every idea and outside report is seen against this background built up out of a limited range of facts and experience. (Landfall, No. 4, p.258)

The second part of the story entitled "Te Whenua and the Future" suggests a hopeful picture for the New Zealand imagination,

New Zealanders have not always been so at home with the sights and sounds among which they grew up, that these could provide the very substance of mood, the material for imagination, and be a starting point for all understanding, including that of other places and other times, both past and future. But a stage seems now to have been reached when, in people settled in one place, the sense of life is identified with their surroundings; so much so that imagination deals with past and future from the point of view of a solid and convincing present. Time has become bound to place.

(Landfall, No. 6, p.125)

At the Writers' Conference in Christchurch in 1951 Vance Palmer talked about "humanising the landscape" and making sense of a new and strange territory. It is not a new idea. Henry Lawson had once written,

I believe the Southern poet's dream will not be realised
Till the plains are irrigated and the land is humanised. ¹⁵

If T.H. Scott, and indeed Henry Lawson, are to be believed, it might be suggested that the "fretful sleep" of New Zealanders would conclude when the country's landscape became as important in its own right as England's. Viscount Bledisloe had recognized the potential of the New Zealand imagination in 1936, and, from a cultural point of view, very few New Zealanders would accept the superior attitude of an English historian who

15 Sydney Bulletin, "Up the Country", July 9, 1892.

wrote,

The culture of London seemed to polished that it was hard to treat with perfect seriousness the aspirations of Toronto or Auckland, Lagos or Belize. To the men of Whitehall, the civilisation of the colonies, whether newly contrived by expatriated Britons or the child of the primordial jungle, was not merely different to their own, it was inferior to it. Colonial peoples were like children and were to be treated with all the kindness and severity of the Victorian parent. 16

English literary critics still embraced such ideas about New Zealand literature. But, just as New Zealand had gained independence politically, it was simply a matter of time before short stories written in this country achieved an independent standard. With Landfall and some post-war scholars and intellectuals in the vanguard, the time had come.

There are two recurrent themes in early Landfall stories which merit brief mention as examples of less sophisticated early forms of New Zealand short story writing. These themes, the war theme and the theme of childhood, reflect both a preoccupation with the recent war and a preoccupation with the comparative aspects of a child reaching adulthood with those of a country reaching cultural nationhood.

Short stories on the war theme appear quite frequently in early issues of Landfall, but they only succeed as stories

16 Pugh, R.B., "The Colonial Office" (1801-1925). From The Cambridge History of the British Empire (volume 111), eds. Sir James Butler and C.E. Carrington, (London, 1959), p.768.

when there is a definite sociological application. Stories illustrating the soldiers' reactions to war often appear sentimental and overwrought, seldom achieving the vivid perceptions of John Mulgan's Report on Experience. An example of a successful war story is Bill Pearson's Social Catharsis whose very title reveals the social element in the plot. The story is an interesting account of death, sex, and the war in Italy. The climax is reached when a soldier, Condon, who has been caught stealing from his mates, is "executed" by his accusers. It is a hard-bitten incident showing the primitive form of justice and strict code of ethics accepted in war in order to uphold the golden rule of New Zealand egalitarianism.

Everyone agreed silently: pinching off your coppers was unforgivable. Stores and government property were different, they were common game; but robbing your mates poisoned the solidarity, it turned each man into himself, defensive and suspicious. It was the only crime officers and men made united front against, because it involved them all, and because it was good for officers to have at least one circumstance beside the enemy that brought complete moral backing from the men.

(Landfall, No. 4, p.266)

The "gritty decision" to kill Condon permitted the condemned thief to fire a pistol at his tormentors, all armed with tommy-guns. The result of this brutal revenge is forcefully written;

Hambrill surveyed the sprawled hulk of what was Condon, its protest faint in the near-dark.

Pearson illustrates the series of injustices which begin with the war mission and end in the slaughter of a comrade, and his story reveals a definite social morality, unlike other war stories which merely portray incidents and predictable reactions.

There are several examples of competent, yet unextraordinary war stories. Bruce Mason's The Glass Wig tells the story of

New Zealand sailors on warships. There is none of the tension created by Pearson's Social Catharsis, and the narrative follows a simple "slice of life" technique. G.R. Gilbert's Include Me Out and P.J. Wilson's A Rented Room feature the returned serviceman as the central character, while D.W. Cheer's Prisoners and Leo Sinden's Dog Lovers tell of the Italy of the Allied occupation. What all these stories have in common is the description of "the bronzed Anzac ever ready to turn from his plough and exercise his God-given skills with a gun and horse."¹⁷ The war theme in the short story illustrates how the soldiers involved experienced a great psychological impact from their combat experience, and, while it would be mere speculation to suggest that the war influenced the improvement and increase of New Zealand fiction since 1945, it can be noted that the war theme was used by short story writers as an illustration of a maturing experience. The Second World War increased the sense of New Zealand nationhood¹⁸ and, to quote Viscount Bledisloe, provided a "salutary fillip" for New Zealand literature.

The childhood theme in New Zealand fiction has been admirably discussed by M.H. Holcroft in three Macmillan Brown lectures given at the Victoria University of Wellington in

17 The Bulletin (Sydney), November 13, 1971.

18 On February 3, 1940, a Nazi radio announcer described New Zealand soldiers as "poor country lads". An advertisement in The Listener used the comment in a recruitment advertisement with the caption "Let's show 'em!".

April 1964. The lectures, later published in a pamphlet entitled Islands of Innocence, discussed the childhood theme from both the literary and the sociological point of view.

On the literary point of the theme Holcroft wrote,

We sometimes forget that childhood is a relatively new theme in fiction. It could not become interesting to writers until children became interesting (in the right way) to parents. The myth of infancy as a state of security, the warmth of the womb still around it, could have no place in the minds of people who stood under the gallows while children were hanged for small misdemeanours. And in those days so many children died after only a few weeks or months of sickly visitation that there seemed no reason why infancy should be valued: it was rather a stage to be escaped from as quickly as possible, a tiresome and perilous approach to maturity. 19

In New Zealand, the theme usually applied to the problem of identity. Bruce Mason's story Summer's End (Landfall, No. 9 and No. 10) contains an autobiographical account of a young boy, John, who wants to write. The story gives the effect of a vision seen by the writer that causes him to reflect on his identity,

And now he seemed to be there again, keeping a lonely vigil on the porch, staring calmly and wisely out to sea, past Rangitoto, past the Great Barrier, past everything. Frail ghosts emerged from a mist to gaze briefly at him, then faded, heartened and impressed. He turned and went in, shutting the door. He picked up a book, read perhaps two lines and laid it down, smiling a little wearily. Then he sharpened his pencil and wrote and wrote and wrote...
(Landfall, No. 9, p.33)

John Kelly's story, For Ever and Ever, is a tale of a small boy, Rocky, who makes his first kill as a hunter. Like a counterpart in a Faulkner novel Rocky is awed by his power

over his prey, and is disturbed by the silence of death.

Rocky's parents are proud of his feat,

"Well, mother," said the man, as they came in at the back door. "Looks as though we've got a marksman on our hands." He grunted as he eased himself down onto the step and tugged at his bootlaces. "Out every day now, eh? Be no stopping you now."

The boy said nothing as he stood the gun back in its corner. He wiped his hands slowly down the back of his faded shorts.

"No," he said then. "No, I s'pose not."

Outside, a little chill wind had got up, and the shadows were creeping up the gullies.

(Landfall, No. 9, p.25)

Both Mason's and Kelly's stories reveal a particular coming of age; the one artistic, the other of manhood. Besides these, there are other Landfall stories dealing with the childhood of individuals, and there is the haunting suspicion that these stories reflect the "national adolescence" of New Zealand literature. Certainly the early Landfall stories which centre on the childhood theme support this suspicion. But M.H. Holcroft predicts a very different future,

I have thought sometimes that the country itself projects around us in physical form the conditions of childhood: the land nurturing us from ample breasts, the hills opening a way to small freedoms until the mountains, like immutable parental authority, restrain us--and always beyond the sand the wide sea, inviting us to the future, and yet dangerous to cross. Against our recent history, this can no longer be seen as a true picture. In the new world of today our writers may still turn to childhood when some personal necessity drives them, or if it sets a challenge to their talents; but I doubt if we shall need to find in the theme any corporate significance.²⁰

There is an important conclusion to be drawn from this brief reference to the themes of war and childhood in early Landfall stories. Stories bearing on these themes were never particularly sophisticated or substantial, but both themes provided an

20 Holcroft, M.H., op. cit., p.63.

immediate useable past and the nuclei of short stories. But, in a short time (as later Landfall stories show), simplistic themes gave way to a more complex type of short story that presented less superficial insights in a more interesting way. The following discussion of several post-war New Zealand short story writers, particularly Frank Sargeson, O.E. Middleton, and Maurice Duggan, is designed to illustrate how Landfall reflected the post-war development of the short story in New Zealand.

It was with the sixteenth number of Landfall that Frank Sargeson first appeared with his story Up Onto The Roof and Down Again. It is an autobiographical commentary generously providing material by which Sargeson reveals himself as the outstanding short story writer who has continued to write in New Zealand. The well-known saying that "New Zealand literature has had two tragedies: the first was Katherine Mansfield, and the second is Frank Sargeson;"²¹ is valid in comparing the two masters of the short story. Professor Rhodes notes that the use of the word "tragedy" to describe the stature of Sargeson is due to the "critical hesitancy" with which his impressive works are received. The danger is that poor imitations by a new breed of "Sargeson disciples" will stand in the way of new creative trends. The only answer can be that Sargeson's achievement is the antithesis of tragedy, and even

21 Rhodes, H. Winston, op. cit., p. 168. It has been suggested that Sargeson made the comment himself.

if lesser men follow in his footsteps, the loss will only be theirs not New Zealand's. Sargeson has raised the calibre of creative prose writing in New Zealand, and he cannot be mistaken for O.E. Middleton or Maurice Duggan both of whom can be considered as colleagues of Sargeson, not followers.

On the subject of his autobiography Sargeson admitted in Landfall ("Beginnings", No. 74, pp.122-129) that, following his powerful motivation "to write a novel" he set to writing "my own life story from its earliest beginnings." The result was a change of heart,

Fortunately I did not get very far before I decided that nobody was going to be bothered to read this dull stuff. I found after a few pages I certainly could not be bothered to read it myself.

It is to Sargeson's credit that he was able to write from his own experience expanding the contents into both the local experience of a New Zealander and that of universal man. Only by being faithful to his immediate environment was Sargeson able to achieve the universal relevance of his stories.

Professor Rhodes finds that the suggestion that "Sargeson's writings are largely autobiographical" is "an oversimplification." He explains that,

The short stories of Frank Sargeson should not be considered as a series of unrelated fragments, a haphazard collection of isolated incidents and episodes. Their effect is cumulative like those of the acknowledged masters of the medium, and such is their consistency of tone and their moral coherence that it is possible to speak of a "Sargeson world." This achievement, unequalled by any other New Zealand writer, implies a creative ability that is not confined to the invention of character and selection of material, but is concerned with the imaginative rendering of a moral climate in which the characters move and have their being. 22

And the autobiographical derivation is part of,

...a larger meaning that becomes apparent only when the single stories are seen within the framework of the New Zealand setting, and the revelation of and commentary on New Zealand life are recognized as essential elements of the whole Sargeson world of imaginative realism. 23

This idea supports Allen Curnow's claim that good literature cannot exist in a state of weightlessness, but must derive from a local context and perspective. Professor Horsman writes of the universality of Sargeson's art by saying that "...as an artist he has been after nothing less than the fullest illumination of life which the technique of the short story will yield him." (Landfall, No. 74, p.129)

Before Landfall was established Sargeson had published many stories in Tomorrow, Penguin New Writing, and Australian and English publications. Conversation with My Uncle appeared in 1936; A Man and His Wife in 1940; When the Wind Blows in 1945; and That Summer and Other Stories in 1946. Up Onto The Roof and Down Again was written after "My King Country uncle was dead." It is a record of a personal return to the happy experience of life on this uncle's farm,

...I found myself for eighteen months living with my uncle on his King Country stump farm, where it was agreed I might write in the morning and assist him on the land in the afternoon.

(Landfall, No. 74, p.125)

Sargeson's epiphany is the increasing sense of belonging to the land where his forefathers had immigrated,

For me, it was the beginning of something. Previously I had associated honeysuckle with an old lady my mother would occasionally call on when we drove out to my

Waikato uncle's farm: it was always impressed on us children that because she was English and well-connected she had her rules--and we were never allowed out of the buggy to go in and see her unless we were wearing our shoes and stockings: once she told me I must try to win a scholarship so I could go to Oxford, and afterwards I might become Prime Minister of England--and she always said she allowed the honeysuckle to grow all over her verandah because it brought back memories of Home. It astonished me to know that there was another sort of honeysuckle, a great tree that grew along the ridges of my own country; and the moment of knowing seemed to be indefinitely prolonged while I thought once again of the Te Aroha mountain-side, remembering how I had always needed a companion before I could dare to enter and claim as my own a strange and terrifying world that turned out to be wonderful: here too I had one in my uncle: my discovery of the honeysuckle tree had somehow mysteriously revealed to me something of the true nature of the pilgrimage that I had so persistently imagined....

The "pilgrimage" was less one of rebellion as one of maturing.

Not that it was possible for me to escape immediately from the imitation English world that so much of my home town environment made itself out to be, nor could I think of my two worlds as completely separated since there were so many obvious links and overlappings...
(Landfall, No. 20, p.249)

And the significance of the honeysuckle bush is as the symbol of a new transplanted life style and tradition--personified in the uncle so greatly respected; an uncle whose death was a beginning as much as an end,

...I can see now that his pattern of death was a worthy one also: refusing to lie down he died as he could have wished standing up--and unless my eyes deceived me there is somewhere on the Mamuku plateau at least one honeysuckle tree that still stands up, for me standing not for New Zealand as it is, but New Zealand as it might worthily have been (*italics*).
(Landfall, No. 20, p. 250)

As important as New Zealand's cultural dependence on England was the literary dependence. Sargeson reflected,

...it seemed to me that virtually always the formal language of the English novelists had been used to

deal with the material of New Zealand life.
 (Landfall, No. 74, p.126)

Sargeson's achievement of an indigenous voice gave substance to a "New Zealand language" that would describe New Zealand material. The first Landfall story, embracing four numbers, is the conquering of the literary and cultural obstacles standing between Sargeson, his sense of place, and his freedom to adopt a new dialect. Professor Rhodes quotes Walter Allen as writing that Sargeson had much "to unlearn" before his stories could live on their own terms. In a recent interview with Michael Beveridge Sargeson was asked to comment on his personal "discovery" of New Zealand that was, in a sense, the fruition of the "unlearning" process. Beveridge asked;

I think in 'Up onto the Roof' you said that you had to create a new language and that the language of those who had written in New Zealand before you seemed irrelevant. Wasn't it much more than this-- more than the language? I mean did you find New Zealand anywhere before?

To which Sargeson replied,

Well, yes I did, but I didn't find it in New Zealand literature. I found it in say Sherwood Anderson for instance. At the same time when I first read Katherine Mansfield I was being much more moved by something I read in the London Mercury. It was a curious kind of a story by Sherwood Anderson; it was something called 'Small Town Notes'. It was just some observations about a very ordinary person living in a very ordinary little American town and the doubts he had about this and that, how he went to bed feeling very troubled, and how he was interested in a certain girl but he was too shy to speak to her and so on. And it was all a way of writing that to my mind had never been done before. Perhaps I didn't understand at that moment that Anderson was a real successor to the Mark Twain of Huckleberry Finn, that he was carrying on something. I got so excited over this because it related to my experience of New Zealand.

(Landfall, No. 93, pp.19-20)

It is not surprising that the style of an American writer had

such an impact on Sargeson. It was the simple fact that different situations demanded different styles of expression. Sargeson made a beginning in New Zealand. Professor Rhodes writes,

It was not only the language, however, but the material of New Zealand life itself that had not been explored sufficiently to provide anything in the nature of a tradition from which young writers could draw nourishment or from which they could diverge. Frank Sargeson was forced to begin at the beginning. 24

On his fiftieth birthday in 1953 the major short story writers in New Zealand published a tribute in Landfall to Frank Sargeson. It said,

Your work has had, in the past twenty years, a liberating influence on the literature of this country. (Landfall, No. 25, p.5)

Sargeson's local expression combined with a universal sensibility gained the respect of his co-writers. Of Sargeson's achievement over twenty years they wrote,

You had broken down our isolation in the world of letters still further. You proved that a New Zealander could publish work true to his own country and of a high degree of artistry, and that exile in the cultural centres of the old world was not essential to this end. One could be provincial, in the best sense, and of the world at the same time. 25

Sargeson's individual vision had secured a unique confidence in New Zealand literature. It is significant that the tribute appeared in Landfall, the medium that had symbiotically matured

24 Rhodes, H. Winston, op. cit., p.iii of the preface.

25 The writers who signed the letter in Landfall No. 25 were: David Ballantyne, J.R. Cole, James Courage, Dan Davin, Erik de Mauny, Maurice Duggan, Roderick Finlayson, Janet Frame, A.P. Gaskell, G.R. Gilbert, Bruce Mason, O.E. Middleton, Bill Pearson, Helen Shaw, Greville Texidor and Phillip Wilson.

with the help of Sargeson's contributions, and also made these contributions available to interested readers in New Zealand. Sargeson was asked about the importance of Landfall to his work; the question was,

Why have you published so much here, particularly in Landfall, when you could perhaps have published overseas?

Sargeson replied,

One needs so much help if one has lived as I have done and if you have an editor as I had in Charles Brasch who encouraged you and who felt that you knew what you were up to and that you were producing something of value, a question of loyalty comes in. That is it.

(Landfall, No. 94, p.149)

Sargeson's work in Landfall is fascinating and impressive, but by no means "tragic" if New Zealand literature is to gain a high standard. Professor Rhodes writes,

Although he is among the very few New Zealand authors who have gained reputations overseas, Sargeson's influence has been confined to his own country, where his artistic dedication and integrity have been a source of encouragement to writers very different from himself...It can be argued, however, that his imaginative vision of reality and his individual style have been dangerous assets to an emergent literature.

It can also be argued, probably more optimistically, that the Sargeson example has not only set a standard but also demanded of other writers that they be original in developing styles of their own. Certainly Maurice Duggan, for example, is such a writer. If R.A.K. Mason can be described as the "first wholly original unmistakably gifted poet" (as Allen Curnow suggested) then Frank Sargeson can be so described as far as short stories are concerned. But their examples need not be overpowering if younger writers have the capacity to interpret their experiences as Mason and Sargeson have done theirs.

I For One is a short novel which appeared in Landfall in 1952. It is the story of a spinster school-teacher, reminiscent of the novels of Sylvia Ashton-Warner. The novel takes the form of a diary as it might have been written by a frustrated and alienated woman. Professor Rhodes described I For One as,

...a disturbing novel, because, although it has a well-defined plot and an impressive structure, it leaves so many gaps in an argument concerned with conventional behaviour and the reticence of a moderately well-to-do household. 26

Katherine's problems stem from her feelings towards her father and the haunting coldness of her mother,

How strange that I cannot fix my attention on the really important fact. Father is dead. I write the words and see them plainly before me, but they still don't impress me as I feel they should. Perhaps it's life being hurt, but hurt so very badly that even pain is number. Perhaps it is why I have suddenly flown to this big old exercise book of mine. I used to call it my diary, but I see I haven't written anything in it for nearly ten years--and when I look back at what I have (*italics*) written I feel pulled two different ways. I want to go on and read, taking peep after peep at the self I used to be, until I suddenly feel a wave of shame as I come on something so very young and childish. Then I want to slam the book shut and say, Let the dead past bury itself. If I did though, mightn't I have to say the same about father? And how could I?

Katherine is the victim of her own puritanism. But she is perhaps less to blame than her philistine parents who inflicted moral rigidity and subsequent sterility on their child. In portraits such as the uncle with a "hard knocker" or the child who faces a war cripple at his mother's tea table (The Last War) Sargeson brilliantly succeeds in defining and breaking down the

philistine attitudes which foreigners like Andre Siegfried noticed as the all-too-common characteristic of the New Zealand middle class. Sargeson's insights into his society and his satiric tone should not be missed.

Of course, the grown-ups were affected by the last war in lots of different ways. A lot of them, I know, actually did go to war. But my uncles who were farmers were simply made. They gave a certain amount of money and land to the patriotic fund, and in 1920 they sold out and retired. (The Last War) 27

The story of Katherine in her menopausal loneliness is the personal focus of Sargeson's social concern,

Katherine Sheppard is not clever. She is an ordinary teacher in a girls' school, not yet of middle age, but conscious of her increasing years and her state of virginity. 28

Katherine is a pathetic lonely character like so many other people, and there is something personal in this; Sargeson told Beveridge,

The isolation of various people and types of people in my work is all connected with the isolation that I've felt myself. I feel the two things: that this is a New Zealand thing and it's particularly so in my case because of the unusualness of my occupation.
(Landfall, No. 93, pp.22-23)

Katherine fails to understand "why I should seem to see all these things with the eyes of a stranger, of one set apart." Her problem is more one of inertia and less of virginity-- which she could change without much difficulty. The peculiar sense of isolation has been a part of the New Zealand ethos, but, when Camus' Meurseult is remembered, isolation is the

27 Sargeson, Frank, Collected Stories 1935-1963, Paul (Auckland, 1964), p. 29.

28 Rhodes, H. Winston, op. cit., p. 118.

predicament of Western man. Sargeson's themes are doubly relevant. The Depression forced Sargeson to turn to writing, both spiritually and economically, and made the business of writing as honourable an enterprise for the "unemployed" as any other. Part of the alienation felt by certain people in New Zealand is due to the ramifications of non-conformity. The non-conformist stands out from his fellows as "a hard case" or worse. There is little solace for the alien.

Four more of Sargeson's stories in Landfall tell the story as a first person narrative. The Undertaker's Story, The Colonel's Daughter, The Problem of Pocket Money and City and Suburban, are narrated by "I"--who Sargeson has often claimed is not autobiographical. The technique of each story includes a basic plot embellished with critical social observation. Sargeson is eloquent and seldom verbose, and the stories are delightful sketches of human behaviour with a fundamental humour and descriptive colour.

The eponymous hero of The Undertaker's Story is an unlikely person to mediate between an irate publican and a banished client. The descriptive aplomb of the story is evident,

There were two of us outside now, and while I was trying to work out the problem the incident had presented me with, there appeared in the doorway an elderly undersized man, very tidy in a panama hat a maroon blazer and flat rubber-soled shoes...he looked as though he had by some mistake dropped in instead of going to bowls. He had with him an old felt hat, which he dusted with his handkerchief as he went down the beach, and for quite some time he kept turning it in his hands as he sat beside the heap of discarded humanity. (Landfall, No. 30, p.83)

The reflective narrator continues in the story rather like a television interviewer--a catalyst for conversation. The "while

I was trying to work out the problem" is the possible clue to an autobiographical element. The narrator is, like Sargeson, a philosophical observer of his fellow man.

The Miss Smith of The Colonel's Daughter overwhelms the humble narrator. Once again the "I" of the story draws out the other's comments without any need for persuasion. The Problem of Pocket Money is a story of a young man's love affair with a rich debutante. The Sargeson humour is evident in both the empathy he feels for adolescent infatuation and the slightly derisive attitude towards the New Zealand nouveau riche--who come closest to a self-ordained aristocracy. Sargeson's style is very different from the curt lines of Middleton, but it achieves a similar candour and descriptive validity. As the narrator views the girl in the lecture hall he reflects,

I had asserted that this girl was composed of the finest porcelain, most delicately tinted, I would have hotly disputed any assertion to the contrary. Although that was my ineradicable impression however, the bodily reactions which I experienced did not suggest that I myself was composed of porcelain. (Landfall, No. 46, p. 104)

The story alludes to a sycophancy on the part of the New Zealand "aristocracy" for things exotic. The enormous collection of paintings held by the Gower-Johnson family, including one by a Frenchman who "had not long since visited the Auckland beaches and painted the pohutukawa trees in flower," is appreciated only for its foreign origins. And Ernie,

...sound as usual on all matters which related to the realities of life in New Zealand, had told me that it was impossible to know or appreciate much about painting: one's opportunities for experiencing original work were much too limited, and unless I got the opportunity to go overseas I had much better concentrate upon literature.

(Landfall, No. 46, p. 108)

The Gower-Johnson's did not have their hearts in New Zealand.

The fourth story with a first person narrative, City and Suburban, is aimed at the intellectual New Zealander and his veneer of education,

Let's face it. I'm average. I have my university qualifications. I am by profession an accountant, that's to say a partner in a public accountancy business. I am the end product of what may happen if you raise the school leaving age...Nothing alters the fact that you have only to strip away the higher education to find me average. If you like, the new (*italics*) average--the latter-day common man, the runner among the ruck in the urban rat race. In secret I yearn for something less complicated, let's say a milkround and an unworried living in a small country town. For committing myself to paper I have the good excuse that I am at present enduring another of my crises.

(Landfall, No. 73, pp.4-5)

In Sargeson's later stories the suburb becomes an important aspect of environmental experience. New Zealand has no vast industrial cities, but various conglomerations of suburban areas surrounding a business centre. This is the result of the character of a country that concentrates on agriculture and manufacturing instead of heavy industry. Just Trespassing Thanks provides a vivid illustration of the changing face of rural New Zealand,

The large area enclosed by an untidy hedge was known to the inhabitants of the suburb as Corrie's corner; but to Edward it was all that remained of his grandfather's farm, the scene of summertime explorations during school holidays sixty years ago and more. He remembered paddocks with creeks and creekbanks; trees, some of them native; scrub on the hillsides; besides his grandfather's cows there had been an orchard, and one season a crop of wheat. Many abstract forces had been at work since those days, and bulldozers and builders had done all the rest: in every direction variety had been replaced by rolling hillsides covered with tile roofs. It was not a view for which Edward had any affection and he preferred as a rule to remain

indoors, apart from an early half hour beneath his pine trees before the whosh of an occasional car along the motorway had multiplied into the commuting roar. If the wind was in the wrong direction there would be a smell of fumes. Eye ear and nose offended--what was the world coming to! (Landfall, No. 70, pp.116-117)

The feelings of Edward Corrie, reminiscent of Patrick White's Stan Parker in The Tree Of Man, represent an older generation reacting to the changing face of New Zealand society.

Sargeson's writing reflects this new New Zealand; a country no longer covered only with sheep and cabbage trees, but covered increasingly with "tile roofs" and motorways. The analogy with Patrick White in Australia is not without calculation. Patrick White was among the first writers to illustrate the "encroachment" of suburbia and the plastic civilisation on the wilderness of the bush. Sargeson is his New Zealand counterpart, writing from his Takapuna home of the phenomenon of urbanisation--and the noticeable scarcity of "urbaneization".

One writer who has achieved a singularly individual style is O.E. Middleton. With a simplicity reminiscent of Hemingway, Middleton is capable of making a normal incident a creative happening. His stories often express a morality that is more specific than satiric, and the main impression left on the reader is the complete sincerity of Middleton's vernacular expression. His first story in Landfall is an autobiographical account of a man tyrannized by the authorities in the United States: "It is fall in Up-state New York when I am herded in

through the weighty steel gate of the City Jail." (Landfall, No. 10, p. 135). The use of "fall" instead of the New Zealand term "autumn" is typical of Middleton's reception to new terms--whether they be those of a foreigner or a child. The autobiographical aspect of My Thanksgiving is a touching human story itself,

In 1947 he travelled to the U.S.A. as a seaman to seek treatment for an eye disease, but was refused permission to land. So he deserted his ship and hitchhiked from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border, but because of lack of money was unable to get the treatment he wanted. He was finally arrested and held at jails in New York State, Chicago and California before being deported in February 1948. 29

Middleton's story is not a pristine account of a cow stuck in the mud or a man gardening while his wife "bitches". It is a powerful story of injustice carefully and succinctly told in a few pages. Autobiography runs the risk of becoming egocentric and being of limited appeal, but My Thanksgiving is a story of everyman in an ironic situation.

A later story, Cooper's Christmas, takes place in a timber yard. Middleton's working men come alive in their own language;

And so the morning goes on with Des and Lofty and I pulling down seasoned timber from the racks in the yard and feeding them through the planer; old Bongo shaping and jointing the staves, and the five coopers raising-up casks, steaming and winching them and trundling them still hot from the drying fires, to stacks near the loading floor.

(Landfall, No. 14, p. 125)

At the conclusion of the story the men are drunk enough to need

29 Middleton, O.E., A Walk On the Beach, Michael Joseph, (London, 1964), dustcover. This book is dedicated to the late Yukio Mishima, known as "the Hemingway of Japan", who committed hara-kiri in November 1970. Mishima impressed Middleton as both novelist and playwright.

a "snore-off" while the narrator gloats over his four pounds of poker winnings; "It's not the way I planned it, but perhaps I'll have myself a real slap-up Christmas after all." The stoic qualities of Middleton's working men are very true to the characters of men who frequent the Working Mens' Clubs of cities and towns. There is always a superfluity of booze and a dearth of women in stories about the labour force.

It Happens Here shatters the social myth of racial equality in New Zealand--at least in one particular case. This is a simple story of racial prejudice suggesting that some New Zealanders, although willing to suffer Polynesians, are unwilling to suffer Hindus. The opening paragraph is typical vernacular Middleton;

I tell him not to hand me that kind of stuff but he says there's no bull, it's fair dinkum. I say what about the Treaty of Waitangi and he reckons Treaty or no Treaty what he's been telling me is on the level and what's more I can come and see for myself if I don't believe him.

So that's how we come to be here.

This pub's right off my beat really but naturally a story like this rouses my curiosity and I want to get to the bottom of it. If what Perce says IS true, the deal that is going on here is worse than the one the Conchies got.

(Landfall, No. 17, p.21)

The pointed message is conveyed in such language, avoiding polemics, and illustrating a moral issue. The final line is simple, yet effective in its impact; "And I always thought we had no colour bar in this country!" And the incident of a Hindu trying to order a beer from a bigoted barman is rendered as a moral parable.

Middleton presents the childhood theme in A Day by Itself;

Down by the mouth of the Mauku there is an untidy stretch of country which will take you right back to your boy years.

(Landfall, No. 24, p. 287)

The author's mind "pokes and probes" at simple experience for some personal revelation, and the imagination of his characters is provoked by an environment in which they feel unmistakably at home. M.H. Holcroft finds that the best of Middleton's short stories are "set in the open" where "they have an authentic flavour of outdoor life accessible to all boys in New Zealand, even if they come from homes in the cities." (Islands of Innocence, p. 45)

Middleton can use the idiom without begging the question. He intersperses unique information with background description,

The day I first went down with the hinaki, I thought I was back at Te Rakau; off on one of those tiring, exciting trips into the King Country which my brother and I had made so often with our father. It seemed impossible that this rugged stretch of estuary, with its toe toe and flax-covered banks, was only half-an-hour's fast drive from the city.

There was even a pukeko, gangling and friendly in an aloof fashion, stalking through the reeds and flipping his tail-feathers.

If you walked off the road, and ignored the fences and the gorse higher up, you could feel that here were a few acres of untouched New Zealand. A forgotten slice of pristine chaos amid the newer, brisker order... (Landfall, No. 24, p. 288)

There is also often the subtle humour of socially critical observation,

Ruapuru was a long way off. One of those inland dairying towns which have grown out of a blind faith in cows. The kind of a town where I always expect to see a pub called "The Swinging Teat" or something like that; only it is a dry town.

(Landfall, No. 24, p. 288) 30

30 A dry town reminds one of prohibition in the United States. An example in New Zealand was Oamaru from which prospective drinkers commuted to the "wet town" of Glenavy until Oamaru became "wet".

Middleton's youthful characters are realistically drawn and his kids are adventure-oriented, extraverted and self-sufficient. Holcroft writes,

The kids in Middleton's stories become real for us because they're shown at full stretch among boyhood interests. We discover quite soon that Middleton knows (*italics*) about fishing and dogs: he can't be faulted on matters of detail, a point of some consequence in this country, where people are so practical in outlook that a story is spoiled for them by a small error in fact. If a boy in one of his stories goes with his elders on a pig hunt, the episode is seen as a boy would see it--the right things emphasised, the casual and faintly proud treatment of violence, the bare and yet faithful etching of background. Everything is restrained by an economical use of words, a style influenced by French literature, and in its own way as effective under our hills and in the open air as it has always been in the streets and cafes and bedrooms of Paris. 31

It is Holcroft, not Middleton, who is begging the question here. A comparison with other literature is far from Middleton's purpose of illustrating a faithful picture of active life in outdoor New Zealand. Middleton's reading of foreign literature convinced him that such a picture would be far more valid than a copied style. Realism is the paramount feature in Middleton's stories. A delightful and excellently executed incident exemplifies his craftsmanship. The drama of two Maoris involved in a motorbike mishap allows the human reactions to capture the mood.

It was a motor bike as I had guessed. One of those big, racy-looking American machines with wide handle-bars and plenty of red paint.

Astride it was the Maori in the sweater, only now he had put on an oilskin, helmet, and goggles. The bike was popping and banging and the younger Maori was trying to balance the sacks of herrings across the petrol tank.

31 Holcroft, M.H., op. cit., pp.44-45.

They were at the far side of the bridge as I came up the slope and as I came out onto the road they started towards me across the bridge.

The clutch went in with a flourish, the legs which had been steadying the bike were drawn up, and the front wheel bumped over the first plank of the bridge.

They were only a few yards across when it happened. Not suddenly, in spite of their speed, but very gradually, or so it seemed to me as I watched.

The motor bike began to wobble ('Steering gone!' I thought), then veered towards the wooden parapet on the seaward edge and toppled on its side.

I remember there was a loud grinding noise as they fell and a great puff of dust. 'Mustn't panic,' I told myself, and started to jog-trot towards them.

(Landfall, No. 24, p. 292)

There is an obvious simplicity about these lines, but their vividness exemplifies Middleton's descriptive prowess. The old bike driven by the two men was "held together with number eight wire in many places" and typical of the "old bombs" common on New Zealand roads. Middleton clearly disapproves, but his magnanimity supersedes his reproof of such vehicles,

Dangerous, ugly, mechanical horrors... Shouldn't be allowed on the roads. And the way people slaved to keep them going! Messing around for whole weekends when they could have been out in the open somewhere, or just doing nothing...All those suburbanites in the towns, with their old wrecks of cars in back yards and garages...Stripping down engines, reboring, grinding valves, changing tires, painting. ('I fitted new rings myself, it saves quite a bit.')

Or perhaps that was (*italics*) their way of enjoying life...?

(Landfall, No. 24, p. 293)

The publishers of Middleton's collection A Walk on the Beach note the author's ability to understand the ordinary people who make up the great majority of New Zealand society.

Apparently simple, Mr. Middleton's style is the result of constant and disciplined striving for economy and realism. Without sentimentality, he explores the interaction of background and character in the lives of the down-and-out, the adolescent, the

misfits, and--perhaps a greater achievement--
of ordinary people. 32

These ordinary people are the same as Sargeson's, but a new and refreshing perspective is given to them. The difference is in the styles of the two writers--both of whom present a singularly unselfconscious picture of New Zealand society.

One For The Road is set in a pub--the omnipresent centre stage of many New Zealand short stories. "It was one of those boozy bar-room encounters I once found so hard to avoid..." The narrator is packed and ready for departure when he encounters a fellow drinker. The ensuing conversation captures a typical and homespun subject, but there is no artificiality about Middleton's presentation of the "New Zealand as God's Own Country",

'This country will do me,' he said.
'The country's alright,' I said.
'He set down his glass and ordered another couple.
'Too right it's alright,' he said. 'It's only the finest little country in the world.'
I laughed.
'Well, what's the matter with it?' he asked, placing his hands against the bar and putting his head on one side.
'I haven't said a word', I told him. 'It's just that you sounded like one of those immigration posters.'
'Well, it's perfectly true, anyway,' he said.
(Landfall, No. 29, p.17)

Two more of Middleton's stories appeared in Landfall, both of which were later republished in A Walk On The Beach. The Greaser's Story is linked with the author's days as a merchant seaman. The opening paragraph shows the free-flowing style and the cosmopolitan attitude Middleton achieves,

The Kaitiki was one of those reliable old ships which used to carry cargoes across the Tasman and around the coasts of Australasia. When I joined her, she had a mixed crew of Australians, Englishmen and New Zealanders, and her crew's quarters and food were poor by comparison with the newer ships. But there was a girl in Sydney I wanted to see again rather badly, so, although it wasn't my usual job I signed on as a greaser, hung-up my shore-going gear in the locker, and looked around to see who my cabin-mate would be.

(Landfall, No. 62, p.110)

The Collector is a story of men awaiting trial, caring little about the law, and talking in American slang,

'We just lost a real nice guest, man.'

'You don't say,' echoed Danton's voice from around the corner.

'Yes man, there's another stud gone out into the free world.'

'That Barker was a real nice stud!'

'Man, he didn't harm anybody.'

(Landfall, No. 46, p. 117)

It is the exactness of the language used by Middleton's characters that lends credibility to his stories. They are reflections of a social stratum that lives more by instinct than philosophy, and whose story must be told if the true dimension of society, specifically in New Zealand and the Western World, is to be comprehended. Middleton is an independent voice in post-war New Zealand literature, a radical writer whose perception of his own country makes him one of the most significant short story writers published in Landfall and elsewhere. 33

33 Middleton's independent political opinions clashed with the more conservative (if not repressive) New Zealand opinions towards foreign and alien ideologies. The libel charge brought by Middleton against Truth is one of the most unfortunate, strange, and distasteful incidents in New Zealand's short literary past. An anthology of N.Z. short stories was prepared for Russian readers, and some of Middleton's stories were included. Prof. H. Winston

Maurice Duggan is one of the best New Zealand short story writers whose reputation owes much to Landfall. His first publications appeared in 1945 in the short-lived Anvil, and in Speaking For Ourselves edited by Frank Sargeson. Duggan's appreciation of Landfall's confidence is expressed in Beginnings (Landfall, No. 80, p. 335) relating to his second Landfall submission,³⁴

At this time...I wrote 'Six Place Names and a Girl'. It was perhaps less a story that a prose celebration of a topography and a time that, in rediscovery and re-creation, moved me strongly enough to force me away from what had become a habit of rhetoric. If it was to be strong, it had to be simple; the language must be a focusing glass and not, as had up to now been the case, a sort of bejewelled and empty casket.

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- 33 (cont'd) Rhodes reviewed the book and stated; "Whatever literary or political objections one may have to this collection (and these are apt to become hopelessly entangled), it was a bold and adventurous attempt to acquaint the Soviet people with New Zealand as seen through the eyes of her writers" (New Zealand Stories for Russian Readers, Landfall, No. 70, p. 158). Charles Brasch commented on the court proceedings; "we know... that the shadier tactics of politicians are employed in other places where they are still less excusable, for instance in university affairs; but there they seldom come into the open. It is unusual to hear a senior member of a university, and a teacher of English, at that, make deliberate use of such tactics in the course of a hearing in a court of law, as happened recently in Auckland." Brasch did not name the teacher, Professor J.C. Reid, but the conflict of opinions had somewhat brutal overtones. (Landfall, No. 75, p.221) New Zealand was still not free of xenophobia.
- 34 Duggan's first Landfall submission, a review of the Auckland University Drama Society Production of Dr. Faustus (1948) is a brief lightweight criticism of passing significance. See Landfall, No. 8, December 1948, p.331.

I learned to murder my darlings; and have mostly benefited, in my writing, by continuing the painful slaughter, ever since. Though bits of bombast do get by, of course, to my shame.

The title 'Six Place Names and a Girl' was supplied by Frank Sargeson. I thought it, and still think it, a good one. And Landfall published it.

The story is a series of nostalgic flashes; swimming at Komata; duck hunting at Awaiti; playing and discovering at Hikutaia; voyaging at Ngatea; exploring at Karangahake; summer with the Maoris at Waihi; and a love affair with Pelly. The achievement of this brief interlude is the extent of memories placed in a small space of writing vividly reflecting turns of memory and the functioning of the mind.

Voyage, published in Landfall, (No. 19) in September 1951 is full of description and colour. The elements are the focal points of the story; "the light was grey and the air was cold." And an anonymous farewell telegram has a haunting imperative tone; "Do not let yourself be imposed on by reality." There is both reality and poetic unreality in Duggan's prose; reality is,

The red flag showing the ship's position at noon each day moves slowly across the map. A frigate bird flies above the mast. On the horizon, in the evening, lightning flashes, trapped in a cloud.

(Landfall, No. 19, p. 187)

and the unreality of a mental vision concludes the story,

From the gables a bird watches, a black stone bird watches the white bird flying, watches the creeping mist, untroubled by the cat whose anguished cry ravages the decaying silence with teeth of delight.

Crooked in a sycamore an owl cries:

These are the dimensions of the winter world.

(Landfall, No. 19, p. 188)

Duggan's ability to paint a picture of many dimensions makes him one of New Zealand's best short story writers--in fact

probably second only to Frank Sargeson among contemporaries. Duggan has graduated from the typical metaphors of Maoris-in-pubs; children-growing-up; soldiers-reaching-consummation-on-foreign-battle-fields. A reviewer of Duggan's latest collection of stories, O'Leary's Orchard and Other Stories, wrote,

Duggan seems to have all the skills a writer could hope for: a huge vocabulary and a keen sense of when to use it, the ability to project himself sympathetically within a large variety of characters, an unusual judgment in the niceties of story structure and the gradual revelation of details of plot and character, the ability to use a dramatic development to heighten incongruity and contrast, and, above all, a subtle but well regulated sense of humour which never seems to be indulged in for its own sake but always contributes to something more substantial. But Duggan's most conspicuous strength is not technical (he does not, for example, experiment much with narrative method); basically, he is simply a most accomplished story-teller. 35

The story Voyage (II) continues Duggan's search for reality. While the narrator stands on "the rollercoaster deck" of "(Thinks) of a bath and a drink..." the question becomes,

To which world do they...belong? To which do we? Where in all this is the reality? Don Quixote de la Mancha is now plain Alonso Quizano and there is nothing he can do but die; life is reality transformed. Now we are seeking again reality enough to take us tilting.

(Landfall, No. 24, p.316)

Voyage (III), entitled also Yes And Back Again, bears a titular and contextual similarity to Sargeson's Up Onto The Roof And Down Again. By the conclusion New Zealand becomes "back again", the arrival after a period of departure.³⁶ The situation of

35 The Press (Christchurch), Saturday, June 6, 1970, p.4.

36 Duggan wrote in Landfall No. 53, p. 50; "I have the idea that New Zealand is an awful country in which to be young--so dull; and so suspicious of youth and so afraid of it. No, I'm sure it wouldn't hurt the writer to get out, once in a while..."

New Zealand is delightfully described through a conversation between a French waitress and the narrator,

Catalina who waited on table refused to believe that I was anything but French: she made opportunity to say monsieur; she took my empty plate with a clear merci; she offered the two words continually as a sop to my foreignness. Why would I not be French; there was a plane from Marseilles? There was also a boat; there were many boats from that direction.

Mallorca, one saw, was the centre of the world; beyond it were only people who could not get in.

With a little malice we showed her the school-atlas map of the world and pointed to New Zealand. It is small, Catalina cried. Is there room? She examined the map as though she had never seen such a thing before: it was a gesture of politeness. But people in Oceania would be French, she believed. She thought she had heard it said. We compared the size of Mallorca and New Zealand: Catalina stared at the tiny dot in the Mediterranean. But it is central, she said. It is near.

(Landfall, No. 31, p.161)

Such is the psychology of a New Zealander who has few illusions of false greatness--or apologies for smallness--when discussing his homeland.

Duggan's first Landfall story to concentrate on a New Zealand setting, In Youth is Pleasure, takes place in a private school. It describes the tension between a reticent, clumsy pupil, and the injustice of a teacher, Brother Mark. The story succeeds in its vivid portrayal of two people who have an intense dislike of one another, and yet the plot is simple.

In March 1960 Landfall prepared a questionnaire for writers in New Zealand. A total of eight questions attempted to discover the habits of leading writers concerning time allotted to writing, and the difficulties of devoting time to their work. In the introduction to the series of questions

Charles Brasch wrote that "Literature in New Zealand has now had a continuous history of more than a generation; that is, if we ignore several isolated earlier writers and reckon this continuity from the twenties..." But Brasch was disturbed by the number of writers who were forced to stop writing and earn a living by other means.

This waste of talent may be such that our intellectual and spiritual growth is all the more likely to fall behind the material development of the country, while growth of population will not be enough, in this century, to alter the situation by providing a viable market.

(Landfall, No. 53, p. 37)

Maurice Duggan, in reply to the questionnaire, described the financial hardship of professional writers in New Zealand--a hardship that Landfall, in principle and practice, attempted to alleviate by paying as much as it could for contributions;

My first story (juvenilia of course) was published over thirteen years ago. I had sixteen of such stories published--stories not collected into Immanuel's Land--without payment. I shouldn't think that over ten years I ever made more than twenty pounds a year from writing, literary journalism, etc. I may have risen once, since then, to a hundred and fifty pounds in one year. I received nothing for 'Towards the Mountains'--a story I can still think fairly well of. When I was overseas I received ninety pounds for 'Guardian'--and I can see many faults in that story. It's curious comment that writing for children is more lucrative than writing for adults; and here I have robbed Peter, so to speak, to pay Paul; or used the children to subsidize the adults. It's another form of rifling the child allowance.

(Landfall, No. 53, p. 50)

Duggan's part-time jobs are typical of those many New Zealand writers are forced to take on in order to support themselves,

My last job was as a brush-hand, painting the inside of a house. Before that I worked in a venetian blind factory; and before that as correspondence clerk, proof reader, van driver (through all one hot summer collecting suburbia's dirty linen), food canner, etc. The value of this is obscure to me. The money was

useful; and I've never doubted the value of being with people. Je suis un homme pour qui le monde exterieur existe. The disadvantage, for one's writing, is simply the time and energy spent on something other than writing; it prolonged my 'apprenticeship' so to say. I don't know how important a disadvantage that might be.

(Landfall, No. 53, p.51)

Duggan did not submit many stories to Landfall under Brasch's editorship, but those that were published stand out as real achievements of social and personal observation. Blues for Miss Laverty and Riley's Handbook are stories of two people without any sense of purpose to their lives. Miss May Laverty needs "a little human warmth" while Riley is a vagrant,

My person? Undistinguished though I bulk somewhat large even with the weight off. Head naked and eyes protuberant, from smoke or booze or lack of sleep, some trembling of hands.

(Landfall, No. 60, p. 319)

These are stories which beg no questions of a New Zealand location, but their relevance to the social situation in any advanced country makes them applicable to this country. Duggan's style is wordy, particularly in the interior monologue of Riley's Handbook, yet escapes verbosity because of the detachment of mood. In Along Rideout Road That Summer a conversation, typically "Kiwi", is followed by a characteristic Duggan commentary; the conversation:

Gooday. How are yuh?
 All right
 I'm Buster O'Leary.
 I'm Fanny Hohepa.
 Yair, I know.
 It's hot.
 It's hot right enough.
 You can have a swim when you're through.
 Mightn't be a bad idea at that.
 Over there by the trees.
 Yair, I seen it. Like, why don't you join me, eh?

I might
 Go on, you'd love it.
 I might
 Goodoh then, see yuh.

And the commentary,

A genuine crumpy conversation if I ever heard one, darkly reflective of the Socratic method, rich with echoes of the Kantian imperative, it's universal mate, summoning sharply to the minds of each the history of the first trystings of all immortal lovers, the tragic and tangled tale, indeed, of all star-crossed moonings, mum and dad, mister and missus unotoo and all. Enough? I should bloody-well hope so.

(Landfall, No. 65, p. 11)

Of Duggan's stories it can be said "it's universal mate."

C.K. Stead writes,

Maurice Duggan is perhaps better equipped to turn a sentence than any other New Zealand writer. Yet that is not the gift which makes 'Along Rideout Road that Summer' the remarkable story it is. It is not 'prose' that tangles the heel of the father, retreating from his discovery, in the 'bra' of the girl with whom his son has assumed the 'historic disposition of flesh'; not is it 'prose' that sends him stumbling across the field his son has ploughed, 'scattering broadcast the white and shying gulls'. 37

Stead is discussing the style and imagination of the story.

He adds,

A professional critic might well study 'Along Rideout Road that Summer' simply as prose. A second might approach it sociologically, in terms of 'race relations'--and find in it a tone refreshingly casual and wholesome. A third, coming by a different route, might see it as a bringing together of two extremes--the literary and the actual--of the New Zealand consciousness. 38

The third issue is most relevant to this discussion and defines the duality of Duggan's prose. On the one hand is the true realism, and on the other hand the imaginative quality that

37 Stead, C.K., *New Zealand Short Stories*, OUP, (London, 1966), p.xiii

38 Ibid.

becomes, at times, almost surrealistic. Where Duggan shows New Zealand society as distinguishable, he often shows also that there is no distinction from other countries. Professor Rhodes writes of Duggan that,

He has created a world of his own in which the personal vision becomes a desperate comment on the external reality. He is a writer who can be as oblique and involved as he can be direct and simple, and if sometimes his manner has attracted more attention than his matter, his best work has been the result of a disciplined struggle to trace the pattern of sadness, cruelty, lust, deceit, and loneliness that he discerns in life. He makes a point out of its pointlessness. 39

It is the "personal vision" of Duggan which makes his stories as cryptic as they are, but the beauty of their style is hard to miss. Deep down in the short story writer is the poet using the prose form. Duggan writes of contrasts whether it is the anti-Maori bigotry of Mr. O'Leary in Along Rideout Road That Summer or the sentimentality of O'Leary's son Buster. Both characters show the extreme swing of a generation pendulum, and neither character discovers the truth that Duggan seeks in both himself and his stories.

Most critics who have noticed Duggan treat his work warily as if waiting for more evidence on which to base their critiques. Terry Sturm, writing in Landfall in March 1971 (No. 97), describes Duggan as "a difficult writer" and his essay bears out these difficulties of understanding. Sturm presents an interesting and informed pioneer essay on Duggan and says of Duggan that,

Although many of his themes and subjects are similar

39 Rhodes, H. Winston, New Zealand Fiction Since 1945, McIndoe (Dunedin 1968), p.36.

to those of other New Zealand writers, his attitudes towards them are difficult to relate without distortion to any particular pattern in New Zealand fiction. His scepticism about 'certainties' or 'final truths' is much more uncompromising than, for example, Frank Sargeson's.

But what can be related with certainty is the sense that Landfall fiction has come a long way since the war when Duggan's stories are compared with earlier ones published in the quarterly.

While Frank Sargeson is probably the greatest New Zealand pioneer short story writer; O.E. Middleton the most vernacular; and Maurice Duggan the most sophisticated of the contemporary writers; there are also many other Landfall fiction writers whose work is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, in order to show the variety of writers and stories which reflect the sociological theme of "humanization of the landscape", five writers and a few specific stories deserve brief mention. P.J. Wilson, Roderick Finlayson, Maurice Shadbolt, C.K. Stead, and John Caselberg, are as varied as any five writers could be. But their stories are comparable with aspects of the themes of Sargeson, Middleton and Duggan.

The Landfall stories of P.J. Wilson are a contrast to Sargeson's eloquent use of words. Wilson's stories are simply constructed, yet less curt in phraseology than Middleton's stories. End of The River (Landfall, No. 16, pp.302-308), a story told as a first person narrative, shows that Wilson is also concerned with the New Zealand character. The story has

to do with the imminent departure of the narrator's best friend (possibly a homosexual relationship) for England. The lament of the narrator is overt; "He would come back, if he did, one of the most important men in New Zealand in some ways, while my own liberalism would expire among acrid chalk-dust and the crude guffaws of boys." The friend, about to leave for Rome and study towards a doctorate, is the envy of the narrator who sincerely wishes that it was he who would leave "these barbaric shores." The theme of overseas travel as the basic ingredient of intellectual stimulation, and the belief that New Zealand could be a plateau of mediocrity in its social makeup, is a recurrent idea among some segments of the population and a theme of Wilson's story. And yet New Zealand's social philistinism is preferable to the moral ambiguities of Europe and North America. The exaggerated and melodramatic conclusion of Wilson's story would almost approach humour if it were not for the unmistakable sincerity of the lament,

I had lost him at last. My shallow integrity had failed me, while the nub of his conviction carried him far from my grasp to a land from which he might never return, into the ecstatic presence of a God he had made part of him. And on this ominous shore it seemed the mists of Hades slowly descended, enveloping me but leaving him to ride majestically on into a radiance that was denied my sight and a warmth that would never touch my aching heart.

(Landfall, No. 16, p.308)

Wilson's stories grapple with the dichotomy that New Zealand is a country which is hard to come to terms with, yet which has an indescribable magnetic attraction that is impossible to banish. In A Change of Heart,

Away in the distance, across the tumbled hills and gullies, beyond the first miles of half-cleared land, was the main range. It stood out sharp and blue, white-ridged, and the dense, green-black jungle below its snowy skyline seemed...forbidding with a deep-seated menace. Even from the road that untrailed country, inhabited by only a few remaining Maoris and their dogs, had something eery about it. There was a suggestion of cruelty and dark hate in the sodden bush and icy white water of the falls, in the impenetrable undergrowth he remembered well, and in the black impassable gorges with their outcroppings of unscalable rock. It was an uncanny feeling, and now its brooding suspense was heightened by the storm-heavy sky. (Landfall, No. 19, p.179)

It is as though the land were alive with images haunting the artist's mind. Wilson is frank about his uncertainties.

Farm For Sale is an interesting narrative based on factual information. The theme is the uprooted sense of a farmer, Harry, "who had been looking for a farm for nearly a year, ever since he'd sold his old place in the Waikato and gone south to buy something else." (Landfall, No. 36, p. 280). There is a notable comparison between this story and T.H. Scott's South Island Journal (Landfall, No. 16) Just as the geographical insularity of New Zealand and Australia has allowed two different countries to develop along individual lines, so Cook Strait, to a much lesser extent, has allowed the two main islands of New Zealand to develop different characteristics. T.H. Scott wrote,

When I left the North Island and came to the South to live, I felt immediately and overwhelmingly that I had come to a quite different country. It was not merely that I had new work to do and new people to work with. It was not the inevitable strangeness one experiences in a new city till one gets one's bearings. Nor was it the subtle difference one feels about the people themselves--things one notices first perhaps, as I did, in the slowness of traffic and folk on the streets, and their freedom from the sense of urgency I had been used to.

That kind of thing one is prepared for; it is soon absorbed and one is perhaps mellowed in some indefinable way as a consequence.

It was something else. For it stayed with me, this feeling, for a year or more...

(Landfall, No. 16, p. 289)

In Wilson's story Harry is specific in his preference for the South Island,

'The south is much the best place to live in,' he had told me.

'How's that?' I said.

'The people are the sort I understand,' he said.

'Not like these jumped-up Waikato types I've been working among for the past few years. And it's more civilized down there. Life is more stable and people are more considerate.

(Landfall, No. 36, p.281)

But Harry was a "puritan" and an "idealist" who "In his imagination...used to live in the old free-and-easy friendly pioneer days, and he tried to make his own existence approximate to that life, an aim natural enough I suppose for someone who was brought up in the bush." Scott's image of the South Island was idealistic as well. There is particularly the sense of underpopulation in the southern region;

Yet immediately in the South Island I had sensed this strangeness, as if I had stepped into a world of a different order, the meaning of which I could not grasp. Looking back I see how it had begun to touch off my imagination without my being able to tell why. For though I had explored the Port Hills and gazed south and north over the plains, there was a sense in which I had felt that everything was exactly as I had always expected it to be. It was only after I had seen more of the country that I realized that this impression had quite misled me. For only then did I discover that there on the hills the feeling of strangeness had been present too. I had been feeling there the edge of something, as it were, as one glimpses and is disturbed by the inside of a room from things seen just outside.

(Landfall, No. 16, p.290)

The land becomes humanized by such reflection, and the difference between the North and South Islands--as much a question of light, shadows, and colours, as one of topography--is determined in the mind of one perceptive observer. The idea of the "personality of the land" is a part of Wilson's story. Harry is a farmer/businessman, full of ideals, but harried by the landgrabbers who infest the land that is more to him than a simple investment,

'Harry's a stubborn chap,' I said. 'To him farming is something that shouldn't be mixed up in things like that. His standards and ideals are different from most people's, and you can be mighty sure that he wants to retain them. Yes, even if it means returning to the slavery of a dairy farm for the rest of his life.

(Landfall, No. 36, p.287)

Harry's "failure in Christchurch was a shock to him." The man of ideals and dreams had collided with the sort of dishonesty towards land purchase which brought about the darkest age of New Zealand's European history and the "theft" of Maori land--at least theft as the Maoris understood the value of land. Harry realized,

...that the man who was selling that property had lied to him about the quality and condition of the land, had asked an exorbitant price and hadn't even told him he would have to pay for his irrigation water. All his personal beliefs were contradicted. He took it very hard, and it was a blow to his ideals...

(Landfall, No. 36, p.282)

Wilson's fine story captures a less palatable aspect of life in New Zealand where a man with ideas of fair play finds his attitude at variance with the rigours of capitalism, profit motive and dishonesty. In a sense it is the story of a rural inhabitant confronting the new morality of the city and finding

that his own strict code of ethics is no longer entirely relevant. Wilson, like Middleton and Sargeson, is an economic writer painting a vivid picture in few words. It is unfortunate that Wilson was not published in Landfall Country, particularly when his story Farm For Sale is both competent and exacting in its literary and social aspects.

Wilson's contributions to Landfall diminish after 1955. The Breaking Point is a story of loneliness and desolation. Jack and Pip come close to a separation when they visit the isolated shack that could become their home. It is a personal and simple story of human emotions "out here in these barren bush-fired hills at the end of the clay road from the Caves." (Landfall, No. 47, p. 210). The problems of living far from towns and cities are acute for people unwilling to embrace a pioneer spirit,

'You know I like the country and the bush. But how can two people live together in one room like that? Not even any sanitation.'

The Juryman's Tale is another story showing Wilson's concern for individuals facing injustice or social imposition. It is a classic account of a situation where property rights overrule human rights. A Maori truck driver, his hand smashed in a truck accident, is not awarded the "five thousand smacks" he believes to be his due as a result of his disability. When the verdict of "No damages to be awarded" is given the juryman is left "...there in the box with the agony of our humiliation and our shame." (Landfall, No. 55, p.242). The story emphasizes the author's empathy with the downtrodden--though one cannot

be certain that the plaintiff's Maori heritage is not designed to heighten the injustice. After all, there are a great many Maori truck drivers.

Apart from book reviews, Wilson's final submission to Landfall under Charles Brasch is a recollection of James Courage. Wilson could be writing of himself when he writes of Courage,

He was a writer of meticulous taste, who wrote a clear stubborn prose and had the highest concern for formal matters in his art.

(Landfall, No. 71, p.234)

Courage's fear of New Zealand's outlook on life was "...the puritan narrowness, the hardness and rawness of New Zealand as he remembered it." Wilson attacked this narrowness without escape to the northern antipodes or an unhappy self-exile. Like other writers who have braved the apathetic artistic climate of New Zealand, Wilson had, perhaps, more courage than those who left this country but could never forget it.

Roderick Finlayson, like David Ballantyne, published only two stories in Landfall. This is surprising when considering Finlayson's reputation as the author of Brown Man's Burden (1938), a major attempt by a pakeha writer to comprehend the fundamental differences between pakeha and Maori New Zealanders. Sweet Beulah Land (1942) is another major contribution of New Zealand literature. Perhaps Finlayson's stories are more interesting for their substance than for their craftsmanship as he is one of the very few New Zealand

writers who has been able to write about the Maori people on their own cultural terms, without sentimentality or patronisation. E.H. McCormick, in his role as doyen of New Zealand critics, writes of Finlayson,

Finlayson's work is often so good, occasionally so profound that one is puzzled by its failure to amount, in the total, to something more impressive. A tangible answer to a complex question lies in the writer's indifference to the refinements of his chosen form. His fiction reveals small interest in technique and of external influence scarcely a trace. Thus in presenting Maori speech he usually adopts a convention current in journalism for half a century, the staccato English sentence sprinkled with 'Ehoas!' and 'Py korrys!' Though the convention works, it imperfectly represents the original, and at times it betrays the author into a condescending attitude that is far removed from his intentions. This acceptance of the ready-made, together with other features of Finlayson's writing--the loose-ends, the solecisms, the home-spun philosophy--blunt the force of his fiction and weaken the impact of his massive integrity. Artlessness has its own virtues and its own peculiar strength; but in the long run it is no substitute for art. 40

McCormick is being reasonably fair in this summation of Finlayson, and goes on to say that "If one speaks of art in reference to contemporary New Zealand fiction, that is largely due to the achievement of Frank Sargeson." As a critic, McCormick cannot lower his sights when it comes to craftsmanship and artistic standard, but he has also recognized the great significance of Finlayson's "profundity." In the cause of a maturity of attitude and a depth of substance one might hazard the suggestion that these merits may "substitute for art" in the short run as the building stones of a country's

40 McCormick, E.H., New Zealand Literature, OUP, (London, 1959, p.132.

literary character. Again, however, such acceptance ranges perilously close to "literary adolescence" and the contagious double standard.

If other pakeha writers are any indication, it seems virtually impossible to translate Maori expressions into the English language. Sylvia Ashton-Warner's book Greenstone approaches Maoritanga with an almost poetic quality as if she were translating Maori myths,

"This is the greenstone Takarangi. Your ancestors all wore it. Tikawe wore it, your grandmother Whai wore it, your mother Kaa wore it and soon you are to wear it and your first daughter will wear it and so through the generations. It is passed over while the wearer is still alive so that it always remains warm. The greenstone Takarangi has never grown cold.

"This greenstone Takarangi is alive..."⁴¹

Such writing has no intention of recreating an aural Maori idiom. It is straight pakeha-English conveying the cultural beliefs of the Maori. Finlayson attempted a further step--the sounds of Maori English on pakeha ears--and this McCormick believes to have failed. Finlayson recognizes the axiom that the Maori way of speaking is the only legitimate means of communicating Maori culture and thought-process, and if he falls short in the translating, Finlayson can be aptly regarded as a writer of significant social pieces.

In Beginnings (Landfall, No. 77) Finlayson condemned 'bur ruthlessly technological and acquisitive society" and

41 Ashton-Warner, Sylvia, Greenstone, Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd., (London, 1966), p. 140.

found among the Maoris, his friends, an alternative to the way of life of which he so strenuously disapproved,

As always with the rebel, I turned away from the crowd, away from the content and the self-satisfied. I turned from the Pakeha and turned to the Maori. Due perhaps to some quirk of far and ancient ancestry, but certainly not to any studied attempt at understanding, I found it natural for me to identify myself with the Maori. I, a Pakeha, can be Maori when I wish--or perhaps I am mostly Maori and can play Pakeha only when I try hard. So it didn't surprise me that sometime before I was twenty, arriving as it were out of nowhere, yet I was welcomed into a Maori home, accepted as one of the family and soon admitted to and even consulted in their family discussions. For me it was the most natural place to be, and those things the most natural for me to do. Dear old Honi Ngawhika one night said to me, 'Roddy, I don't know how it is, but I know you are not a Pakeha, Roddy. You are a Maori.'

(Landfall, No. 77, p.77)

Finlayson owed his beginnings as a short story writer to the encouragement of D'Arcy Cresswell. In a tribute to his patron, with whom he worked on farms during the Depression, Finlayson recalled a confrontation in a pub that embraces more than one classic attitude towards different peoples;

We called in at a little country pub for a beer and in the bar we met a young man I knew. He was quarter Maori and rather touchy, never quite able to make the most of either world let alone both.

I introduced D'Arcy who made some friendly remark, but the younger man was in one of his moods having already had a few beers.

'You are an Englishman' he said to D'Arcy.

'No, a New Zealander,' D'Arcy replied.

'But you speak as an Englishman.' The quarter Maori had a pleasant voice and spoke finely enunciated English as many Maori or part Maori people do.

'Now I am a true (*italics*) New Zealander' he declared.

'So am I' (*sic*) D'Arcy replied quietly but also standing on his dignity, looking down his nose as he did at such times.

'No you are not.'

'But I am.'

'Then why speak like a bloody Englishman?'

'I speak as I was brought up to speak' D'Arcy said.
 'And I have lived many years in England.
 'Well' said the young man. 'You will go back to England
 and you will stay there. Only do not imagine that you
 will be any happier there or that the English will
 welcome you. I too have been there.'

He banged his glass down and stalked out of the bar.
 And D'Arcy thoughtfully rolled himself a smoke.

This episode is carefully told so that the balance between
 opponents is not lost. It had more than simply passing
 significance to the writer.

Finlayson's first Landfall story, A Little Gift for Harry
 (Landfall, No. 24), again shows a keen knowledge of the Maori
 people, and contains some of the dialectical interchanges
 McCormick finds farfetched,

'Hello, Meri!...You see, you people, my prayer
 answered, eh?' His big honest face shone with
 simple pleasure. 'Now I never need keep that
 holy medal no more. Perhaps it not so good for
 a fellow like me to keep it now and never go to
 church. I don't know.'

(Landfall, No. 24, p.300)

The little gift for Harry is an American dime which holds the
 value of a "phoney holy medal." The girl, Meri, is at the
 tangi and remains disinterested in Harry's show of affection
 for her. Harry leaves for the city with the coin in his pocket,
 and, comforting himself that Meri would be unhappy in the city
 anyway, keeps the battered medal as a memory of their parting.
 The story reveals Finlayson's understanding of the unsettling
 rift between the urban experience of Maoris and their traditional
 life of the marae. It is the difference between maoritanga and
 materialism. Finlayson would agree with one Maori leader,
 Mrs. Whetu Tirikatene Sullivan, the Member for Southern Maori
 in Parliament, that Maoris who leave the marae for the city

become members of an urban proletariat where, to some extent, they lose their identity and cultural heritage.

Finlayson's second story, The Bulls, is the story of a bull being ringed in the nose. The confrontation between the male symbol of the life force and the marks imposed on this symbol by a human plan is the action of this story. While the incident could occur in any agricultural country, the specification that Steve is "the drover from Matapoi" identifies the exact location.

E.H. McCormick's observation that Finlayson's art is erratic in standard may be accepted, but Finlayson's Landfall stories provide two important insights into New Zealand society. The first insight is Finlayson's unmistakable compassion and empathy for the Maori consciousness. There might be shortcomings in the presentation of Maori speech, a shortcoming that Middleton so excellently overcame with reference to pakeha speech. But Finlayson is one of the few pakeha writers whose concern for the Maori people is void of patronizing insincerity. Instead, as Finlayson clarifies in Beginnings, the reader is left with a real sense that Maoritanga has much to teach pakeha New Zealand culture. Finlayson, like F.E. Maning in Old New Zealand, might be the best contemporary pakeha/Maori short story writer. The second insight is Finlayson's concern for the impersonality of the city. While examples of "outsiders" in New Zealand cities are usually Maoris in Finlayson's stories, there is the haunting suspicion that the city alienates all inhabitants in one way or another. The culture of the cities,

as Professor Rhodes describes a post-war literary trend in New Zealand literature, is the most notable new theme among contemporary short story writers. Life in the cities is more sophisticated than that in war or during childhood, so the urban theme necessarily becomes a part of the New Zealand writer's concern as the cities expand. It is Finlayson's grasp of the themes of Maori consciousness and the urban scene that makes his Landfall stories important from the sociological viewpoint. Perhaps the themes are larger than Finlayson's capacity to present fine art, but, in an age of literary pioneers, there is merit in a writer's understanding of, and concern for, his social environment.

Maurice Shadbolt, best known for his novel This Summer's Dolphin, was first published in Landfall with the story Sing Again Tomorrow (Landfall, No. 36). The story of youths and their girlfriends at a country dance underlines aspects of jealousy between males and females. The strength of the story is in its ability to illustrate inner emotions. Another story, End of Season, views the landscape from a passing car where the sight of a girl triggers "funny things" in the narrator's mind. The description of the landscape is equally vivid in effect;

Unsheltered, stilted up on high foundations, the Kahu house stood in a flat open space of swampy country. It was small and boxlike, unpainted, with a sagging front verandah. Cowbails and several old sheds of varying sizes stood to the rear; circling the whole group of buildings was a thin line of

recently-planted young trees, touched with a new green. Fences spoked out over the unattractive land; some twisted and half-fallen, others, newly-wired, spearing stiffly upright. Cows grazed, slack-bellied after spring birth or still heavy with calf.

(Landfall, No. 40, p.295)

Shadbolt's characters are often driving past sights and reflecting on them. In a very real sense the outside world beyond the car windows affects the inner thoughts of the people inside--most of whom are young and emotional. In Play The Fife Lowly (Landfall, No. 41) Helen and Gerald are once again riding along;

She recognized his mood as they drove to the party; he sat stiffly silent behind the wheel, his impassive face flickered by light and she knew he would be examining a new approach, calculating her response. She was almost certainly in for another serious talk: in his delightfully subtle fashion he had even prepared the way, at dinner, by telling her about his new promotion at the office.

The street into which the car turned was broad and prosperous, with large white homes set back among ordered tangles of dark greenery. Streetlamps, obscured by trees, sprinkled winking lights over the car-bonnet.

(Landfall, No. 41, p.37)

The vernacular story concludes with a broken-hearted Helen running past environmental structures that are personified in description,

Somewhere, somehow, she must have taken a wrong turning. She was, suddenly, quite lost; the familiar part of the city was vanished behind her; ahead it was new and strange. Sagging and weed-tangled, rickety buildings conjured from nightmare lined her way: and the hollow eyes of unlighted windows.

(Landfall, No. 41, p.53)

And, as "the wind grieved through overhead wires" the story ends with a jilted girl in her friend's arms.

Shadbolt's best Landfall story, printed also in Landfall Country, is entitled After the Depression. It is a highly descriptive story, set firmly in the New Zealand political and geographical environment. A couple and their baby are on their way to a remote mining town--probably on the South Island's West Coast--where the husband, William Morrison, has been offered employment. As the story unfolds it becomes evident that Morrison is a radical union-man, bent on changing the existing relations between labour and management. It is a story of complacent workers who, though dissatisfied with their lot, are unwilling to jeopardize their jobs by complaints or strikes. They are unwilling to lose "their square ugly homes with strips of gardens and patches of lawn." (Landfall, No. 48, p.331) The ending is an abrupt and anti-climactic finish to an effective story, except for the image of the couple plodding three miles back to the railway station from where they had recently walked,

'Where we going?' the child said.
 'Shush,' said the woman. 'Daddy's taking us.'
 The sun sank; the valley was shadowed. In the east
 the clouds were pale and curdled; in the west they were
 gold and pink.

'Why?' said the child.
 (Landfall, No. 48, p.331)

The child's question is a moralistic conclusion to a story which illustrates Shadbolt's vivid description of a fact in New Zealand labour-management relations and the deep historic significance of these relations to New Zealand. The surrounding landscape described in the story appears weirdly relevant to the psychological problems of the Depression years and the immediate aftermath in a country which suffered extensively and

reacted with radical reforms,

The sun warmed the pale sky, lighting a landscape stripped and harsh. On the upper slopes of the hills, where limestone outcrops stood gaunt against the sky, were long-dead trees, tangled and whitened, and giant ulcers of erosion scabbed with weeping crusts of clay and papa; on lower ground lank wire fences straggled about small pine-sheltered farmhouses. Loose-bellied cows grazed on pasture of dead green colour. The road unwound slowly, a thin strip of clay and bluish metal edged with ti-tree and gorse. They came, at length, to a crossroad...
(Landfall, No. 48, p.323-4)

The omens inferred from the hostile landscape show that the author sees the environment as a setting for the plot of the story.

The Room, published in Landfall in 1962, is a sentimental story of a dead girl and her loneliness. It is another example of Shadbolt's ability to let his characters live naturally in their respective situations. They live, remember, and die in a familiar way, "In a world where uncertainty was the rule..."
(Landfall, No. 63, p. 231)

C.K. Stead's single Landfall story, A Race Apart, was chosen for Landfall Country. The story begins at the end, setting out information, and returning to the pages of a diary. The diary, written by the aristocratic lady of an English household, provides a formal literary style for the narrative. The story concerns the clear difference in attitude between a travelling New Zealander and the English aristocracy. Andrew Nicholson, who happens to be a top athlete, is the New Zealander working as chauffeur for the

English family. He sees the job as working employment while he travels, but his employers, oblivious to the theories of New Zealand egalitarianism, see him as one of the servants--yet, because of his education and eloquence, he soon becomes a friend of the family. The writer of the diary talks to Nicholson in the crucial part of the story where the author's own opinion seems to be exercised;

I...questioned Nicholson further. He had been brought up, he said, in the country. His father ran cattle on the slopes of a mountain range and made extra money dragging timber from the forests with a bullock team. He added that he hoped this information satisfied my feeling for the romance of a far-flung Empire.

It did. Life in the colonies has fascinated me since I first read about them as a girl. I wanted to talk to Nicholson reasonably--to learn something. But there was nothing one could do with (his) sulky, boyish aggressiveness.

--What are New Zealand cities like? I asked

He said that at least the sun knew how to shine on them.

--I suppose there are wonderful opportunities for modern architecture in a young country.

I had seen a design for an opera house in Australia which made me think this was probably so. I was surprised to see that Nicholson thought I was joking.

--New Zealand is a spiritual dependency of Europe, he said with heavy sarcasm. Australia too. Surely you've heard that, Everything we have out there is an inferior copy of a European model.

(Landfall, No. 54, pp.142-143)

The classic misinterpretations implied here are very likely closely connected with the author's satiric opinion. But Nicholson's homing instinct is not satisfied. He breaks his back in a car accident and marries the Honourable Clara Smith-Withers, a woman "well-known in Red Cross circles". Despite his injury Nicholson was no longer socially a member of "a race apart." But there is the ever-present suspicion that the ex-patriate New Zealander in the story must do

something dramatic before being acceptable by other people's standards. Stead's story is a subtle satire on the fantasies of both Englishmen and New Zealanders, and the tale of "a race apart" is more a declaration of independence than a sense of alienation.

It should not be presumed that all successful Landfall stories have a sociological reference. In fact many stories succeed because there is no social comment, and some, like those of Maurice Duggan, are as significant for technique and artistry as for substance. Many competent stories had an esoteric quality, and the last writer to be mentioned will be John Caselberg.

Caselberg's stories can be appreciated for their lyricism and weird effects since there is no attempt at portraying the sociological imagination. The stories are examples of an intense subjectivity, and remain obscure and cryptic.

John Caselberg's four Landfall stories are stylistically distinct from others published in the periodical. Caselberg is a minor writer as far as quantity is concerned, but in his delight in the poetic description of the landscape and natural elements he is an important New Zealand writer. Frequently there is a psychological vision joined by a variety of surreal images,

Sometime after dark a bright star came up over the mountains. It shone out of the lustre of the sky onto black-etched summits of the mountain barrier, half-lit the shapes of cliffs and falling ridges, showed by their furrowed gloom mazes of gullies

and gorges in the valley below, and shone a little on pools in the river.

(Landfall, No. 24, p.304)

The story, Which Red Heart, is perhaps more a series of images than a story. It is a narration of natural activities choreographed by an unseen force until "The bright star disappeared and mist rose in the valley." The Halt (Landfall, No. 38) is another cryptic story containing passages suggestive of Maori legend, and often even resembling the tone of legends of the North American Indians in an Australian setting.

Today they would go down from the jumbled ridges to meet Wonambi, the huge man-eating snake, who long ago had thrown up Gondiri, Nullabor, this giant plain; of whom they had heard far away in the north in her own land; who even now guarded its water-holes and stood sometimes upright and threatening to the top of the sky...

(Landfall, No. 38, p.100)

Earth Water Fire Air is dedicated to Thor thus exemplifying the supernatural quintessence of Caselberg's stories. His interest in the elements presents a picture most unlike New Zealand. But, as in most of Caselberg's stories, the aura is more important than the location. Eli Eli Lama Sabachthani, published in Landfall, No. 41, and also in Landfall Country, is certainly Caselberg's most consistent Landfall story and the biblical context places elemental descriptions in a primordial perspective. It is a picture of a planet in turmoil with a molecular beginning turning to the creation of life in the shape of a fish. The spectacular life force begins its symbiotic existence with the natural elements;

He broke to the surface, stretched his neck and peered at the ice-flow ahead, dived opening and closing his bill consuming the euphasid, sped for

thirty yards under the surface then, in mid-dash, jerked his tail back and up and his curved body up and shot propelled out of the water into the full blaze of the sun.

(Landfall, No. 41, p.20)

If Caselberg's stories prove one thing it is that Landfall fiction could be noted as much for its variety as for its standard and the sociological reference.

Landfall published, between 1947 and 1966, a varied selection of New Zealand short stories. Some were nebulous, some excellent, some disappointing and none very bad. It would be unfair to capsule the stories of the first eighty issues for qualitative criticism since the short story is a continuing tradition and Landfall, like The Listener under Holcroft, has never attempted to sponsor and promote a specific school of writers. Consequently identifiable trends are hard to determine. The short story has proved to be a difficult medium for successful results, and a popular medium for mediocre results, but Charles Brasch understood the significance of the story to New Zealand culture and tried, with considerable success, to banish the mediocre and banal story. The stories that do not seem to work too well may have the reverse effect on the taste of different critics. It is true to say that Landfall's stories have progressed from simple war stories and tales of childhood to mature illustrations of social and personal conditions of people in the New Zealand environment. Landfall's stories, as Joan Stevens said, "focus on a moment only" (N.Z. Short Stories, Price Milburn), and illuminate the situation of life in "Landfall country".

The short story writer in New Zealand has another task besides artistic merit. He must use his imagination to interpret his experience. Charles Brasch wrote in 1948,

...we know very little about each other at more than a superficial level; we display our bodies freely, but keep our thoughts to ourselves...The jealous conformity of New Zealand society and its refusal to countenance any deviation from the 'normal', betrays the same uncertainty. Its reactions have a dual nature, for they are also those of a frontier society closing its ranks against the enemy without--the unreconciled vastness of the natural surroundings.

(Landfall, No. 7, p.169)

Reconciliation with self and society is the writer's need if he is not to write in a vacuum.

Public disinterest has been the main plague of the New Zealand short story writer. The reading public consists of an already converted audience even though independent publications like Landfall are available at a smaller cost than most books. There has been the problem of the loss of expatriate writers such as Katherine Mansfield. But, as Brasch pointed out,

Other writers, pursuing their art single-mindedly, found New Zealand intolerable, inimical to the arts and to any freedom of life and spirit--as it was, as it is only now ceasing to be--and left it to live abroad. Frank Sargeson went abroad and returned to live as a writer, and a writer only, in New Zealand; which meant, at that time, to live as a virtual outcast from society. By his courage and his gifts he showed that it was possible to be a writer and contrive to live, somehow, in New Zealand, and all later writers are in his debt.

(Landfall, No. 25, p.3)

It is a fact that too many writers are forced for financial reasons to write only as a pastime and to carry out alternative employment. While Landfall helped significantly

to "lay foundations" (No. 40, p.276) in the building of a New Zealand culture, the short stories which appeared in its pages reveal that the task of establishing a short story tradition has only just begun. The post-war years, however, will in retrospect probably appear to future critics as the crucial changeover from adolescence to maturity in style, technique and substance. Brasch believes that "...literature is rooted in history" and that,

A work of literature, to be read justly, has to be placed in its setting of ideas and movements, in the stream of human history; only then will it yield its full meaning.

(Landfall, No. 73, p.3)

Landfall's short stories are experiments in truth and prove that New Zealand is living by "an imaginative light of its own." The relevance of the short story is its parabolical and illustrative quality and the focussing on the nerves of human experience. C.K. Stead eloquently captures the relevance of these foci;

Why are (short story) scenes memorable? Why is one compelled--by that power which belongs uniquely to fiction--to store them as if they were real? It is not to an 'idea' one has responded. There is, I suppose it may be said, a 'perception'--about our society, about ourselves--bodied forth in these scenes; but if so, it is a perception more comprehensive, more satisfying, and more general (its instance being more particular) than anything which may be stated in intellectual terms. 42

LANDFALL AND THE MAORI

The Maori has had little influence on New Zealand literature, but a brief chapter is necessary to comment on the sparse but important submissions of Maori poets and pakeha critics to Landfall.

There are two main reasons for the lack of Maori influence on New Zealand literature. First, the English language is not yet fully accepted by the Maori as the medium of cultural expression. In fact, English is a second language to the Maori and has not yet (if indeed it ever will) displaced the Maori language. Second, the Maori culture in the past has been passed from one generation to another orally so that there is no written culture or literature. This second reason might allow English to increase in importance as the medium of Maori creative writers because of the scope of its vocabulary and linguistic flexibility, but it may never replace the Maori language as the basis of Maori culture or Maoritanga.

Only three Maori poets contributed to Landfall; Rarawa Kerehoma, Hone Tuwhare, and Rowley Habib. Hone Tuwhare, who began writing seriously as late as 1956 at the age of thirty four, has been actively involved with Maori affairs. Tuwhare is a socialist who has worked for the Maori Advancement Committee and the Te Mahoe Local of the New Zealand Workers Union. Tuwhare's considerable significance as a creative writer is that he has turned political commitment into a personal literary commitment. In a foreword to Tuwhare's first

collection of poems R.A.K. Mason wrote in February 1963,

After many generations of racial intermingling in our country, things have become interfused: in poetry, as in life itself, this is manifested in many forms. Here--and I think this is for the first time--is a member of the Maori race qualifying as a poet in English and in the idiom of his own generation, but still drawing his main strength from his own people. 1

Tuwhare is the most significant Maori poet writing in English and has published in Landfall, The Listener, Te Ao Hou, Northland Magazine, Motive, Mate, and other periodicals.

Tuwhare's first Landfall poem, "Lament", was "suggested by a Tangi in Sir George Grey's Nga Moteatea." The distinctive qualities of this poem are the first elegaic stanzas,

In that strident summer of battle
 when cannon-grape and ball
 tore down the pointed walls
 and women snarled as men
 and blood boiled in the eyes:
 in the proud winter of defeat
 he stood unwearied
 and a god among men.
 (Landfall, No. 45, p.45)

and the final acceptance of death,

I bear no malice, let none stain my valedictions
 For I am at one with the wind
 the clouds' heave and the slapping rain
 the tattered sky and the wild solitude
 of the sea and the streaming earth
 which I kneel to kiss.....

Both quotations show Tuwhare to be a competent poet while their substance refers directly to the Maori "in the proud winter of defeat" and his bearing of "no malice." If there is a double entendre in these stanzas it is certainly calculated.

1 Tuwhare, Hone, No Ordinary Sun, Longman Paul Ltd., (Auckland, 1969). First published September 1964. P.5, foreword.

Rarawa Kerehoma published a lament in Landfall, No. 56, entitled "Waiata Tangi" and translated by Barry Mitcalfe. The poem was originally written for an English and Maori opera called "Tangaroa." The most notable quality of this poem is its sensitivity to natural things.

The smallest fern,
 Even the mamaku
 That hangs of its own weight down
 Is stronger than I.
 (Landfall, No. 56, p.323)

Rowley Habib, the third Maori poet to publish in Landfall was born of a Maori mother and a Syrian father. This background perhaps helps to explain why Habib's poetry is very different from that of Tuwhare and Kerehoma. There is the same emphasis on natural elements,

Fall undaunted spring rain. Fall unheeded
 Straight and true to the earth.
 Fall. Fall. Straight and true.
 (Landfall, No. 57, p.30)

But there is an underlining of subjective feeling that is less concerned with Maori culture than is the poetry of Tuwhare and Kerehoma,

O let me see the blossoms swell amid the magic of your
 /falling,
 Let me see the heavy-leaved trees
 Bow with the weight of your waters upon them.

Habib is a more cosmopolitan poet who submits to nature ("I submit myself to you") in a deeply personal, non-political manner. Habib, Tuwhare and Kerehoma, appeared in Landfall between 1958 and 1962. No more of their poems appeared in the quarterly under Brasch's editorship.

Charles Brasch had a definite idea of the significance of Maori culture for New Zealand. He saw the Maori ancestors as a different form of occupation in the land. In a recent interview, Brasch described a wartime collection of poems, Disputed Ground, as being,

"...provoked by the threat of death at the beginning of the war--I don't mean personally, but just the general threat that overhung everything. It was then I wrote the 'Islands' poems. The threat was a treath to New Zealand too, to the whole of civilization." 2

Brasch is unafraid to use the word 'civilization', and when his poem "Forerunners" is quoted it seems that the word does not apply exclusively to European civilization;

Not by us was the unrecorded stillness
Broken, and in their monumental dawn
The rocks, the leaves unveiled;
Those who were before us trod first the soil

And named the bays and mountains; while round them spread
The indefinable currents of the human,
That still about their chosen places
Trouble the poignant air.

But their touch was light; warm in their hearts holding
The land's image, they had no need to impress themselves
Like conquerors, scarring it with vain memorials,
They had no fear of being forgotten.

In the face of our different coming they retreated,
But without panic, not disturbing the imprint
Of their living upon the air, which continued
To speak of them to the rocks and the sombre, guarded lakes.

The earth holds them
As the mountains hold the shadows by day
In their powerful repose, only betrayed by a lingering
Twilight in the hooded ravines.

2 This interview, "Conversation with Charles Brasch," was conducted by Ian Milner in Landfall, No. 100 (pp.344-372). This reply appeared on page 366. It is one of the most important features ever printed in Landfall.

Behind our quickness, our shallow occupation of the easier
 Landscape, their unprotesting memory
 Mildly hovers, surrounding us with perspective,
 Offering soil for our rootless behaviour.

Brasch's tribute to the Maori people implies a criticism of his own culture and its weaknesses. In the Maori Brasch saw a people who had succeeded in humanizing the landscape long before the European came. Alan Mulgan writes that,

Charles Brasch...has expressed the idea that the Maori occupation was warmer and more understanding than ours... In other words, the European's way to true possession is through the Maori. I am sure Mr. Brasch does not wish us to take him with complete literalness. After all that has happened, it is impossible that the European should have no roots here. His love for the country is beyond question. 3

A critic who has read Landfall carefully must add immediately that Brasch's love for New Zealand is "beyond question."

Brasch has been instrumental in strengthening European "roots" in this country, and his belief that the Maori settlement "was warmer and more understanding than ours" is solely of cultural significance. A hunting and gathering society has a much closer contact with the landscape than has an advanced industrial state with its techniques of exploitation. As "Forerunners" so eloquently states, the Maori looked around his country "And named the bays and mountains."

The pressure of the second world war had prompted Brasch to praise the Maori while reproving "our shallow occupation," and Mulgan's comment suggests a balance. But the sentiment expressed by Brasch is in accord with the spirit of all

3 Mulgan, Alan, The Making of a New Zealander, A.H. & A.W. Reed, (Wellington, 1959), p.148.

Europeans who have attempted to know and respect the Maori by studying his ways. From Sir George Grey to Dr. Bill Pearson, pakeha scholars generally have admired and respected the Maori and his culture.

Charles Brasch seldom wrote about the Maori people in his quarterly Notes. But, in 1959, he was prompted to condemn an omission by the New Zealand Broadcasting Service (NZBS) when a resolution at a Writers' Conference opposing the exclusion of Maoris from a South Africa-bound All Black team was not mentioned in broadcast. Brasch was angered by what he called "a piece of censorship."

The ban on broadcast news of the controversy over Maoris and All Blacks is (or was) clearly a piece of censorship imposed on the N.Z.B.S. by the Government; which shows once again the folly of keeping the Broadcasting Service as a government department. It was a particularly inept piece of censorship when newspapers had been full of the subject almost daily for months, and while the N.Z.B.S. continued to report developments at Little Rock.

(Landfall, No. 52, p.297)

Later, in 1960, Brasch overtly condemned racist sport;

This country will not easily regain the good name it has lost by excluding Maoris from the All Black team chosen to play against South Africa. Official New Zealand, by approving of their exclusion, has made racial discrimination respectable at home just as it was being most widely condemned abroad. Discrimination was introduced by the country's greatest sporting body, the Rugby Union, and has been given what amounts to the highest possible sanction, by the Government and the Opposition, that is by both political parties; by the late Anglican Archbishop; and by the leading newspapers (The Auckland Star and the Christchurch Star honourably excepted).

All of them deny, of course, that what they have sanctioned is racial discrimination, to which they declare they are totally opposed. They agree that Maoris as such must not be

refused a drink at a hotel; yet they are ready to see Maoris as such excluded from a football team going to South Africa. Why this discrimination between acts of discrimination? What is the difference?

(Landfall, No. 54, p.115)

Brasch went on to say that "a principle of greater importance" than "the activities of a sporting body" was involved. The principle was "that of equality for Maori and pakeha." This was to be Brasch's strongest observation concerning Maoris. His censure of such government 'madness' was one of the strongest social comments ever voiced by the editor or by a contributor to Landfall, and he made no attempt to hide his outrage by pious indignation. His attack was blunt,

Discrimination against Maoris has always existed in practice, and always been condemned--until now. Now that it has been accepted in this one instance, it cannot easily be condemned in other instances, still less in principle. What is the criterion by which some people are fully New Zealanders and others are not? If it is race one day, it will be religion or politics or morals the next. If discrimination is admissible against Maoris, on any pretext whatever, it will be equally admissible against other groups, no matter what they are: Catholics, Jews, Quakers, atheists, freemasons, everyone not born in New Zealand.

(Landfall, No. 54, pp.115-116)

When it was a question of principle Brasch never couched his displeasure, and this scolding was a firm statement upholding the tenets of racial equality and harmony in New Zealand.

Other pakeha writers and scholars have also taken a personal interest in the Maori. In almost all cases the attitude of these people has been strongly in favour of the Maori as a humane and noble people tarnished by European

influence. Some of the best pakeha writing on the Maori has been produced by Dr. Bill Pearson of the University of Auckland. In an article, Attitudes to the Maori in Some Pakeha Fiction, Dr. Pearson blames the pakeha for "Hongi's murderous campaign."

We should recall that in pre-European times the Maori were an industrious people, that their main energies went to producing food and clothing and shelter with primitive implements, that their tribal fighting was confined to the season between planting and harvesting. It was after the Pakeha's introduction of the musket that fighting became so fierce, so destructive and depopulating.⁴

And he accepts the Maori saying that "...the white man's peace was more devastating than his wars." Dr. Pearson tends to favour the Maori and to give him the benefit of the doubt "...as an outsider or debutant in New Zealand society, individually or communally."⁵ A second article, The Maori and Literature 1939-65, continues the study made in the first article, but there is an inference that a previously submerged Maori expression promises to be revealed by Maori writers;

New Zealand life will be greatly enriched when we can learn to see ourselves and the country through the eyes of a number of Maori writers and it may well be that Maori can help us find ways we wouldn't have found for ourselves. 6

Dr. Pearson is careful not to jump to conclusions when dealing with pakeha fiction about Maoris;

4 Printed in The Journal of the Polynesian Society, Volume 67, No. 3, September 1958, p. 211.

5 Schwimmer, Erik (editor), The Maori People in the 1960's, in an article; The Maori and Literature 1938-65 by Bill Pearson, p. 217.

6 Ibid., p.256.

The amount of writing in English by Maori is small and a non-Maori critic has to approach it more tentatively. But there is a clear difference in preoccupation, some difference in approach, and at least in Hone Tuwhare, the literary use of a different cultural inheritance. 7

Particularly with a writer like Tuwhare the Maori can try to abolish "an old and deep-seated Pakeha sterotype" of "the comic ill adapted Maori, lovable, transparently shrewd old Hori."

Pearson's major submission to Landfall concerning the Maori appeared in 1962 in the series New Zealand Since the War. It was a sociological study emphasizing a basic premise of the condition of the Maori;

The most striking feature of the Maori situation seventeen years after the end of the war is the continued existence, within the welfare state, of rural enclaves of material poverty and, in city and country, spiritual insecurity. It is from these that the current vexed problems derive, determined as they are by acts of history and complicated by European preconceptions of desirable norms of behaviour and the terms of racial co-existence. 8

But Dr. Pearson aims at a balanced judgment,

Maoris themselves are optimistic about the future and are more willingly emerging from their pre-war withdrawal, voluntary in some areas, geographical in others. 9

Pearson's most significant statement from a cultural point of view concerned the use of the English language by Maoris.

The point is made once again that the thought processes of Maoris are distinct from those of the European. This explains,

7 Ibid., p.217.

8 Landfall, No. 62, June 1962, p.148.

9 Ibid., p. 151.

in part, why only a very small number of capable Maori writers use English as their medium;

...after 85 years of compulsory English Maori parents and children often still speak a dialect of English with a limited vocabulary and range of constructions. And many teachers implemented official policy by strapping children if they spoke Maori--a thing for which a well-known Kuia (old woman: a term of respect) told me she would never forgive my race. When they first come to school some children are taught in a language they either do not know or only partly know. In English-speaking districts the kind of English spoken is not standard New Zealand English. The question arises of the psychological effects of linguistic frustration: of not having a language in which to express one's most complex thoughts or most intimate feelings. And it is arguable that there is a connection between self-respect and knowledge of a language which expresses one's ethnic traditions. Language like land would seem to be an anchor against demoralization.

(Landfall, No. 62, p.170)

The Maori becomes demoralized when he finds that his use of the English language is different from accepted European speech. It is significant that sensitive pakeha ears attune themselves to the new voices of Maori writers using English. The socio-cultural ramification of this fact is illustrated by Pearson,

Intellectuals and sympathisers often get impatient because of hesitancy of Maoris to interest themselves in wider public or international questions. It should be remembered that the Maori people are in deep confusion about the New Zealand pakeha world, let alone the whole world, or the stressful western pattern of living we are trying to impose on them.

(Landfall, No. 62, p.177)

In Pearson's view, therefore, the English language and pakeha New Zealand culture have not yet permitted the Maori to fulfil himself in terms of complete de facto equality. With a couched warning Pearson concludes his article, and lays most of the

blame on pakeha shoulders,

The way of life we have been trying to "integrate" on to the Maoris is a spiritually impoverished version of a deeply anxious, individualistic and often sadistic (and dirty-minded) Euro-American culture. If instead of forcing them into our uniform, we would allow Maoris to be themselves and recognize them as themselves, we could at once rid ourselves of our intermittent worry about what we are "doing for the Maoris", and at the same time they could enter more confidently into bi-racial New Zealand activities, to our enrichment. If I may add a personal coda, if New Zealand weren't the home of the Maori people, it wouldn't be mine for long either.

(Landfall, No. 62, p.180)

As the concluding line suggests, Pearson's esteem for the Maori people is based on personal respect and value judgment. He does not fully answer the dilemma posed by the existence of an ethnic minority faced with a powerful industrial society more interested in materialism than in culture. But the significance of Pearson's article lies in the writer's recognition and understanding of the problems faced by an ethnic minority governed by an ethnic majority. Dr. Pearson's studies of the Maori in New Zealand literature are the best available, and his sociological criticism is incisive and enlightened.

Post-war writers still treat the Maori as "an outsider or debutant in New Zealand society". However the theatre of his explorations is no longer the traditional marae but the complex situation of urban society. Netta Samuel in Noel Hilliard's novel Maori Girl is a North Island girl "plunged into the grim vortex of city life."¹⁰ Her decline and fall

10 Hilliard, Noel, Maori Girl, Heinemann, (Auckland, 1971). Introduction. First published 1960.

amid the turmoil of urban temptations is a story of a human being broken down by overwhelming social pressures. Paul Day finds Maori Girl "not a satisfactory novel" (Landfall, No. 57, pp.88-91), but it is valuable in expressing the "melancholy urban search" of Maoris who try to fulfil themselves in a strange environment. Paul Day might have added that this novel is one of the very few on the subject.

If Bruce Mason's drama, The Pohutukawa Tree, is any indication, there is an alternative to the urban search. The alternative is a regression to the past. The heroine of the play, Aroha Mataira, is devoted both to her Maori heritage and her Christian faith. James Bertram says of Aroha Mataira:

Alone, she can stand out against the degradation of her people, against the cheapening flux of modern living; but through her own dependents she is dragged down.

(Landfall, No. 59, p.268)

When her children lower the standards of her beliefs, one by becoming pregnant, the other by becoming a drunkard, Aroha "...cracks--and cracks all the way back to her pagan heritage." Bruce Mason's play asks the question whether the task of the Maori adapting to European culture is too great for all but the superhuman person. Roderick Finlayson, in concluding his contribution to the Landfall series "Beginnings", urges the Maori to guard his culture as a birthright;

From a kaumatua, to the younger generation of the Maori: Hold fast to your maoritanga--yes, but remember that maoritanga is firstly a quality of spirit, and that music and carving, poetry and dance are truly only the spontaneous joy of that spirit. You will never be able to hold fast to maoritanga, or bring forth its fruits, if you allow yourselves to be subverted by the Pakeha, if you allow your

natural true selves to be subdued and bound,
 spiritless, in a world sucked dry by parasitic reason,
 greedy commercialism, and empty sophistication.
 (Landfall, No. 77, p.82)

The sentiment of pakeha writers such as Finlayson has been centred on the essential goodness of the Maori and his magnanimous nature. The problem of Maori integration into an urban and technological environment has been treated as both a human and a sociological concern.

Several other aspects of Maori culture were considered in Landfall. Hester Carsten's "Maori Studies" (Landfall, Nos. 19 & 24) photograph individual Maoris in noble poses, and groups in family settings. The photographs reveal considerable personal sympathy for the Maori and his more reflective moods. Allen Curnow and Roger Oppenheim collaborated on two occasions (Landfall, Nos. 41 & 61) in the translation of Maori songs and poems, and, in 1965 (Landfall, No. 74), some photographs of Maori wood carving were published. All these contributions appear to have been designed to familiarize readers of Landfall with basic Maori culture. But they appeared sporadically, and were not part of a policy of making Landfall an organ for the transmission of Maori culture.

It is evident from the few contributions to Landfall on Maori culture and affairs that creative writers and sociologists regarded the situation of the Maori people as significant to the study of New Zealand culture. Professor Ernest Beaglehole,

in 1949, talked about "the problem";

It is difficult to describe precisely just what this Maori problem is, but in general, the Maori are a problem because the white New Zealander does not understand them. Not understanding them the New Zealander builds up a mental picture or stereotype of what he thinks is typical Maori behaviour, and so we get the widespread picture of the Maori as feckless, happy-go-lucky, sensitive, aggressive, improvident, at times sullen and uncooperative. In other words the Maori does not appear to respond to the same values, the same standards, the same controls as the Pakeha. Therefore the Pakeha does not himself respond to customary expectations when he comes in close touch with the Maori. So there is a Maori problem. 11

And in 1962 Leo Fowler quoted Professor Beaglehole's brother, Dr. J.C. Beaglehole, as saying that "the critical fact about New Zealand since the war may be the relationship of Maori and pakeha." (Landfall, No. 61, p.36)

Leo Fowler, a critic with specific interests in Maori affairs, writes one of the very few articles on Maoris to appear in Landfall. He follows on from Dr. Beaglehole's comment with an important qualification,

It is dangerously easy to speak of the Maori collectively, ignoring...differences. Before we can do so with truth and accuracy we must isolate the shared characteristics which link the extremes.
(Landfall, No. 61, p.36)

Mr. Fowler finds the Maori "...migrating from the country to the town and this migration is destroying the marae as a tribal forum and as a spiritual focus." (Landfall, No. 61, p.40). Again the emphasis is on loss of cultural heritage within an urban environment. The Maori is caught between the search for material prosperity and the "spiritual focus" of culture.

11 This passage appeared at the beginning of a review of Norman Smith's book, The Maori People and Us, in Landfall, No.9, p.82.

Leo Fowler continues,

Besides failing to grasp fully the weapons of the Pakeha, the rising generation of Maori has a tendency to allow the traditions of his ancestors to become a wasting treasure. He is still too close to his race's pre-literate phase for the vast background of history, tradition, custom, poetry and genealogy to have been put into permanent form. The old culture is still largely dependent for survival on oral transmission and much of it is still too jealously guarded by the initiate for oral transmission to be widely effective.

(Landfall, No. 61, pp.45-46.)

It is interesting that yet another critic substantiates the points made by previous critics, and, again, an optimistic conclusion is tempered with a warning to the pakeha,

All in all Maori-Pakeha relations in this country have improved immensely since the war. This is to be credited, in the main, to the effort the Maori has made to overcome the educational, cultural and civic differences which separated the two peoples. If in the next comparable period the Pakeha will make an equal effort toward understanding, the two races will surge forward to a richer and fuller co-citizenship.

(Landfall, No. 61, p.49)

The articles of Bill Pearson and Leo Fowler are the most detailed studies of the Maori that Landfall published. Several reviews appeared on diverse topics from the Maori King movement to Maori myths and legends. Keith Sinclair was selected to review Harold Miller's book, Race Conflict in New Zealand (Landfall, No. 79, p.296), while Harold Miller reviewed Keith Sinclair's Bulletin on The Maori Land League (Landfall, No. 18, p.151). Neither reviewer is complimentary of the other's presentation of each topic and the inference of mutual ad hominum criticism suggests that other less partial reviewers should have been found. There are also reviews of Bruce Biggs' Maori Marriage (Landfall, No. 59, p.284) and David Ausubel's

Maori Youth (Ibid.).

The two most interesting reviews appeared in 1965 when Dennis McEldowney reviewed Anthony Alpers retelling of Maori Myths and Tribal Legends (Landfall, No. 74, p.197), and H.B. Hawthorne reviewed James E. Ritchie's The Making of a Maori. Dennis McEldowney makes the provocative suggestion that "New Zealand has been de-mythologized...because of our tight hold on the land and perhaps a resistance to being influenced by the culture we have destroyed." (Landfall, No.74, p.199). This point brings into a sharp perspective the persistent pakeha belief that a sensitive approach to Maori culture could remove the harsher aspects of puritanism and conformity in New Zealand. H.B. Hawthorne expresses Dr. Ritchie's hope;

Dr. Ritchie urges teachers to recognize that Maori children are not "just Pakehas with brown skins" and "to learn to think of the special needs of Maori children in terms of a psychology and a unique development rather than in terms of cultural odds and ends."

(Landfall, No. 74, p.203)

In Dr. Ritchie's view, the scientific approach of the psychologist and the sociologist is preferable to "the abstractions of culture and social structure..." (Landfall, No. 74, p.203). But this view cannot diminish the deep personal involvement of a creative writer like a Finlayson or a Hilliard.

Whatever the individual conclusions of the intellectuals who wrote and reviewed for Landfall, and whatever their methods for arriving at these conclusions, there is general agreement

that the future of the Maori people in New Zealand lies in equality in a multi-racial society. There is also general agreement that the Maori should find his urban future without destroying the spirit of maoritanga, and the words "assimilation" and "integration" are, for the time being, banished from the vocabularies of all pakeha critics concerned with Maoris.

Landfall, in a limited, precise, and significant way, included the Maori people as an integral part of its intellectual concern for the future well-being of New Zealand.

LANDFALL AND ASIAN/PACIFIC CONSCIOUSNESS

Charles Brasch expressed the opinion that "New Zealand is a Pacific nation and its nearest great neighbours, apart from Australia, are China, Japan, and India..." (Landfall, No. 22, p.87) His interest in education prompted Brasch to suggest that "One of our most pressing needs is a department of Pacific and Oriental studies in the University of New Zealand." (Ibid.) But Landfall's scope was limited to a few noteworthy contributions about "the neighbourhood" which reflected New Zealand's ideal status as "a genuinely Pacific society of mixed blood..." It was impossible for the quarterly to convey to its readership a profound understanding of exotic cultures.

Australia, naturally, receives most attention because of its proximity to New Zealand and similar cultural heritage. But there is a deepseated attitude in New Zealand that things uniquely Australian are best left to that continent. The ballads of Banjo Patterson or Henry Lawson and literary movements such as the Jindyworobaks and The Angry Penguins, for example, have no parallels in New Zealand. Since the thriving Bulletin years of the 1880's and 1890's when New Zealand writers were published in the Sydney magazine New Zealand has developed its own accent; with Landfall, in recent years, at the zenith of this achievement.

Besides the Australian Letters, seven written by Vance Palmer before his death; three by Geoffrey Dutton; one each by T. Inglis Moore, Ian Turner, and Judith Wright, and two by

Bruce Beaver, coverage of Australian cultural activities was selective. An interesting contribution by F.J. West entitled Near Enough (Landfall, No. 38, p.141) dealt with "The Writing of Australian History." The main inference to be gathered from the short article is the paradox that Australia and New Zealand are best compared by contrast with one another while far more varied countries (eg: China and India) are best compared by what they can contribute to the embellishment of New Zealand's way of life. For example, West refers to the Australian task of "moving a frontier" and adds that people preoccupied with such a pursuit have "neither the time nor the inclination to take stock of (themselves)". New Zealand, in contrast, has no outback to colonize and has only been referred to as "a frontier" with reference to the expansion of the New South Wales colony to which it was once politically attached.¹ Edward Gibbon Wakefield had been the exponent of New Zealand as "frontier";

Very near to Australia there is a country, which all testimony concurs in describing as the fittest country in the world for colonization; as the most beautiful country, with the finest climate, and the most productive soil; I mean New Zealand... Adventurers go from New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land, and make a treaty with a native chief, a tripartite treaty, the poor chief not understanding a single word about it: they make a contract upon parchment with a great seal: for a few trinkets and a little gunpowder they obtain land...We are, I think, going to colonize New Zealand, though we be doing so in a most slovenly, and scrambling,

1 A lucid account of this is the chapter "Australian Colony" in Sinclair's A History of New Zealand,(p.29).

and disgraceful manner. The country appears to me to be open to colonization. 2

Perhaps in aversion to Australia's "Botany Bay history", the use of the word "frontier" has been banished from the annals of New Zealand history or sociology. In colonial days New Zealanders preferred to think of their country as "England's far-flung pastoral province." In America, the frontier was the basis of the ideal of freedom and the practicality of exploitation. For Americans "The impulsion from the frontier did much to drive forward the industrial revolution."³ Canada too has been aware of her frontier as the Frontier Stories (1898) of Cy Warman and Wilfred Eggleston's more recent critical work, The Frontier and Canadian Letters (1957), suggest.

Canadian historian Kenneth McNaught writes that,

From the time of the earliest records Canada has been part of a frontier, just as in her own growth she has fostered frontiers. The struggle of men and of metropolitan centres to extend and control those frontiers, as well as to improve life behind them, lies at the heart of Canadian history--and geography determined many of the conditions of that struggle. 4

In Professor McNaught's view Canada has been, and still is in effect, a frontier of Europe and the United States. But, just as New Zealand is un-Australian, Canada is un-American. Canada does not enjoy New Zealand's insular detachment which is the source of her geographical "struggle."

2 McIntyre, W.D. & Gardner, W.J. (Editors), Speeches and Documents on New Zealand History, Oxford University Press, (London, 1971), pp.3-4.

3 Ions, Edmund (editor), Political and Social Thought in America 1870-1970, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, (London, 1970) p.22.

4 McNaught, Kenneth, History of Canada, Pelican, 1969, p.7.

As West suggests there is no parallel in New Zealand to the "great Australian myth" that was so colourfully "summed up by the bush ballads." James MacKenzie is not Ned Kelly, and it is not the New Zealander's ideal to be "the lean, rangy, horny-handed son of the great outback". Just as Canadians are proud that British soldiers and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police superseded the Colt 45 Justice of the American West, so New Zealanders are proud that their history is one of law-abiding farmers, gold-diggers, and settlers instead of penal rejects. But "The convicts, the diggers of Eureka, the squatters" have been replaced by an urban and (much to the chagrin of Patrick White) suburban "petty bourgeoisie."⁵ New Zealand has no myth to conform to or contrast with, and all attempts at self-determination (such as the establishment of Landfall) are carefully negotiated with English examples in mind.

P.J. O'Farrell's The Australian Labour Split (Landfall, No. 46) is vague because of a lack of background. The article provides interesting information but is unsubstantiated by sufficient comment on the subject. Australian Letters receive much better coverage, particularly in reviews. Allen Curnow reviews H.M. Green's selection Modern Australian Poetry (Landfall, No. 2, p.142), and comments,

The poetry Australians write, and the kind of poetry they most admire, concern us less than they did a generation or more ago, when the Sydney Bulletin provided something like a matriculation tests (sic)

5 The Bulletin, still published in Sydney, call such suburbanites "patio intellectuals."

for writers in the country it called Maoriland. Or rather, Australia concerns us, but in a different way; we cannot avoid some acquaintance with the literature of our nearest neighbouring country, and we may be interested to improve that acquaintance, to attend occasionally to the neglected middle distance of our outward scene.

Curnow's point of New Zealand overshooting "the neglected middle distance" with a stare on Britain refers to the neglect of things Australian. Reviews of Australian poetry followed in later numbers of Landfall, and Robert Chapman reviewed a symposium, Australian Civilization (Landfall, No.68, p.413), with reference to the "common life" shared by the trans-Tasman neighbours. In the last Landfall of Brasch's editorship Terry Sturm mentions Judith Wright's "double aspect" shared with Australia and New Zealand; a "reality of exile" and a "reality of newness and freedom." (Landfall, No. 80, p.405). Australia is taken for granted by the post-war generation of New Zealand writers who are more aware of American writing than that of their nearest neighbour. Professor H. Winston Rhodes writes,

Although the literature of England and in later years of America has had an abiding influence on Australian and New Zealand writing, the outstanding feature of these emerging literatures, despite the fact that they have passed through or are passing through similar stages, is not their sameness but their difference...The relationship between Australia and New Zealand literature and their influence on each other are not as marked as might have been expected, particularly if one thinks, as I am afraid some Australians do, of New Zealand composing a few off-shore islands across the Tasman. 6

Professor Rhodes is in a particularly authoritative position to

6 Meanjin Quarterly, No. 113, volume xxvii, number 2, 1968, pp.185-6.

compare the literatures of Australia and New Zealand since he was educated in Australia and emigrated to New Zealand in 1933 to teach at the University of Canterbury. Nevertheless it is strange that so few scholars have paid attention to trans-Tasman literature.

Charles Brasch refers to Australia's leading literary journal, Meanjin, on several occasions. His position as founding editor of Landfall is not dissimilar to that of C.B. Christesen who founded Meanjin Papers in Brisbane in 1941. Brasch indicates the similar policy of both publications;

Perhaps only from outside is it possible to see how much a single independent journal can do in helping to establish the picture of itself which a country offers to the world; and for many of its overseas readers Meanjin must bulk large and honourably in their view of Australia...Attacks on the free expression of opinion have to be expected today, and if journals like Meanjin and Landfall are to survive, writers and readers too, on both sides of the Tasman, must be vigilant.

(Landfall, No. 17, p.3)

When Meanjin Papers moved to Melbourne, and came under the patronage of the University of Melbourne for financial reasons, Brasch observed;

If such journals can avoid becoming too academic and too orthodox this may be a form of patronage which offers hope for the future.

(Landfall, No. 18, p.83)

Brasch prided himself on remaining independent of university patronage, but both Meanjin and Landfall have been criticised for their academic tone.

Brasch referred to Australia in certain of his Notes. His most detailed account of Australian thought was the "continent/island" editorial in Landfall, No. 29. In a later issue Brasch

referred to the paintings of Sidney Nolan as "the most compelling visual images of Australia yet created..."

(Landfall, No. 44, p.275).

No painter before has presented a picture of Australia comparable in the force of its imagery with that which Nolan constructs. It is an Australia partly observed and partly invented, more real than in any realist painting because more powerfully evocative, recreated with great intensity as a clearly defined, visionary country of the imagination.

Brasch's interest in the visual arts permitted another dimension besides literature to develop the idea of "national imagination." Brasch also refers to the UNESCO choice of "ten representative Australian writers" for a translation into many languages. The writers chosen include the major contemporaries, a choice with which Brasch agrees. But "Henry Kendall wrote some very readable watery verse which is likely to evaporate in translation." Kendall and Bernard O'Dowd do not in Brasch's view merit international publication; "If they don't qualify in Australia, why export them as representative?" Such comparative criticism occurred occasionally in reviews and commentaries, but infrequently in the editor's notes. In Landfall No. 40 Brasch reported the tribute paid to Vance and Nettie Palmer in "the entire winter number of Meanjin." Palmer had been Australia's main correspondent to New Zealand through Landfall's pages until his untimely death in July 1959. Brasch wrote an obituary;

The editor of Meanjin wrote of him as the most distinguished man of letters Australia has so far produced. Through his series of "Australian Letters" to Landfall he was also a fine interpreter of the

country which he enriched and adorned.
 (Landfall, No. 52, p.299)

Brasch chose "the most distinguished man of letters Australia has so far produced" to form the bond between two emerging literary traditions and two literary journals.

Japan features several times in different numbers of Landfall. In the first number, March 1947, James Bertram submits a chapter from a forthcoming book about his war experiences in Japan. It is a portrait illustrating a special compassion for the defeated Japanese;

One of the memories of wartime Tokyo I still carried with me was the picture of tiny children marching undeterred to school through the smoking streets after a big B-29 night raid. Stiff in their little uniforms and peaked caps, swinging wooden arms with firmly outstretched fingers. And all stopping to bow in formation whenever they passed the entrance to a Shinto shrine...
 (Landfall, No. 1, p.30)

The first number also includes photographs by G.B. Bertram taken in China and Japan--the Altar of Heaven and the Ming Tombs, Peking, and the shrines of Nikko. The theme of the photographs is "Chinese imagination and Japanese fancy." James Bertram, with Rewi Alley, is the main Asia correspondent for Landfall, fulfilling Brasch's intention to familiarize New Zealanders with their "nearest great neighbours." Japan, however, receives less detailed attention than does China, perhaps because;

In Japan--and it would call for a massive study of her history, economy and physical environment to establish all the reasons for it--the human spirit is

oppressed and confined (*italics*); and like all prisoners, it suffers neurosis and sickness. Whether the shock of military defeat and the discarding of many outworn institutions can break down many of these familiar inhibitions and release the prisoner from the straight-jacket of the past, is the most vital of all questions for Japan today. And this will be the hardest thing of all to test. For no people is so adept in the organisation of the superficial, in the slick assimilation of borrowed forms and techniques, as the Japanese.

(Landfall, No. 1, p.34)

In contrast, "...in China the human spirit is free..." It is open to question whether such a psychological insight into national character bears on the truth. Since about the sixth century AD Japanese art has been influenced by the Chinese, while the Buddhist faith was absorbed from China. In Bertram's report there is the sense that China is a "centre" of "civilization" while Japan hardly rises above the status of "province." Bertram's article prompted a reply from R.T. Robertson in the third number of Landfall. The reply praised both Bertram's article and Landfall;

This absorbing chapter from Mr. Bertram's book was, for us over here, the most valuable part of Landfall, and it was good to see that the only article we were all competent to criticize was the one we most generally agreed on... Landfall has achieved one part of its dual purpose when it has interested others in us and brought our work to their notice, as it did during this most interesting weekend. How far it succeeds in providing a body of criticism of New Zealand arts and bringing the arts to a greater consciousness of themselves and a realization of their position in society--that I shall only be able to see on my return to New Zealand.

(Landfall, No. 3, p.173)

In March 1952 Bertram published "The Japanese Settlement" in Landfall. The article underlined America's attitude towards

Asia, an attitude which influenced official New Zealand policy;

No one would now deny that America was chiefly responsible for the defeat of Japan in the Pacific War. From the moment of the final decisive action--the dropping of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima--the U.S.A. was more deeply committed than ever before in its history towards a country that had wronged America, and that America had wronged. Just how far a sense of guilt about the use of this new weapon against Asiatics has been a subconscious cause of the profound American recoil against Asia in recent years, must be left to the psychologists to determine; it is certainly revealing, that fear of atomic bombing should now be greatest among the nation that invented it. Yet it was natural enough that the U.S.A. should assume chief responsibility for the correction and future conduct of the Asiatic power which, at Pearl Harbour and Bataan had inflicted the most grievous defeats in history upon American arms and prestige.

(Landfall, No. 21, p.41)

The San Francisco Treaty of 1951, the year of the Waterfront Strike in New Zealand, did not altogether eliminate "Australian and New Zealand fears about a resurgence of Japanese strength in the Pacific." (Landfall, No. 21, p.45) The Waterfront crisis had all but silenced New Zealand interest in the treaty;

The Security Treaty...is more of a liability than an asset...In this country, where we are taken into the Cabinet's confidence over any new development affecting social security, the price of primary produce, or the handling of industrial disputes, there are no radio chats about international treaties and their implications.

(Landfall, No. 21, p.46)

Bertram's disapproval of the Treaty arose out of its motives-- motives sanctioned by New Zealand eager for America's approval;

There is nothing wrong with the idea of generous treatment of a defeated nation, if it springs from true generosity and a sincere desire to bridge the lamentable gulf between East and West. What is wrong with Mr. Dulles's generosity is that it is calculated; and that the business end of the calculation--the building of an anti-communist army and arsenal in

Japan--will destroy the few positive achievements of the Occupation as surely as it makes a mockery of the genuine idealism that lay behind them.

(Landfall, No. 21, pp.48-49)

Such New Zealand indifference disturbed intellectuals such as Bertram because they saw "the lamentable gulf between East and West" as not only dangerous but also inconsistent with the expressed benevolence of the Allies in dealing with defeated nations. New Zealand interests in Asia were primarily defensive from a military point of view. But from a cultural point of view New Zealand would have to become more familiar with Asian culture and customs or live in fear of "the Yellow Peril." Bertram's concluding comment that "this is not so much a peace treaty with Japan, as a war treaty against other people," quoted the words of Dr. Yoshishige Abe in the Tokyo magazine Seikai (October 1951). Neo-militarism in Japan was now a reflection of European and American militarism and New Zealand was a European pawn in an Asian sea; an ominous position.

James Bertram is, with Rewi Alley, Landfall's leading China correspondent.⁷ His first-hand experience allowed him to interpret political events in China following the victory of Mao's Communists over the Kuomintang in 1949. Bertram's articles

7 A significant personal contact between a New Zealander and China was the trans-Asian voyage of South-African born journalist Robin Hyde (Iris Guiver Wilkinson). She obtained the first visa ever given a woman correspondent to enter China from Chiang Kai-shek (Evening Post 24/8/'39) and became involved with the Sino-Japanese war out of which came her novel Dragon Rampant (1939). A critic described Robin Hyde as attributing "...most of Japan's conduct to the veneer of western commercialism..." (N.Z. Freelance 30/8/'39).

were scholarly and eloquent and among the main features of Brasch's policy of Asian coverage in Landfall. A characteristic of the articles is their careful and moderate wording-- a far cry from the political fervour of Tomorrow--and controversial ideas were conveyed with a minimum of radical rhetoric.

Bertram's "The Chinese Communists" was a series of "a few first-hand personal impressions" designed to answer the questions of many Westerners--"What is the secret of the strength of this movement that rolled so irresistibly down to the Yangtse, and what is the nature of its leadership?" (Landfall, No. 9, p.12) Bertram's sympathy for the revolutionaries and his desire to present their case to what might be expected to be an "anti-communist" audience prompted a careful emphasis;

The degree of lasting success with which the "Liberators" may meet in their efforts at stabilization in North China will depend very largely on the attitude of the outside world to their new regime. At present the Communists are much more anxious for foreign trade and investment than the Kuomintang has ever been since 1945. A blockade or a boycott by the West might well throw them into a dependence on the Soviet Union that, of themselves, they would not seek.

(Landfall, No. 9, p.21)

No further comment on China appeared in Landfall until 1956 when six contributors wrote commentaries under the heading "Views of China." The six writers, Charles Hilgendorf, Angus Ross, James Bertram, Margaret Garland, Evelyn Page, Ormond Wilson, were members of a cultural group that visited China in April and May 1956. In his Notes, Charles Brasch described two reports as referring to "the impact of the

doctrine of socialist realism on the most ancient and longest civilized of all living societies." (Landfall, No. 39, p.175).

Brasch adds;

The doctrine of socialist realism is in China, as it has been in Russia, a political weapon on the "cultural front", part of the apologetics of a barely established revolutionary regime still fighting for its life.

Brasch discusses the basic contradiction between "...the liberating, forward-looking aims of revolutions like the Russian and Chinese..." and the constricting of the arts "...into a single narrow mould..." The liberating of a people from a political tyranny should not be permitted to stifle the "open society" which "...retains its vigour only by entertaining unpalatable truths and dangerous conclusions, in a process of constant self-renewal..." In Brasch's opinion the arts were to hold a sovereign place above political activity, "...above the heat and dust of everyday life...", even though they grew out of a political and social reality.

Charles Hilgendorf wrote of the impact of revolutionary China on a New Zealand observer;

To me, the most striking impression of present-day China is that it really is communist. There is a complete dictatorship, intensive and all-pervading propaganda, secret police and spies, standardization of behaviour and apparant standardization of thought, armed soldiers seldom out of sight and mass executions. Some people have thought that communism would have little deep and lasting effect on China; that the vast population, ancient and stable civilization and China's normal resistance to new ideas would mean that communism was merely a superficial and transitory phase. Among the people we met I saw no sign that this was so; they appeared to have swallowed communism hook, line and sinker. On the other hand, it seems likely that the ordinary peasant is not interested in political philosophies but only in the

promise of more food and better living conditions.
 (Landfall, No. 39, p.212)

There is the same contradiction--"...on the one hand tyranny and terror..." and yet, "...on the other hand a massive effort to improve natural resources and capital equipment, accompanied by a considerable improvement in the living standards of the people." The population explosion struck Hilgendorf as China's most pressing problem.

Angus Ross questioned the "remoulding" of Chinese thinking: "To close a nation's doors to the thought of the rest of the world is to shut out a stimulus to progress." But James Bertram was less concerned;

For the Chinese literary and artistic tradition, with its strong reliance on periods of solitary retirement alternating with periods of social living, is bound to reassert itself...Chinese writing in the future will not be so remarkably different from the best writing of the past.

Margaret Garland found the dilemma of artists to be the task of new interpretations in line with the new policy of the revolutionary order;

The Chinese have no desire to copy their own traditional art exclusively, and they are not satisfied that Social Realism, as it is produced in the U.S.S.R., is what they want.

Ormond Wilson emphasized the "before liberation/since liberation" division of Chinese history;

...the paradoxical situation is that the communist revolution has deliberately imposed a European imprint in Chinese civilization.

The dominance of Russia in "post-liberation" China symbolized the alienating attitude of the non-Asian powers. In general,

the New Zealand visitors were cautious of their praise of communism.

The emphasis in the contributions to Landfall about China is on cultural aspects and interests. "The freedom of writers in one country is the intimate concern of writers in every other country." (Landfall, No. 46, p.99). Brasch's policy is constant, whether it is condemning the suppression of Dr. Zhivago in Russia or the bowdlerizing of Lady Chatterley's Lover in New Zealand. A most revealing comment about Landfall's "moderation" appeared in Brasch's notes which often dealt with the business of censorship;

In New Zealand the radical fortnightly Tomorrow was suppressed in 1940; and because "the greater the truth, the greater the libel", Landfall like other journals has on occasion been unable to mention facts of public interest.

(Landfall, No. 46, p.99)

Such a comment is important in revealing the pressure to conform that is strong in New Zealand as elsewhere. The freedom of the writer, and of the arts in general, is Brasch's central concern; but where Landfall might have followed a radical line the editor's moderation remains supreme. Landfall's durability testifies to the success of such a policy.

Maurice Shadbolt visited China in 1958 and wrote of his misconceptions of the "history-shaking upward struggle of six hundred million people." (Landfall, No. 46, p.126)

...I had fallen into the trap of assuming that Communism was just a convenient form of nationalism for the resurgent Chinese nation. I had chosen not to realize, until faced with the reality, that Chinese grass-roots Communism is not just a cover for the resurgence; it is the resurgence.

Such personal revelations were convincing and informative and a contribution to New Zealand's better understanding of the one country she most feared.

Rewi Alley, "...an ordinary New Zealand plug...",⁸ has been New Zealand's most consistent interpreter of China. Landfall printed few of Alley's poems but reviewed major works such as Leaves From a Sandan Notebook (No. 16), The People Have Strength (No. 36), and Yo Banfa (No. 27). The first of these books, reviewed by John A. Brailsford, consisted of passages selected by Professor H. Winston Rhodes, a longtime admirer of Alley, passages which were "...free outpourings of his (Alley's) spirit." In Airey's recent biography of Alley there is a chapter entitled "China, Shanghai, and the New Zealand Mind." In it Professor Airey writes;

In a world of incipient change New Zealand thinking was still largely patterned on the nineteenth century. Such an outlook Rewi Alley carried with him to China in 1927. There was no hint of the comment he would make eleven years later..."I know where I should start ...They were starting quite nicely in 1927."

He would not have said that in 1927. 9

Such respect for the motives behind China's revolution and the realization that it was only a start typify the informed and sympathetic New Zealand attitude towards China. Maurice Shadbolt had been perplexed by China; Brasch wished to interpret the situation to his countrymen from a distance; but Alley has devoted his life to China with a maxim guiding him--"I remain a New Zealander, but I have become Chinese too."

8 Airey, Willis, A Learner in China (a life of Rewi Alley), Caxton Press, (Christchurch, 1970), p.11.

9 Ibid., p.61.

In September 1953, Mary Boyd wrote in Landfall;

Few men have had better opportunities for breaking down the barriers of understanding between China and the West than the New Zealander, Rewi Alley. Over the last twenty-five years, he has worked as a chief factory inspector in the alleyways and sweatshops of Shanghai, he has organized flood and famine relief and reconstruction in the villages of the Chinese countryside, and he has played a leading part in the development of Gung-ho, the Chinese Industrial Co-operative movement.

(Landfall, No. 27, p.226)

Miss Boyd reviews "pages from his diary" and appraises the "scattered memories and impressions." On the one hand, "...were Kuomintang officials and their foreign supporters always so corrupt and callous?" On the other hand, is the New China "...really so new, so changed and rejuvenated?" Alley's response to these two questions is a personal commitment which gives a straight answer to neither. Alley has,

...the vision of a man with a deep faith in humanity working together, not the colour-blindness of a man who, dazzled by his closeness to the common people of China, has lost sight of the sense of values of his own countrymen.

(Landfall, No. 27, pp.226-227)

Such "faith in humanity" and continuing allegiance to New Zealand make Alley a particularly interesting and valuable observer of the Chinese enigma.

James Bertram's review of The People Have Strength describes the "image of China" which "haunts all our minds today" as resembling either "the good and kindly giant of Rewi Alley and Chou Li-Po, or the feeble-witted giant who has appeared to Lord Lindsay in an academic nightmare...more frightening than any cold-blooded power-seekers in the Kremlin or the Pentagon."

(Landfall, No. 36, p.355). Bertram accepts Alley's view instead of that expressed in Michael Lindsay's China and the Cold War, but he also chastises Alley for "the harshly propagandist tone that mars" The People Have Strength. Bertram applauds the courage of the new regime without entirely approving of the rigours and suppressions of communism. Bertram and Alley, the one in his creative writing the other in his criticism, created a balanced view of China that Landfall's limited coverage could accept.

Only a few of Alley's poems appeared in Landfall, but rare publications such as "Yangtze Gorges" show skill of versification and the,

...reminder that for the people
liveliness means struggle
and the price in risk
must be paid;

(Landfall, No. 37, p.33)

Alley's sympathies lie with the people, but there is the restraint of a foreigner who, while a part of his adopted land, preserves a personal detachment;

and on the passenger deck
the amplifier tells
of those who would wage
atomic war; of meetings
petitions, of the need
for widespread understanding;

and the tall mountains
look down
as though bowing their heads
in requiem.

(Landfall, No. 37, p.34)

Allen Curnow included "Boiler in Sandan" in his anthology, describing it as a poem which,

...expresses with vivid, intuitively sufficient language (he can hardly go wrong with such a subject), his vision of the impact of the new age on China. 10

Alley owes much of his recognition in New Zealand to the efforts of Professor Rhodes,¹¹ but Professor Airey notes that the most significant aspect of Alley's labour has been that...

He is more essentially a doer and maker of things and his writings would not exist apart from the abundant experience of activity in his past life and his present journeyings that bring him into contact with the daily work of people he understands. 12

The contrast between the old China and the People's Republic is the crux of Alley's creative writing when it is political;

Tired old temple doors
swing to a close as back we go home to quarters,
past the great Dagoba to the sacred hair of Sakamuni,
under the great pailou framing the main street,
to food and warmth, and the evening class on the uses
of asbestos.

("Boiler in Sandan", January 1945)

Alley's adherence to Western ideas as well as his assimilation of Chinese revolutionary ideals poses difficulties;

This difficulty of interpreting the new China to Western, particularly English-speaking, readers, even if they had some sympathy let alone of getting them to feel things from the inside in a way that makes reasonable judgment possible, is very real. 13.

Alley has been accused of being "...so emotionally involved that he supports everything in the new China without the critical

10 Curnow, Allen, New Zealand Verse, Penguin, 1960, p.312.

11 Professor Rhodes edited Gung Ho (1948), Leaves from a Sandan Notebook (1950), This is China Today (1951) and Fragments of Living Peking and Other Poems (1955).

12 Airey, Willis, op. cit., p. 252.

13 Ibid., p. 257.

eye that truth demands." But the significance of Alley's relationship to China is his personal empathy and preoccupation with that country which has "...broken through imperialism and rejected capitalism, and is developing a society where organization, both political and economic, is based on serving the people..." China may yet become the great alternative to selfish capitalism and oligarchical communism. Airey points out that the trend is only in the initial stages; Alley has faith in China;

This does not mean a blindly partisan attitude but rather a sense of proportion, an admission that mistakes are made but that they can be remedied by experience and by the kind of discussion that brings them to light which in fact has been so important a part of Chinese liberation and development; it means a conviction that the general direction of movement is more important than isolated details, the empirical examination of which will distort the significance of the main trend. 14

Brasch, with the assistance of Bertram and Alley, wished for a dialogue between New Zealand and China. There was also a dearth of China experts--James Bertram's book Return to China was reviewed by C.P. Fitzgerald, (Landfall, No. 45), Professor of Far Eastern History at the Australian National University, while Fitzgerald's books Flood Tide in China and Revolution in China were both reviewed by Bertram (Landfall, No. 52, p.378). Both critics agreed that each was an expert "New China" hand, but detached reviewers would have brought a more refreshing perspective to the criticism of books on China.

14 Airey, Willis, op. cit., p.259.

The Soviet Union has received scant attention in Landfall. Maurice Shadbolt contributed an article entitled China, Russia, Bulgaria: A Journey (Landfall, No. 46) which revealed a strong Russian interest "in the development of a national literature" such as that in New Zealand. Shadbolt's interview in Literaturnaya Gazeta of Moscow by "a gentleman by the name of Ovstrovosky" concerned the growth and relevance of literature in New Zealand.

The role of Landfall in our literature particularly interested him. I explained to him the salient differences between the literature of Australia and New Zealand; pointed out that, because of the development of our society, our writers were, on the whole, less politically conscious than the militant Australians... Our social conflicts revealed themselves more in quiet internal situations, rather than in dramatic externals... This might also be seen in the fact that, since 1923, only one or two of our modern writers have had any link at all with political parties. But I added that New Zealand writers, almost without exception, did work within the humanist, socially critical tradition of world literature; only bigots, begging distortion of New Zealand life, could ask much more of them.

(Landfall, No. 46, p.128)

The foreign interviewer's interest in Landfall as the major literary periodical read abroad, and his interest in the comparative aspect of Australian and New Zealand literature, is significant of the interests of outside opinion in New Zealand writing.

Shadbolt believed that "...it is, in the end, I think, impossible to hold permanently captive the minds of people fed with the world's greatest literature." (Landfall, No. 46, p.140). In defending Dr Zhivago, Charles Brasch concurs;

...it openly declares the validity of individual judgment,

the value of the individual soul; man, that is, does not exist for the sake of society--society and its managers, but society with its managers exists to serve man; ends do not justify means.
(Landfall, No. 48, pp.299-300)

The expression of Pasternak's novel gave Brasch an example with which to question censorship in New Zealand;

...in the west too there are any number of aspiring Grand Inquisitors of various persuasions seeking their opportunity to fasten straight-jackets on the suffering body of mankind.

In a review/article of New Zealand Stories for Russian Readers entitled New Zealand Short Stories, Professor Rhodes wrote;

Whatever literary or political objections one may have to this collection (and these are apt to become hopelessly entangled), it was a bold and adventurous attempt to acquaint the Soviet people with New Zealand as seen through the eyes of her writers.
(Landfall, No. 70, p.158)

The reference to "political objections" records the court hearing of O.E. Middleton versus Truth and the suspicions surrounding the case. Truth, a weekly newspaper, believed that contributors to the anthology had Communist connections and a libel charge ensued. It seems that the Russians made a greater attempt to understand New Zealand than vice versa. Landfall did a small amount to form a dialogue between the Soviet Union and New Zealand.

India features first in Landfall in March 1963 with a Commonwealth Letter by Mahendra Kulasrestha, English Editor at the V.V. Research Institute, Hoshiarpur, Punjab;

A letter from India, to make a fourth in this modest link of letters between Commonwealth countries (and continents), has been on Landfall's desiderata list for years. (Landfall, No. 65, p.3)

But India is as much a South Asian country as it is a Commonwealth nation, and, according to Brasch,

It is also the Asian country with which we share most, through our common connection with Britain and our debt, in different ways, to English literature.

Brasch views Kulasrestha's comments as relevant to New Zealand because they touch on the "...central question of our time."

That is;

...for how much longer will or can western attitudes to nature, with all the evil (although good too) that has issued from them, continue to dominate exclusively, unmodified, man's thought and aims and activities?

While such comparison of "mutual" concerns was in line with Brasch's idea of the international relevance of literature, it seemed to negate the policy of publishing only New Zealand contributions which, as Brasch states in Landfall Country, was waived in the case of reviews and commentaries.

The most interesting aspects of the Indian Letter revolve around the similar difficulties faced by Indian writers and publications, and the relevance of the English language, "...or Indo-Anglian to be exact." (Landfall, No. 65, p.57). Above all,

...there is a crisis in all major aspects of Indian life and, fundamentally, it is a crisis of values. To move forward, we must change and change quickly. We must shake off our old burdens and be mentally free. But, unfortunately, our reactions to the contemporary situation are very odd, and sometimes downright funny. (Landfall, No. 65, p.59)

The second letter (Landfall, No. 69, p.62) dealt with the political

ramifications of the Chinese attack in NEFA and Ladakh.

"A remarkable effect of the Chinese aggression has been to inspire the Indians to unite as one single nation." The third letter referred to the death of Prime Minister Nehru and the implications of the Chinese "poor man's bomb" nuclear deterrent. And the fourth letter lamented "the experience of war with Pakistan";

Philosophically examining this war, we feel that it has been forced on us by circumstances. We fought it most reluctantly and mainly in self-defence. India is a pacific nation.

The Indian Letters are of considerable interest, but, with a single annual appearance were not extensive enough to be more than a superficial contribution.

Another small connection with Indian literature is the group of translations of "Poems from the Panjabi." (Landfall, No. 73, p.36) Charles Brasch cooperated with poet Amrita Pritam in translating four poems most notable for their stark imagery;

A soft lump of clay
It will have to learn
The secret of the hardness of stone.
("A Lump of Clay", Landfall, No. 73, p.39)

The main conclusion to be drawn from the Asian contributions to Landfall is that they were interesting but too sparse. The quarterly scope of Landfall could hardly have provided more space when the publication of New Zealand writing was the prime purpose. Also, the quality of foreign submissions was carefully guarded by the editor. All the Commonwealth Letters are of very high standard, and extra quantity might have sacrificed quality. In themselves, however, the submissions from, and about, Asia and

the Pacific were sufficient to promote an interest that could be investigated much more deeply elsewhere. Landfall in essence had established, at the behest of Charles Brasch, an Asian/Pacific consciousness.

LANDFALL AND THE INTELLECTUAL ENVIRONMENT

Landfall's considerable success as a New Zealand quarterly can be partly attributed to Charles Brasch's practice of including non-literary material beside poems and short stories. The including of intellectual comment alongside creative writing added an extra dimension to Landfall's scope, and provided objective comment on life and attitudes in New Zealand.

In a recent interview, Ian Milner asked Charles Brasch whether there had been "...any problem in striking a balance... between sociological, historical, economic, philosophical or other contributions and more purely literary, aesthetic contributions." Brasch answered;

I think I was fairly sure from the first that New Zealand wouldn't be able to support a purely literary journal, that there wouldn't be enough good material, so I felt it would have to be a mixed journal...If we were going to make Landfall pay its way we had to attract readers who were interested in many other things beside literature. We had to take into account the arts and public affairs generally.

(Landfall, No. 100, p.349)

In Landfall's first issue Brasch had said of the arts that "any serious consideration of them is bound to involve an inquiry into their place in society and the social function which they fulfil--what part they play in life, what use they are." So, while there was a financial consideration for the publishing of socio-political material, there was also consideration of the context within which creative writers functioned.

Brasch specifies to Milner the "general political point of view" that Landfall embraced under his editorship.

...I thought it should take up a liberal-radical attitude in political matters without any ties--and my own interest was more in New Zealand's place in the world. In other words in foreign policy rather than in domestic policy, except in so far as a liberal or radical attitude implied certain things in domestic affairs.

(Landfall, No. 100, p.349)

Milner asked Brasch why he chose a "liberal or radical" attitude. The answer typifies Brasch's concern for his idea of civilization.

...if civilization is to survive, one is driven to radical views. I don't mean driven to violence. Violence always compromises or ruins the cause it means to serve: it produces as much wrong as it tries to remedy. The State for example is always with us. Overthrow it and it will come back in another form, quite possibly worse. It's a necessary evil--a monster that has continually to be tamed, so that it serves us and doesn't devour us. We can't do without it, neither can we ever trust it...

I don't think I ever considered a regular political commentary partly because I didn't want to tie myself down too much on that side in case there was more literary material, and other material of immediate interest, than I anticipated.

(Landfall, No. 100, p.349)

The liberal-radical stand was tempered with an open mind on the editor's part, and was suitable for an independent quarterly dedicated more to enlightenment than to propaganda.

Landfall's radicalism was, in a sense, a counterpoint to the conservatism of the commercial press and its appeal to consumers rather than free thinkers. A carefully researched article, solicited by Brasch and written by Elizabeth Warburton, investigated the established press in New Zealand and made some interesting discoveries. The myth of the high calibre of New Zealand's newspapers can be traced to the nineteenth century

when visitors like Mark Twain praised New Zealand newspapers for "the vigour of their style, their scholarly language and logical conclusions." (More Tramps Abroad). Elizabeth Warburton discussed the contents and calibre of four morning newspapers in New Zealand: The New Zealand Herald (Auckland); The Dominion (Wellington); The Press (Christchurch); and The Otago Daily Times (Dunedin). She concurred with other investigators of the press that "by and large, (it) is 'inferior to none in the world'." (Landfall, No. 31, p.201). Her qualitative judgement is that,

...the New Zealand press is a creditable institution. It nowhere falls so low as much of the popular press in other countries, and I think it is superior as a purveyor of national and foreign news to average newspapers anywhere. It is not adventurous in leading or stimulating opinion, but rarely is it crudely reactionary.

(Landfall, No. 31, p.202)

The "leading or stimulating opinion" became the specific concern of Landfall and other independent periodicals dedicated to intellectual consciousness. Brasch was a supporter of opinion-making publications and an outspoken opponent of "twisted news."

Most periodicals must appear more often if they are to establish their own intellectual climate, standards, interest (in both senses of the word); otherwise they turn into occasional miscellanies for which readers and buyers have to be found anew each time.

(Landfall, No. 21, p.4)

Brasch implicitly distrusted the ability of newspapers to form an "intellectual climate". From this came his interest in small magazines.

A new literary magazine is to be welcomed as a sign

of life. If it does nothing else, it shows that writers are not only dissatisfied but active--dissatisfied with the mediums for publication which already exist, and active enough to set about providing another.

(Landfall, No. 31, pp.151-152)

While magazines like Landfall turned dissatisfaction with the status quo into constructive social criticism, the press, in general, followed a middle-of-the-road philosophy in order not to offend its sponsors. It is always highly questionable to accuse the newspapers of pandering to advertisers' wishes, but Miss Warburton finds instances of seeming prejudice in news reporting.

In the more complex matter of instructing the public on the main issues of the day, their performance so far as it is shown here is less admirable. They failed in a matter of real importance--the waterfront dispute--to instruct the public on issues arising therefrom...

(Landfall, No. 31, p.199)

Another Landfall critic carries the argument against the press to a more radical conclusion. In "Notes on the Wharf Situation" Walter Brookes angrily castigates the press.

...the country will have the memory of the deprivation of traditional rights, perhaps of fellow-countrymen starved into submission, of class bitterness and prejudice; the sinister appearance of underground literature forced into existence by the suppression of news, scurrility, repression, and defiance.

(Landfall, No. 18, p.142)

In a subsequent commentary, "On The Wharf Now", Walter Brookes refers to the "cold" attitude of newspapers towards the trouble on the waterfront.

As I write this article newspaper reports are coldly indicating what many men connected with the wharf have been uneasily feeling for some time even if they

do not wish to admit it--that this vital industry is in a worse state of disorganization and discontent than before the dispute.

(Landfall, No. 22, p.149)

Brookes points out that newspapers were grudgingly admitting what radical intellectuals had earlier realized. The contrast in opinions illustrates the gap between the two opposing interpretations each using separate outlets for expression; the newspapers and the intellectual periodicals.

Critics like Brookes were sceptical of the extent to which newspapers could influence public opinion. But if any philosophy was expressed in editorials it was never radically oriented.

While newspapers relied on advertising for their existence, Landfall partly relied on an annual grant from the New Zealand Literary Fund. The fund, set up by the Government in 1947, was seen by Brasch as "lessening the serious handicap" of penury which faced periodicals with a limited market. In 1950 Brasch reviewed the work of the fund and the total national annual grant of two thousand pounds. He found "the list of grants over the Fund's first three years of existence" to be "a disappointing one." In 1953, Brasch stated that "for the past two years the New Zealand Literary Fund has been spending a good deal less than the total of its annual grant of £2000." There was some dissatisfaction with the financial contribution of the fund, but the most ominous aspect of the grant was its possible influence over intellectual comment in Landfall. There

is only one implication of such influence in one of Brasch's notes, but there is the inference that any such control would betray Landfall's existence as an organ of free opinion; free from the limitations of newspapers.

This year again Landfall applied for a grant from the N.Z. Literary Fund. The grant has been given, subject to the condition that payment from it to authors should be made for literary contributions only, not for ones concerned with public affairs and the like. This will not affect Landfall's policy.

(Landfall, No. 23, p.168)

There is no reason to doubt the promise that the conditions attached to the grant "will not affect Landfall's policy", but the official desire not to sponsor discussion of public affairs "and the like" reveals a certain antipathy to free intellectual criticism and discussion on the part of the Fund's officials.

The most subversive opponent of free expression was, in Brasch's eyes, censorship. In a note on the suppression of ideas in Russia, Brasch condemned elements in New Zealand which upheld censorship in the face of responsible expression.

The freedom of writers in one country is the intimate concern of writers in every other country. And the concern not of writers only, but of every human being, whether he knows or not that freedom is indivisible; for the token, the symbol, of his own small private freedom--freedom to spend his earnings and lead his private life in his own way...to say what he thinks about politics, religion, the licensing laws, and other people's morals--is freedom to write and to publish, the specific freedom of the imaginative writer; when that is threatened, every human freedom is threatened.

(Landfall, No. 46, p.99)

Brasch's implied suspicion that the daily press was reluctant

to publish much that was controversial gave rise to another of his cryptic remarks that remains pertinent if unsubstantiated.

Newspapers notoriously do not publish news which they do not like, even when they pretend to be comprehensive and objective, like the London Times. In France today there is no freedom of publication at all as the term is generally understood. In New Zealand the radical fortnightly Tomorrow was suppressed in 1940; and "because the greater the truth, the greater the libel", Landfall like other journals has on occasion been unable to mention facts of public interest.

(Landfall, No. 46, p.99)

There is no evidence in Landfall or elsewhere specifying which "facts of public interest" were omitted from Landfall under "official" pressure. In cases such as these Charles Brasch is unwilling to elaborate, but the noting of occasional control (and the editor's submission to it) shows that Landfall was directed cautiously to avoid a fate similar to Tomorrow's. In the recent interview with Ian Milner, Brasch reiterates Landfall's intellectual policy that was followed on most occasions;

Landfall's role as regards public affairs was to question and keep on questioning, and that is what its contributors did.

(Landfall, No. 100, p.350)

A difference between Landfall and Tomorrow was that the latter ✓ pushed forward its political opinions vehemently, at a time when national security and paranoia considered radical thinking dangerous. Landfall's era was less tumultuous socially and politically than the thirties, and Landfall's policy concerning comment on public and intellectual affairs was cautious.)

Brasch's aversion to censorship of the arts was exposed ✓ on several occasions in Landfall. In 1949 he accused the New

Zealand film censor of bringing "opprobrium on himself by banning the film Brighton Rock." (Landfall, No. 9, p.6).

While film censorship was conducted before public scrutiny, book censorship was secretive;

News has now leaked out of an attempt to secure the suppression of Dan Davin's novel For The Rest Of Our Lives. Fantastic and sinister as this is, it should at last force upon the notice of a too acquiescent public the vicious system of secret censorship.

(Landfall, No. 9, p.6)

In the same year Brasch referred to a committee of the New Zealand Library Association which was first convened in 1946.

The committee recommended and justified censorship on two grounds;

1. To safeguard public morals and prevent the corruption of youth (which may be through indecency, obscenity or by the glorification of gangsterism and youthful lawlessness).
2. To prevent incitement to violence (or subversion)

(Landfall, No. 10, p.99)

Brasch seems to have suspected concealed repression in the second justification of censorship. The report itself had reservations;

The danger is that such a censorship might be applied in a political sense, and we are firmly of opinion that there should be no censorship of opinion, whether political or scientific, religious or philosophical. There should be no interference with partisan political literature so long as it does not advocate violence.

(Landfall, No. 10, p.99)

In general Brasch approved of the committee's suggestions and criticised the procrastination on the part of government in executing the recommendations. "It is now May 1949 and nothing has yet been heard from the Minister of Customs.

Meanwhile the censorship continues as before." (Landfall, No. 10, p.100). On the specific case of Davin's novel Brasch was angry;

What official decided that Dan Davin's novel For the Rest of our Lives should be placed on the "no guarantee" list? Or is the list a means of fobbing off influential busybodies who put pressure on ministers or officials to stop us reading publications which they dislike? If so, that is one more reason for introducing without delay a system of censorship under which pressure groups shall have as little influence as possible.
(Landfall, No. 10, p.102)

A year later Brasch continued his diatribe against censorship, this time using political overtones;

...it should be common knowledge now that the Customs Department does exercise censorship, an arbitrary and irresponsible form of it which clearly contravenes the intentions of the law. The position was outlined in Landfall's Notes in June, 1949; and following the correspondence which appeared in the Taranaki Herald, other newspapers have taken up the matter. The Labour Government in its fourteen years of office did nothing to improve the position--all Mr. Nash's fine protestations of 1936 against censorship are now only a reproach to him. Here then is a problem in which the National Government has an excellent opportunity for showing greater enlightenment and liberality than its predecessor, and displaying that admirable regard for the rights of the subject which its supporters have spoken of so often.

(Landfall, No. 15, p.183)

The close connection between censorship and political expediency brought Brasch's argument back to the inadequacy of the press. When the Waterfront Strike broke out in 1951 and the Waterside Workers' Union was deregistered, Brasch, in a style reminiscent of Tomorrow's, condemned the failure of the press to present to the public any other than "the government's view of the situation."

The impression which the newspapers fostered throughout the strike was that the watersiders, because they were 'communist-led', had no case, and that public opinion was solidly behind the government.

(Landfall, No. 19, pp.163-164)

Brasch saw that serious damage would be done to intellectual freedom when the press failed to investigate fully the crucial issues behind the crisis.

While political censorship failed to inform a democratic populace, cultural censorship controlled individual taste. In 1954 Brasch chastised the Indecent Publications Amendment Bill "that extends the definition of an indecent publication... and threatens the freedom of speech and publication." (Landfall, no. 32, p.247). Brasch places the blame on the government;

In short, it looks as if the Government has put a fast one across the country--so fast that the sleepy old ladies of the Labour Party did not even suspect that anything was going on.

(Landfall, No. 32, p.247)

In 1962, Brasch put forward the terms by which he would accept a form of literary censorship, but the terms were vague.

If censorship of books for adults is justifiable at all, (which may be doubted) it must be practised very sparingly, with common sense, and by a body answerable to the public.

(Landfall, No. 64, p.315)

It is perhaps strange that Brasch went as far as saying this, but the significant point is that any censorship must be ultimately controlled by the public of the democracy.

When the Indecent Publications Tribunal was established in 1963, Brasch's criticism of censorship was more subdued.

Under the new freedom afforded by reformed censorship laws Brasch mentioned the possible justification of censorship to be "sparingly" employed.

The Indecent Publications Tribunal has not yet banned any book submitted to it. Which suggests that the country isn't exactly being flooded with indecent books, as a few bodies claimed when they agitated for the protection which the Indecent Publications Act now provides. There may be some point in keeping out horror comics, and cheap fiction and films and TV programmes that cash in on violence, cruelty and salacity; there is none in keeping out literature or other works with a serious purpose. But the real protection against the presumed dangers of the written word and the visual and aural image is positive, not negative: good education, and the active, sympathetic interest in everything under the sun which good education fosters. Censorship however enlightened is merely negative. We'd do better to spend our money on teaching English.

(Landfall, No. 72, p.299)

Brasch's argument, like that of many other intellectuals in New Zealand, circles back to education. It is in the realm of literacy and intellectual awareness that such social critics see the salvation of their age and environment.

Critics other than Charles Brasch commented on indecency in literature, and censorship. One, W.J. Scott, published a paper first read at the Writers' Conference in Wellington in 1959. Scott concurred with Brasch that education was the best means of combatting subversive or indecent literature.

The problem of indecency in literature is not... primarily one of having satisfactory, liberal laws and of ensuring that they are properly used; it is primarily the educational one of finding out by investigation what different kinds and qualities of books do to us, of raising the level of reading tastes, and of encouraging the work of creative artists and thinkers in society. But it is no part of my present

task to suggest ways of solving it.
(Landfall, No. 52, p.322)

Brasch had been more committed than Scott in suggesting "ways of solving" the problems of censorship and the "solution" of sound education. The interest of Scott's article lay in the detailed account of the legal situation of censorship in New Zealand in 1959.

Another article, by the self-styled radical F.H. Haigh, discussed censorship in the light of reforms brought about by the Indecent Publications Act of 1963. The article is more a series of borrowed quotations outlining the terms of the legislation, but Haigh, like Brasch and Scott, was soothed by the reforms. No further criticism of New Zealand's censorship laws appeared in Landfall under Brasch's editorship.

Landfall articles of a predominantly intellectual nature show a rough progression from topics of general political and philosophical concern to topics more closely concerned with New Zealand issues. There is no particular pattern of subjects, and intellectual topics appeared spasmodically as Landfall could accept only the best of a few articles written within an unlimited field. The editor's policy was to print anything of excellence regardless of its serial relevance, though many of the ideas were interrelated.

A major intellectual concern was the question of democracy. Discussion on this subject included the effects of socialism, individualism, and culture, on New Zealand's

accepted form of social and political life. The post-war attitude took firm account of New Zealand's colonial history, but the consensus was for an enlightened interdependent future with other Asian and Pacific nations historically based on the heritage of Europe and the West. In "a study in world crisis", the Auckland historian Willis Airey made an incisive criticism of New Zealand's affection for a comfortable past;

...New Zealanders tend to be among the last-ditch nineteenth century liberals in a shaken world. In these islands, conditioned by our own productive climate and a past immunity from the immediate effects of war, we have carried over into the twentieth century an overdose of Victorian optimism and something of the Victorian reluctance to face the facts. It is an outlook on the world no longer possible in Europe or Asia; it should no longer be possible for us.

(Landfall, No. 2, p.105). ¹

Airey's aspirations for New Zealand's future was based on the post-war sentiment that many political and social factors had changed radically as a result of the war;

...we must realize that we live in one of the great crises of civilization, exhilarating in its possibilities of human development but holding also the menace of failure and at least partial retrogression.

(Landfall, No. 2, p.105)

Airey found the tenets of conservatism to be unacceptable in the new world when "...man's recent rapid strides in knowledge and invention have placed new and heavy burdens on his emotion and intelligence." And, if "liberalism is not enough" as the

1 The article was entitled "Liberalism is not Enough." After Professor Airey retired in 1961 a series of essays written in his honour was published by editors Robert Chapman and Keith Sinclair. The book was entitled Studies of a Small Democracy, Paul, (Auckland, 1963). It was reprinted in 1965.

title of the article stated, the fight against complacency (and, possibly, fascism) would require intellectuals and scholars to take a more radical stand. To continue in anti-democratic complacency was "to hand over our destinies to the spell-binders and the medicine-men." "This is the road to fascism."

Such ideas were not new in New Zealand's literary history since Tomorrow had discussed radical philosophy in loud and clear language, but there was a renewed post-war urgency to rid New Zealand's democracy of repressive elements (like censorship) and to nurture enlightened political ideas of equality, racial harmony, and the social ideas advanced in the 1890's and 1930's.

Airey's foreign affairs formula for international post-war advancement would have been extremely unpopular among those people who, shaken by the Singapore disaster, were about to turn to the paranoid American ideology of anti-communism.

The international problem involves the internal structure of states--and here, too, the well-meaning liberals must learn, however reluctantly, that for many millions the collectivist 'new people's democracy' behind the reputed iron curtain holds more hope than the individualistic democracy of the West.
(Landfall, No. 2, p.106)

The Cold War was as much the creation of liberal thinkers as of conservative thinkers. Recognition of the merit of alien political systems, and recognition of changing international conditions of power and economics, are two arguments Airey employs to transcend the limited purview of liberalism.

While it is healthy to deprecate war talk, it is ostrich-like to ignore the potential trends towards a third world struggle. Too easily one can picture the liberals of the West rallying their peoples once more to fight for freedom, democracy, justice, and the rights of small nations...The U.S.S.R., of course, would be 'the enemy'. It would all be a supreme tragedy, not just because it was another world war, but because the good blood of men would be so falsely spent.

(Landfall, No. 2, p.116)

Airey's barbs were implicitly aimed at a New Zealand audience, but the perspective of his comments was international. There is also the sense that New Zealand's destiny was the choice of its own people who could remain detached from European imbroglios while learning from the better aspects of European history and experience.

In his article, "On a distant Prospect of Socialism", Blackwood Paul argues that the democratic system at home deeply affects New Zealand's international relations. He found, as had Airey, that complacency at home, even in Labour Party circles, gave rise to certain unsatisfactory situations and conditions;

The left wing, which should be trying to decide what justice is and pushing the Government (in spite of all temptations) towards justice, rather than towards appeasement of the unions with the loudest voices, is so busy proving that it is militant and anti-bourgeois and closely in communion with the warm pulsing hearts of the workers, that it spends most of its time abusing the Government for being tools of the capitalists. And anyone who speaks of short-comings among the workers gets contemptuously dismissed.

(Landfall, No. 6, p.91)

Blackwood Paul expressed the view that radical ideas and the need for social reform were often thwarted by a post-war quest

for "quarter-acre security" and riches. The important issues raised by both the Depression and the war were submerged by the new race for capital gain; in this politics became a supreme force.

Yet it is true too often here, as in pre-war Britain, that "a high proportion of those who now enjoy the practice normally regard the democratic state not as something which is their business and which they must keep going at personal sacrifice to themselves, but as an agency on which they have a claim for certain benefits and receipts and which imposes on them certain more or less irksome obligations and restrictions."
(Landfall, No. 6, p.108)

This quotation from E.H. Carr's Conditions of Peace sums up Paul's argument in favour of an altruistic approach to democratic principles. The "practice" of democracy, however, was simply a mask hiding the predatory nature of consumerism and materialism. This viewpoint is clearly an intellectual argument, based on political theory, and one that clashes seriously with what Ayn Rand calls "the virtue of selfishness." As in most other parts of the world, sacrifice of material gain was not a popular philosophy in New Zealand.

The aspects of democracy considered by post-war intellectuals in New Zealand dwelt on two particular concerns; the improvement of the individual through information and philosophical enlightenment, and the improvement of social institutions. N.C. Phillips, in an article on referenda, talked about "direct democracy, and the voice of the sovereign people of New Zealand." Phillips does not take democratic process to be an easy matter,

Democracy is a hard task-master; it demands experience

no less than good will, and asks of its exponents a delicate sense of the 'spirit of the laws'. It requires of its Governments respect for the dualism of their status, half counsel, half judge.

(Landfall, No. 12, p.310)

A referendum, or direct public decision, arose out of the conflict within government between party allegiance and the "public character" of government.

Where public opinion cannot press indirectly through the legislature for the supervision of a Government, there may be a sound reason for enabling it to press directly by way of initiative and referendum.

(Landfall, No. 12, p.311)

For Professor Phillips, the referendum is "a refuge from party discord", and may postpone the other means of voicing popular opinion, the general election.

Another intellectual critic, G. LeF. Young, sees political amelioration being achieved after each individual in a democracy has first improved himself. He assumes that the individual must adopt a "universal mind" and achieve "wholeness" in himself before "doing his part towards the achievement of a whole society."

Working on this hypothesis it is therefore impossible to change the formation of society for the better by revolution from the outside, revolution within the individual must come first. Having accomplished that, he has made his own way clear to act in the best way for himself and society.

(Landfall, No. 12, p.324)

Young is concerned by the increasing evidence of a rift in New Zealand between the "proletariat" and the "bourgeois-minded." While the situation may not be in need of "the Marxist line",

The Labour Government has done more than many people thought possible to divide the cake evenly according to capitalist rules. This has been achieved through high taxation, social security, subsidies, import selection and control of overseas funds, and a modicum of control over the issue of credit both by banks and by large aggregations of capital like insurance companies.

(Landfall, No. 12, p.321)

There is accord among all intellectuals so far discussed that New Zealand's situation was unique and needing imaginative reform.

Another Landfall contributor, T.M. Lees, accepts Young's idea that the New Zealand Labour movement followed the politics of compromise and that, as the Communists argue, "social democracy is merely a facade for reaction." Social democracy is seen as being "one step leftwards" of liberalism, and, while "Conservatism...has come to the end of the road,"

Whichever way one turns in the mid-twentieth century one is confronted by (the) trend towards dictatorship and the decline in the Western traditions of civil liberty, justice and freedom of thought. There might be some hope that in another half-century or so the universal triumph of Communism would enable it to relax its control over the whole life of man, and allow independent thinking and the free exchange of ideas to emerge again. But that will not happen in our time, and the whole painful process would have to be learned almost from the beginning.

(Landfall, No. 15, p.198)

It is interesting that Airey had found liberalism to be insufficient while Lees also criticised social democracy which he saw as being in a condition of crisis. For the intellectual who preached left-wing ideals there seemed to be no stage in the leftward movement where political institutions could guarantee justice, freedom, and equality. The "whole painful process" was disturbingly circular in result.

The future of democracy, according to Lees, could be determined in terms of "planned economy" and a "positive alternative to both Communism and Capitalism."

And it is just because there still seems no other alternative that the decline of Social Democracy cannot merely be philosophically accepted as a normal and necessary process. If it is inevitable, then Western standards of civilization go with it.
(Landfall, No. 15, p.199)

There seemed to be no direct answers to the "...general law of human societies to begin with zeal and end in respectability." But, for New Zealand, the first step towards such an answer was intellectual debate among critics with no commercial interest in politics or journalism. Landfall was an ideal vehicle for open and non-partisan debate when the controls of the Literary Fund and the problems of censorship were overcome. Lees concludes his article with a political statement;

What emerges, I believe, is that if we are to resume political progress and establish a greater and not a lesser degree of liberty, it must be on the basis of a political party which not only believes in democracy but practises it within its own movement to a greater extent than political parties have done hitherto. The implications of this are many and varied; I believe the possible consequences of it are vital to Western civilization.
(Landfall, No. 15, p.206)

In another Landfall article, Lees continued his thesis on the "integrity of the individual" and the decline of the Labour party. He expresses the belief that communism "like capitalism, has become politically a conservative rather than a radical force." Again he falls back on the ideal excellence of democracy, but cannot fully define the idea in more than general terms;

"the essence of democracy is the supremacy of reason."

And the "essence of the totalitarian society is the appeal to emotion."

In the political sphere, Landfall's intellectual contributors tried to combine their radical ideas with a moderate form of democracy. Certainly there were no revolutionaries writing in Landfall who were willing to give up material prosperity. Nor were there any reactionary opinions, and this fact was due to a lack of contributions from the conservative sector rather than to editorial policy. In the 1971 interview Brasch recalled,

I wanted Landfall to be open to different kinds of comment from different people. If there had been intelligent National Party people who wanted to write for Landfall I think I would have welcomed it. In fact when one wanted to get a comment from somebody of that political colour it was usually impossible.

(Landfall, No. 100, p.350)

It is not surprising, however, that conservatives were unwilling to contribute to a periodical that was of a liberal/radical orientation. But Brasch was sufficiently impartial as editor to print any progressive argument however distasteful it might have been to his personal opinions.

Connected inevitably with the concern for democracy in New Zealand was the belief in the sanctity and integrity of the individual in a nominally egalitarian society. H.H. Rex, who is generally in accord with Young's attitude towards the moral function of the individual, states that his interpretation

of individualism "...does not wish to deny the fact that man is a social animal." (Landfall, No. 10, p.112). But he is unable to accept Lees' belief that "the supremacy of reason" is the fruition of man's social democratic nature. Rex makes three conclusions about the individual;

(1) that the individual crystallizes into individuality most effectively in the moral sphere. He is the unit in the moral universe on whom ultimately all responsibility rests.

(2) to fulfil this moral function, the individual must have freedom to exercise his moral responsibility. In other words, he must not be reduced to the position of a pawn or automaton pushed about by a leader or party.

(3) what the individual's freedom actually consists in cannot be demonstrated by pure reasoning. It is only in the course of history that the content of this freedom will be worked out.

(Landfall, No. 10, p.123)

As is the case of Young, Rex is more in the realm of value judgment than of political reality. That he is a philosopher rather than a political scientist is borne out by another Landfall article on "existentialist freedom." The article provides a nice balance between the collectivity of social democracy and the integrity of the individual in Western society. The essay concerns "the contribution of Jean-Paul Sartre to European thought."

The discussion of individuality continued in an article by N.C. Phillips on "the conservative and radical minds." The writer contrasts the thought of Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine, and polarizes the two major intellectual factions in New Zealand. Phillips assumes "...that the conservative mind is not simply an annexe to the well-fed and comfortably clothed

body, and that the radical mind is more than a rationalizing cloak for economic appetite." (Landfall, No. 29, p.36). And he deals directly with the New Zealand experience;

Those who came to New Zealand to seek emancipation from their Old World past in large measure succeeded; they shook themselves free from the kind of society which provides the materials and the audience for doctrinal conservatism.

(Landfall, No. 29, p.37)

And he adds that the polar views of radicals and conservatives, which arose from a mature European (and a maturing American) tradition, have considerable relevance to New Zealand's situation,

If we think...that Burke and Paine are irrelevant to our condition, we are pleading immaturity in mitigation of ignorance.

(Landfall, No. 29, p.37).

The implicit idea of New Zealand as the political and cultural annex of Europe, feeding off an intellectual umbilical cord while "truly national" traditions grow steadily, is important to New Zealand's evolutionary status. Unlike revolutionary America, New Zealand chose to remain loyal to inherited traditions. N.C. Phillips' article implies that the controversy between Burke and Paine teaches from a distance. But the lesson does not inflict on New Zealand the kind of revolutionary upset experienced directly by Britain in the thirteen colonies in 1776 or by France in 1789. The battle for New Zealand's nationhood was fought in other territories and among foreign intellectuals. The Burke-Paine debate finds its local shadow in the debate between the National and Labour parties in New Zealand. And,

The debate between Burke and Paine goes on. For though history has yoked them in a partnership that both would have deplored, yet, as we listen to them howling at one another to eternity, we recognise, in their contentions, little less than the whole of human nature in politics.

(Landfall, No. 29, p.46)

It is in articles such as Phillips' that the politics of individuals take on social and political proportions. And the intellectual debate between individualism and collectivism continues.

A political study of New Zealand's social democracy appeared in 1962 in the series New Zealand Since The War. Brasch had designed the series as a reflective feature written by contributors closely connected with different aspects of the post-war years. The political study, written by Robert Chapman, implied that the differences between nominal liberals and nominal conservatives in New Zealand was negligible;

...the most obvious feature of New Zealand's post war politics, the similarity of the two main parties, appears to negate the link between electoral opinion and party policy.

(Landfall, No. 63, p.252)

Such similarity between parties reduces the probability of significant issues being raised before general elections, and permits complacency among the electorate. Chapman is specific about the dangers he foresees;

The primary problem raised in and by the postwar era up to now remains, to my mind, how to prevent the disappearance of the most interesting exception in the Western world, equalitarian New Zealand. Drift and failure to cope will not save it. Uncontrolled and undirected manufacturing development will kill it. The Labour Party, which has a traditional interest in equality and lives by assuaging and reducing group indifference, may yet

be driven towards more social planning, more competitive State corporations and more Socialism of a limited anti-monopoly type, simply in order to avoid that final hardening into classes.

(Landfall, No. 63, p.276)

In general, no Landfall intellectual was satisfied with party politics as they were carried out in New Zealand. Most were philosophically in support of the Labour Party, but none found the situation satisfactory. Implicit in all intellectual criticism was the fear that New Zealand society was losing the lead it had taken in the past which gave New Zealand the title of "the social laboratory of the world."

In the last year of Brasch's editorship, Landfall devoted a major part of one issue to the subject of religion in New Zealand. Brasch's introductory comments were, as usual, most relevant.

Religion in New Zealand is a field of activity and meaning that has barely been studied yet, not even, it seems, in theological colleges. Historians, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, theologians as well, most have passed by it, hardly aware of doing so. Yet religious experience and thought have been pervasive enough among us. The law and custom established here last century were those of a society with a millennium of Christianity behind it; two of the provincial settlements were church enterprises; no New Zealand community, it may be said, has not been partly moulded by Christian ways of thinking and feeling. It does not however follow that in this age, and in a welfare state, religious experience and thought will necessarily take expected, easily recognizable forms. (Landfall, no. 77, p.3)

All those who contributed to the issue on religion "wrote independently" and "were not invited to consult one another."

W.H. Oliver described New Zealanders as "overwhelmingly Christian."

The beginning of a life, the transmission of a life, the ending of a life, are quite crucial occasions, and it is of great significance that the church is still generally held to have something to do with them.

(Landfall, No. 77, p.5)

Oliver notes the "ambiguity" of New Zealand's Christian history which professed Christian ideals yet failed "to create such a community in its proper maturity." But the final statement of the article saves the generalization; such a shortcoming "...is not simply a failure of New Zealand Christians."

W. Merlin Davies writes that, in New Zealand, "religion has conserved some values from the past and contributed too little in shaping things to come." His opinion of the future of Christianity in New Zealand is idealistic, yet significant;

The best hope for the Christian future of New Zealand's national life and culture lies in the modern Christian Unity Movement with which all the major Churches in New Zealand have become intimately involved. One national Church, concerned with the life of New Zealand as a whole, and with its place in the larger world, may have been an impossible dream for the nineteenth century pioneers. For us today it has become both an urgent necessity and also a much nearer possibility, because of the remarkable transformation in inter-Church relationships in recent times. (Landfall, No. 77, p.22)

In his factual and historical article, the Reverend Davies agrees with another critic, Professor Geering, that there is no truly indigenous quality in the New Zealand Church. Religion in New Zealand still shows its transplanted nature. Professor Geering states that it is probably "too early yet to discern what is happening to (the Christian) faith in this particular geographical and social setting." (Landfall, no. 77, p.24).

And he concludes with a firm affirmation of the necessity of religion in New Zealand to reflect indigenous characteristics of society;

The initial period of transplanting from the old world is over now. Most New Zealanders are at least of the second and third generation. A nation is emerging, which, while it values its place in the British Commonwealth, no longer consciously thinks of Great Britain as 'home'. New Zealand is our home. This spirit is becoming more evident in the churches too. In every communion great value is set upon the particular historical stream through which its spiritual heritage has been received, and the denominational forms will not be lightly left behind, but more and more of the churches now believe that the essentials of their heritage can be preserved in a church that more nearly fits the New Zealand situation. Only when the church emerges will the trends we have been trying to discern have a real opportunity to flourish. At that stage it will become clearer what New Zealand experience has done and is doing for Christianity in the reshaping of her faith, worship, life and witness. At that point too the Church, freed from its less relevant ties to the old world, will be better able to play within the New Zealand nation the role which she is now in the process of rediscovering. It is to be hoped that in the coming church which will more clearly reflect her New Zealand home, Maori and Pakeha will be able to make a fruitful blend of their distinctive experiences and insights.

(Landfall, no. 77, p.30)

Such comments reveal the increasing intellectual concern to build an "autonomous" New Zealand culture based on the European and Polynesian inheritance. Landfall stood for such a challenge, and through its pages produced the sense that a new commitment to the "new" environment was essential for cultural sovereignty. If religion was a social force, as P.J. Downey in his article "Being Religious in New Zealand" (Landfall, No. 77, p.31) believed it to be, it had not yet transcended its derivative

quality.

John Harre gives "an anthropologists view" of Christianity in New Zealand and discusses specifically the "social utility and meaning" of religion rather than its "truth." Harre repeats the idea that New Zealand nurtures a "borrowed" European religion while other intellectual emphases are concerned with a new identity;

Our egalitarian ideal continually gives emphasis to the fact that it is our identity as New Zealanders that is of importance rather than our identity as members of groups within the community, socially relevant though they may be. A truly national religion could provide expression for this vaguely felt identity, but in fact we cling to a unity of church and policy with Britain, and our individual identity as a cultural unit remains elusive. Our flag is the Union Jack. Our foreign policy remains closely linked to that of Britain or the United States. Our principal Protestant Church is even called 'The Church of England.'

(Landfall, No. 77, p.38)

Harre makes the interesting suggestion that "perhaps our most important indigenous religious ceremonial is the Anzac Day ceremony." But he goes too far when he claims that "The Poppy is the only really important symbol New Zealand has off the sporting field."

In an article in the series on New Zealand since the war entitled "Where There is no Vision", James G. Matheson says; "Superficially, New Zealand is a Christian country." But he adds,

It would be premature, however, to take this to mean that the Christian viewpoint is steadily permeating our society and that out of the ruins of the Victorian world and authoritarian religion a new structure is rising capable of withstanding the acids of modernity. It will be found that of the ninety per cent nominally adhering to some branch of the Church less than one

third are devout practising Christians. More important, of those who are regular worshippers, the majority have little depth of conviction and still less intellectual grasp of their faith. Very few members of the Churches, at least in the Protestant denominations, can say, in answer to challenge, why they believe. Perhaps this is not important. Christianity has never depended entirely on the ability of its adherents to express themselves intelligibly. What matters more is that the conviction with which New Zealand Christians hold their faith appears to lack the dimension of depth.

(Landfall, no. 57, pp.59-60)

Matheson continues with a strong comment that "on the intellectual level it is almost impossible to find real debate, even among University students, on the meaning of human life." Some intellectuals in New Zealand found that the philosophical and religious attitudes of their compatriots were either shallow or non-existent. Religion lagged even further behind politics and culture as a vital part of the New Zealand experience.

In 1964, Alexander MacLeod criticised the New Zealand fixation on Britain.

While Japanese raiders were nosing around New Zealand harbours I was being encouraged to memorise a stanza about a little British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack. Later on Mao marched out of the hills and began to shift the focus of our lives. No one, as far as I can recall, drew my attention to this, though I think I could have been counted on to understand some of the broader implications. Instead, I was set to grapple with the mysteries of the medieval English exchequer.

(Landfall, No. 70, p.164)

MacLeod's attitude towards the British influence approaches the indignant; "I admit that three years later I see little in Britain that might positively suggest to a New Zealander

what his country ought to try and make of itself." But MacLeod is unwilling to swing directly from a British orientation to "the facile post-Suez mental reflex that New Zealand was 'part of South East Asia'." Between these two theses lay the New Zealand identity, and the attempt to give autonomy to New Zealand's cultural environment.

Landfall presented several important articles on the New Zealand pedigree. In "Alsatia or Utopia" David Herron wrote

In many respects New Zealand is a more civilized country now than it was a hundred years ago. Many of our present deficiencies--for example the disparagement of intellectual achievement--are a hundred years old, not the product of the welfare state or modern education practices. We would do well to remember occasionally that our past history contains as many salutary lessons as it does shining examples.

(Landfall, no. 52, p.339)

The "New Zealand Since the War" series was an intellectual search for the country's social identity. In a parallel way the series, "Beginnings", had been a search for a personal and literary identity on the part of each contributor. Above all, comment centred around the search for New Zealand's future.² The very title of Herron's article expressed the extremes between which New Zealand's intellectuals sought an approach for their reforms.

Phoebe Meikle found that education failed to stimulate the young with visionary ideals;

Today, among young New Zealanders, the emphasis is beginning to shift from traditional egalitarianism

2 In 1964 a collection of lectures was published under the title The Future of New Zealand, Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd., (Christchurch). Seven intellectuals discussed aspects of New Zealand society; manufacturing; agriculture; women; the Maori; literature; fishing; and history as a lesson for the future.

towards American individualism and competitiveness over material possessions.

(Landfall, no. 55, p.271)

The problem of ultimate issues, she believes, is tied up with the system of education;

The strengths and weaknesses of a system of education in which state-controlled schools staffed by state-trained teachers cater for almost all a nation's children, must be those of the nation. This is an inescapable fact.

(Landfall, no. 55, p.274)

James G. Matheson makes the interesting observation that the search for "ultimate issues" may be neither the realm of education nor religion. Instead, he suggests, it is the direct concern of creative writers who usually prefer to be considered creative rather than intellectual;

If we are on the search for signs of development in New Zealand's spiritual maturing...by far the most hopeful direction is when we turn to the post-war generation of poets and novelists. During the last decade they have maintained a steady and often penetrating criticism of New Zealand society and character. At present it is mainly negative, and persistently gloomy...They display an acute awareness of the spiritual emptiness of our way of life. And it is out of a real concern and passionate loyalty that the pessimism comes. There is a way of saying 'This is my own, my native land' which goes deeper than exclamations about the scenery. As yet there is no positive faith, no vision of 'the land that is very far off'. Our most vigorous writers are struggling in the Slough of Despond.

It is perhaps worth remembering--to pursue Bunyan's metaphor--that the strugglers in the Slough all won out. Some of them convinced they were getting nowhere, turned back, and got out where they fell in, on the City of Destruction side. A few kept their eye on 'yonder shining light' and came through in the direction of the Celestial City. The worn old parable may still serve.

It is a vision that we need. It is of the nature of vision, however, that it cannot be created. It is given. It comes usually to those who are looking for it. Twentieth century man finds himself, temporarily,

without a faith. The wise men of the West have no star. They are wisest when they know it. The band of writers in New Zealand are among the few who are aware that, in the realm of the spirit, the world is turning on its hinges.

(Landfall, no. 57, pp.66-67)

Such a comment is recognition that creative writers continue to write because they are not pessimistic. When Matheson writes "it is a vision we need" he makes the most important intellectual statement of all. Knowledge, reason, and facts are essential for intellectual amelioration of individual perception, but vision is the connection with social advance and betterment.

The problem remains in the esoteric nature of Matheson's statement. To talk of vision, and be understood, is to talk to the converted. There is an implicit condemnation of the philistine majority in New Zealand who care less for the "happy band of pilgrims" and their intellectual quest. New Zealand children (like most others in the Western world) grow up more aware of material benefits than of social visions.

Hopes and visions, however, are one part of the intellectual climate. H.N. Parton, writing on "Science in Society", insists that another major part exists in the ordered method of science;

The culture of a country embraces the whole way of life of its people, its art, its science, its industry and commerce, its ways of recreation, and its political and social institutions. A community which fails to find a place for science will become an intellectual backwater.

(Landfall, no. 56, p.372)

Parton places considerable importance on the balance between science and vision, and it is probably true that scientists can be given more credit for vision than can politicians in the post-

war situation. Science brings man firmly into the realm of the laws of nature where there is no anarchy of spirit, and hypotheses which are based on fiction or dream can be made fact when proven within these laws.

The ultimate power over man, terrestrially speaking, is political power. A.R. Entwisle discusses "The Day of the Small Powers", and New Zealand foreign policy in terms of the country's attitude towards mankind and political interests. He sees that intellectual blindness is the root cause of "...the monstrous over-simplification of human affairs which lies at the root of the Cold War." But Entwisle sees reason for optimism in New Zealand's future. It is an optimism that traces enlightenment from the individual person radiating out to the society within which he lives, and then on into international affairs and mankind at large;

The ordinary man, in the West at any rate, is accustomed to see in his domestic political institutions an expression of his people's more distant social purposes. While keenly, even pleasureably, aware of the power factor, and the consequent role of expediency, he has learnt to test political behaviour not by these but by other standards. In New Zealand in particular a whole new society has been brought into existence by constant reference to standards of charity and justice and truth which, however hazily conceived, now operate on the public mind at least as powerfully as does the appeal to interest.

(Landfall, no. 59, p.233)

Expressions such as this suggest that many New Zealand intellectuals have good reason to hope that their visions of a new country in a new world may succeed. Based on the facts at their disposal, the contributors to Landfall discussed in this chapter have built a tentative blueprint of New Zealand's

future. Their frankness is everywhere as evident as their optimism.

The final statement might aptly go to Professor J.C. Beaglehole, who, never a victim of overstatement, gives a cautionary word to any quixotic optimist. His valid statement is that the intellectual in any country can only make tentative conclusions based on the myriad isolated illustrations and patterns of his knowledge.

Sitting at his desk, gazing out of the window, at his paper, at his pen, out of the window again, he tries a number of broad statements, about politics, about social life, about culture and the lack of culture--only to reject them all. One cannot grasp enough, or one grasps too much, and it spills. Or one discerns, horribly, the platitudinous. Is it possible to hazard a single, vast, quite comprehensive affirmation, to assert a pattern so large that it almost disappears, and say that the last fifteen years have seen in New Zealand the slow advance of civilization? That should at least subsume particular defeats and disappointments. But it may not be very useful.

(Landfall, no. 58, p.152)

CONCLUSION

It can be said that, since the war, New Zealand literature has taken an equal place among the literatures of the Anglo-American tradition. Also, New Zealand literature in translation has proved that the imaginative writing this country has produced is read by people from the Soviet Union to France.

New Zealand literature includes works of high quality and provides both a native accent and a cultural identity for a Euro-Polynesian community of the South Pacific. The idea of a double standard of cultural quality can be permanently rejected as it was by Emerson in the United States. During a lecture in Boston in 1878 entitled "The Fortune of the Republic" Emerson said;

They who find America insipid--they for whom London and Paris have spoiled their own homes, can be spared to return to those cities...They complain of the flatness of American life; America has no illusions, no romance. They have no perception of its destiny. They are not Americans.

Less than seventy years later Dr. J.C. Beaglehole's comparable lecture at Canterbury University College was the sign of a renewed confidence in the "life and mind and tradition" of New Zealand. Such reassertions of the value of a country's cultural and spiritual identity are usually made by men whose intellectual capacity transcends the pragmatism of most of their fellow citizens. But all literature is fixed in the common experience, and New Zealand literature illustrates the details and visions of every man's and woman's

life in New Zealand.

✓ Landfall under Charles Brasch achieved everything pledged by the editor in his notes, and presented "valuable new perspectives" in New Zealand's cultural history. In his 1971 Hocken lecture at the University of Otago, entitled "Towards a New Zealand literature", James Bertram said of Landfall;

✓ ...when a literary quarterly can survive in a small country for more than twenty years, and maintain a fair standard of original and critical work without calling on other than New Zealand contributors, it seems reasonable enough to claim that country has a literature of its own.

Young writers in New Zealand can accept a philosophy of universalism in their work since older writers, as Landfall illustrates, have secured a firm basis for New Zealand's cultural identity.

James Bertram concludes his lecture with a realistic hope for the future;

...in time, the world may come to see the work of our New Zealand writers: so, I feel, we should regard it ourselves. What we call it doesn't much matter. What matters is that it should continue to grow--like that Tutira pasture, probably our most useful contribution to science and humanity, which is neither entirely native nor entirely exotic, but a life-giving mixture of both.

Such is the local and universal significance of New Zealand literature.

Bibliography:

This bibliography comprises those sources which have either been used directly in the thesis or have a significant bearing on the thesis subject. There are four sections. The first consists of general reference works or bibliographies; the second of anthologies of imaginative literature; the third of primary literary sources; and the fourth of secondary sources of social, literary, political, historical, or critical importance. All sources are listed in alphabetical order depending on the name of the author or editor. Listings include only the editions referred to in preparation of the thesis (which are consequently available) unless it is necessary or desirable to list previous or subsequent editions.

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