

**TRACES OF IDENTITY: THE CONSTRUCTION  
OF WHITE ETHNICITY IN NEW ZEALAND**

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**LYNDA DYSON**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY**

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TRACES OF IDENTITY: CONSTRUCTIONS OF WHITE ETHNICITY IN NEW ZEALAND.

Settler colonies arose out of a form of European colonialism where a white collectivity was installed permanently on territory formerly occupied by non-European 'indigenous' peoples. In British colonies where white settlers formed the majority population - the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand - the political, economic and cultural infrastructure has historically privileged whites over 'indigenous' groups. In recent years territorial appropriations, which formed the basis of national wealth in these places, have been the focus of struggles for self-determination by 'first peoples'.

This thesis focuses on the colonisation of New Zealand to show that although there were commonalities between white settler colonies, generally the historic specificity of nation building in each place, together with the way in which racial hierarchies were interpreted by colonialists, meant that national formations developed differently.

New Zealand was the last of the 'dominions' to be settled and it became a commonplace that this was the most successful British colony in terms of racial harmony, largely because of a treaty made with the Maori. However recent reinterpretations of the nation's history have shown that while this treaty has functioned as a symbol of nationhood, notions of 'civility' which were brought to bear on the Maori people meant the terms of the treaty were never honoured.

The thesis examines, through analyses of a variety of cultural artefacts, - from nineteenth century travel writing to contemporary cultural forms - films, television and museums -, the way 'civilising discourses' underpinned a matrix of ethnic, gendered and class-based differences which legitimated the privilege of the settler majority.

In recent years reinterpretations of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the severing of ties with Britain, have led to new forms of nationhood constructed around the 'indigenisation' of the 'treaty partners' - Maori and Pakeha. Drawing on Cultural Studies approaches to representation and ethnicity, the thesis addresses issues which arise specifically from the way in which these shifts have challenged the hegemony of 'whiteness' in the colonial context.

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## Chapter 1

A key contention of this thesis is that the colonisation of New Zealand was a racialised process. It argues that in order to facilitate the conditions necessary for capitalist modes of production and exchange the territory was, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, brought under the governance of a colonial state formation which privileged the economic, political and cultural interests of white European settlers over the indigenous people. Maori were systematically stripped of their land and largely disenfranchised from the apparatus of government as the colony emerged as a structured totality - a legal, administrative, educative and moral force - which developed what can be broadly characterised as a 'system of rules' in order to meet the needs of the burgeoning capitalist system.

The thesis is centrally concerned with analysing 'whiteness' as a racial identity which has historically been invisible, centred and unmarked in the monologic, hierarchical and authoritative discourses of nation. By explicating the way the hegemony of whiteness has been maintained through structural and signifying dimensions, the following chapters examine the crisis of nation in terms of the social, political and cultural processes which have legitimated the colonisation of the territory.

The thesis argues that the recent attempts to arrive at a 'settlement' with Maori have been important to the realignment of the national political and economic order brought about by globalisation and

deregulation. Forced to break with the colonial relationship binding the place to Britain, the New Zealand economy has, in recent years, been repositioned within the orbit of the Asia/Pacific Rim. The institutional and cultural 'settlement' with Maori (based around the rhetoric of biculturalism and marked by financial and territorial reparations) has ensured that the nation is perceived by international markets to have the capacity to cede sovereignty to the interests of global capital through its amelioration of the threat to political and social instability posed by the 'minority' challenge.

The analysis of whiteness in the following chapters examines the relationship between structural and signifying dimensions of hegemony to show how ideas of race have pervaded the social and cultural formation and have been the focus of complex struggles over shifting political meanings articulated and rearticulated through identity claims, particularly in relation to the issue of sovereignty.

New Zealand comprises three islands - the North Island, the South Island and Stewart Island - which lie in the South Pacific, 1200 miles south-east of Australia, the country's nearest neighbour. The current population is just over three million with the total land mass of the three islands roughly equalling that of the United Kingdom. In other words, for a territory which is almost completely habitable (aside from a spine of mountains running along the edge of the South Island), it is relatively sparsely populated.

Despite being sold as a destination offering visitors an unspoilt nature paradise (there are extensive reaches of undeveloped coastline and areas of relatively pristine native forest), the landscape, first surveyed by European explorers two centuries ago, has been rapidly transformed. Deforestation during the nineteenth century created millions of acres of agricultural pasture which, in the twentieth century, has given way to sprawling conurbations where most of the population now live.

The exploitation of limited natural resources (such as gold, fisheries and native timbers) has been part of the imposition of modernity (the handmaiden of a voracious capitalism) on a territory previously managed by the indigenous people whose distinct tribal identities were homogenised into the singular race category 'Maori' by the colonisers in the mid-nineteenth century (Kelsey, 1995:184).

Since the earliest days of colonisation, land has been central to wealth generation and as a result, it has also been the focus of the long political struggle by tribal groups against what they perceive to be the betrayals of the colonisers. The legal foundation for Maori demands for self-determination have been based on the Treaty of Waitangi tribal leaders signed with the British Crown in 1840 which the tribes were led to understand at the time, guaranteed their on-going entitlements to land and resources in exchange for ceding overall sovereignty of the territory to the colonisers. Despite the treaty, the wealth of the colony has always accrued disproportionately to white settlers and their

descendants while Maori have been excluded, firstly from their tribal lands and then from the surplus generated by the burgeoning capitalist economy<sup>1</sup>. Maori people have long featured in Government statistics, as one of the most disadvantaged grouping in relation to access to housing, education, jobs, health care, transport whilst being disproportionately over-represented in the prison population<sup>2</sup>. This economic, political and cultural marginalisation provides material evidence of the extent to which the imposition of modernity was a racialised process.

Foucault's notion of 'governmentality' has been used in the thesis to describe the way colonisation imposed a totalising grid of institutional structures - political, cultural, economic and legal - on the territory during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in order to produce a national formation which was part of the emerging world system of 'the West' (Foucault, 1991). Within the global configuration of 'the West', whiteness has functioned as a universalised identity, a performative ideal, aligned with the individualised subject of modernity. Until recently whiteness remained unmarked and largely invisible in discourses of nation (white New Zealanders were the New Zealanders), but counter-hegemonic challenges to the power and privilege of this dominant group during the past thirty years have brought about a crisis precisely because, as a collectivity, white New Zealanders have lost their transparency, their apparent 'racelessness'.

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<sup>1</sup> Ten percent of the population now identify themselves in ethnicity census as 'Maori' (New Zealand Official Yearbook, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*



The thesis examines the shift from the unifying discourses of nation based on the myth, 'We are one people', to the more recent biculturalist version based on the notion that 'We are all settlers'. These shifts are testimony to the plasticity of identity in the national context. As Balibar puts:

No nation possesses an ethnic base naturally, but as social formations are nationalised the populations included within them are ethnicised; represented in the past, or in the future, as if they formed a natural community possessing an identity or origins, culture and interests which transcends individuals and social conditions (Balibar, 1991a:96).

As the shift to biculturalism has produced new and different institutional and signifying practices purporting to accommodate Maori lifeways across all spheres of economic, political, social and cultural life, new versions of white identity have also emerged.

Using Gramsci's concept of hegemony (broadly defined as a form of rule which operates by structuring its subjects and incorporating contestation), the thesis analyses whiteness by examining the relationship between economic and cultural life (Gramsci, 1971). It analyses the ways in which political processes, policy making and social movements are bound up with struggles over meaning and identity (represented in cultural form) and shows how racial signifiers pervade social and political institutions to produce forms of subjectivity through which individuals are socialised into forms of national belonging (Hall, 1986).

Focusing on specific texts, the thesis shows how cultural artefacts put into circulation particular meanings which have material determinants at certain historical moments. It emphasises that while discourse is of vital importance in understanding the way hegemonic formations define a 'common sense' at any one time, so are the forces which shape and change these discourses over time.

The thesis draws on the critical perspectives and methodologies of British Cultural Studies which has, since the 1960s, developed a variety of approaches for the analysis, interpretation and criticism of culture. Breaking with established academic divisions of labour, which have tended to abstract cultural texts from their socio-political and economic contexts, Cultural Studies posits 'culture' as constitutive of social relations, institutions and knowledges. It is centrally concerned with representation as the site of power and regulation; of the relationship between texts (intertextuality) and between cultural institutions and texts (contexts).

Methodologically, the inter-disciplinarity of Cultural Studies draws on a range of approaches. Textual analysis is combined with sociological and historical investigation of cultural production in institutional and spatial contexts, to examine the interplay between representation and meaning in relation to class, gender, race, ethnicity and sexuality at different levels of the social formation from global to national to local and across public and private spheres.

John Kraniauskas has described Cultural Studies as:

an almost unmappable field of critical inquiry endowed with both a set of languages and local histories. At its most institutionally radical it is an anti-disciplinary discipline with a multitude of practitioners working, on the one hand, at the boundaries between disciplines and, on the other, in response to social movements and even political parties, with an eye to illuminating the ways relations of power are experienced in everyday life (Kraniauskas, 1998:9)

Broadly speaking, the approaches to the texts and textuality of culture used across the field of Cultural Studies, exist in what could be described as a productive tension between analyses of cultural production, focused on the political economy of the culture industries (and the extent to which this 'determines' content), to text-centred approaches (where textual analysis undertaken by 'expert readers' who make qualitative judgements through the interpretation of texts) to 'cultural populism', which is concerned with the actual consumption of texts and valorises the meaning-making processes of 'ordinary' audiences/consumers.

Stuart Hall gives an account of these tensions when he describes cultural texts both as a source of meaning, and as that which escapes or postpones meaning:

There's always something decentred about the medium of culture, about language, textuality and signification which always escapes and evades the attempt to link it, directly and immediately, with other structures. At the same time the shadow, the imprint, the trace of those formations, of the intertextuality of texts in their institutional positions, of texts as sources of power, of textuality, as the site of

representation and resistance.....(means) it has always been impossible ...to get anything like an adequate account of culture's relations and its effects (Hall, 1992:284).

And of course this 'impossibility' is exacerbated when 'culture' is considered at the level of global production, circulation and consumption. How is meaning produced, circulated, translated and transformed across and between different spatio-temporal zones and identity groups?

Such issues have been central to the choice, and the analysis of texts in the thesis. Chapter Five considers the representation of race, ethnicity, class and nation across a range of texts which exemplify the complex inter-relationship between culture as a mediation of technology, spatial relations, history and audiences. For example, the development of exhibits at Te Papa Tongarewa, the national museum which opened in Wellington in 1998, was based on the collaboration of a range of governmental and Maori groups. This makes the museum an appropriate 'text' for analysing the way new accounts of race, ethnicity and nation are being produced in New Zealand as the terrain of 'biculturalism' continues to be fought over.

The representation of these issues is highly charged politically and therefore an institutional account of the planning and development stage of the museum would be necessary to reveal the complex issues discussed 'behind the scenes' and translated into the content of the exhibits. A Cultural Studies analysis of the museum's exhibits would require an engagement with a complex range of 'domains' - from planning and

architecture to art historical discourses and would ideally include an ethnographic aspect because so much of the institutional material was not made public. Clearly, this 'totalising' approach to the museum as text is beyond the scope of the thesis as it is structured. Nevertheless, the account offered in Chapter Five attempts to tease out some of the complexities and tensions operating at the institutional level, and move beyond the one-dimensional plane of the exhibits as text.

Chapter Five also includes an analysis of a segment of 'televisual flow' - the live coverage of a football match. Given the ubiquity of television in everyday life, together with the centrality of sport (particularly rugby) in producing national identifications, television is a crucial medium for any analysis of representation and identity in New Zealand. The codes and conventions of television genres tend to be standardised and universalised, with technologies and formats sold globally and translated at the level of the local/national. This 'local content' needs to be analysed in terms of context and intertextuality, (particularly because of the commercial imperative to generate advertising revenue organised around schedules appealing to targeted audience segments), if the complex mediations of this 'flow' are to be understood. The examples discussed in this section analyse the generic codes of 'live' broadcasts to show how viewers are 'sutured' into event and potentially interpellated as 'national' subjects.

In Chapter Four a contemporary collection of essays - Pakeha: The Quest for Identity in New Zealand, edited

by Michael King - is drawn on to explore textual reformulations of 'whiteness' in the context of 'biculturalism' which, in this book, sees the reiteration of a range of 'indigenising' tropes - myths of origin, relationships to land and nature - also apparent in contemporary representations of Maoriness. The collection is of particular interest here because it is an example of a genre of populist, 'middle-brow' publications addressing the contemporary 'crisis' of pakeha identity. The other texts examined in this section comprise a range of late nineteenth century travellers accounts and settler guides selected from the relatively small corpus of material written about New Zealand during the early days of colonisation.

As an expatriate white New Zealand woman who has lived in London for the past twenty years, the writing of this thesis - the 'making strange' of my relationship to New Zealand and its racialised history - has involved a process of self-reflexivity which has made the work something of an autobiographical journey.

Leaving New Zealand in 1979, I experienced my whiteness for the first time in the 'aliens' queues at Heathrow where, without a stamp of patriality in my passport, I was required to account for my arrival in the country. My inability to establish recent-enough patrilineal blood-line connections with Britain provided me with my first glimpse of the racialised boundaries of my subjectivity.

I arrived in London the month the white New Zealand school teacher Blair Peach was killed by police at an

anti-racist march in Southall; it was also the month Margaret Thatcher entered Downing Street. I immediately found myself caught up in a milieu which I am now in a position to characterise as a politicisation of everyday life.

Despite the Thatcherite attack on the public sector, London boasted a network of publicly funded amenities - museums, theatres, libraries, parks, bathhouses, pools and laundries, voluntary organisations, housing co-operatives and so on - unlike anything available in New Zealand. I came to understand that the commitment to this public sphere contributed to a general level of politicisation around class issues which was inconceivable in New Zealand, where a relatively weak public sphere emerged in order to facilitate capitalist modes of production and consumption rather than to ameliorate the historic demands of the working class as it was industrialised and urbanised (as was the case in Britain). At the same time, the legacy of Empire, which had to a large extent generated the wealth underpinning the public sphere, was represented in a way which failed to link the presence of black people in Britain with the nation's colonial past.

Making connections between the presence of black people in Britain, my colonial origins and the naturalisation of my 'whiteness' became possible when I encountered debates about race and identity at university. This provided me with a theoretical framework through which I could begin to examine 'whiteness' and to reassess my relationship with New Zealand.

Growing up in a sprawling all-white suburb of New Zealand's largest city, Auckland, I had experienced from an early age the oppressive proscriptions of ascribed gender roles but, in relation to race and ethnicity, I can now see that 'whiteness' was completely naturalised.

My family were unexceptional in their genealogical connection to Europe; both my parents' families had left Europe in the mid-nineteenth century for New Zealand. My father's family were strict Methodists who had left Yorkshire in the 1850s to join a farming community in the Waikato while my mother, a Fredrickson, was a direct descendant of Norwegians who had settled on the North Island coast in a place they called Norswood.

In the 1960s, my parents, who had both left school at 14 unqualified and unskilled, were nevertheless economically secure enough to take on a 25-year mortgage in order to purchase a quarter-acre plot of land in a suburb on the edge of Auckland. The house they had built on this land was, for some years, surrounded by ungrazed farmland which had been surveyed and marked out for residential development. I now know that the land on which the house was built had been part of an extensive tract of tribal territory bordering the banks of the Tamaki estuary, a stretch of nearby water which, for my parents and their neighbours, constituted nothing more than that most prized real estate aspect - a 'sea view'. In the 1980s the land on which the suburb was built became the focus of a substantial claim for reparations in the Land Court.



Over a period of ten years the open space around our house was transformed into a maze of cul-de-sacs offering dead-end access to new-build three bedroomed weatherboard houses with double garages, mortgaged to young white couples with children who at that time would have considered themselves to be struggling to gain a foothold on the ladder to prosperity.

Everyday suburban life in New Zealand hummed with low-level racism directed primarily against Maori people who seemed to choose the most run-down places to live, to drive the most beaten-up cars and to wear the scruffiest clothes. In a place where appearance was everything - suburban life involved an energetic regime of status-enhancing domestic and corporeal labour - the invective directed against Maori as dirty, lazy 'good for nothings' seemed to be borne out by their refusal to adopt a suitable ('white') lifestyle.

Race issues in New Zealand have, in recent times, obscured pressing political and social issues related to the multinational takeover of one of the most deregulated economic zones in the globalised economy. Aside from those who continue to benefit directly from the spoils of laissez-faire capitalism, most New Zealanders - no matter what their racial or ethnic identification - have experienced the erosion of what was always a relatively weak public sphere, an end to formerly taken-for-granted civil rights and the on-going destruction of the environment in the service of economic development. Just as the discourses of race legitimated the colonisation of the place, so the mirage of race (as a Maori 'problem') continues to disguise rampant exploitation

in a place where , as Kelsey puts it ' the mass of the population remains fragmented, unorganised, insecure and apathetic' (Kelsey,1995 :191). Despite the 'bicultural settlement', which has institutionalised Maori and Pakeha as 'partners', the discourses of nation continue to be racialised in ways which naturalise links between colonisation, the so-called democratic process and the reinvigoration of global capitalism brought about by neo-liberal approaches to 'globality'. It is my contention that an analysis of whiteness as a racialised category is an important step in addressing the continuing disavowal of the links between race, nation and capitalism.

Any re-assessment of the New Zealand's colonial past cannot be isolated from a much broader context in which the legacy of European imperialism has been played out globally. Every place subjected to colonialist intervention has been involved in some form of territorial or ethnic struggle<sup>3</sup>.

In Britain, post-war immigration from former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent have racialised issues around national identity and ethnicity. The significant presence of black and Asian people in the United Kingdom has given rise to a politics which challenges the exclusions and unequal access of groups (characterised in dominant discourses as 'immigrants' and 'ethnic minorities') to all areas of national life whilst at the same time

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<sup>3</sup> Imperialism means the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; colonialism, which is almost always a consequence of imperialism is the implanting of settlements on distant territory (Said, 1993:8).

continuing to disavow explicit historical and economic connections with the Commonwealth.

During the post-war period race and ethnicity have emerged as key terms in political and social contestation, creating powerful alliances between geographically dispersed groups whilst disrupting hegemonic forms of national identification.

As a result of these shifts, British Cultural Studies has moved beyond its Marxist origins (and a preoccupation with the historic agency of class) to refocus on the relationship between discourses of race, gender and nation in the construction of hegemonic versions of 'Englishness'. Such constructions have privileged hierarchies of social organisation and cultural distinction which have maintained the dominance of an English ethnicity, increasingly seen as the exemplar of 'whiteness' (Young, 1990; Rattansi, 1994).

Debates about race, ethnicity and national identity in Britain have connected more widely with critiques of Western ethnocentrism showing that imperialism and colonialism were not marginal activities on the edges of 'European civilisation' but were fundamental to 'Western' cultural self-representation - in other words racialised discourses underpinned the project of Modernity (Goldberg, 1993).

The rather broad field of investigation (known in the Anglo-American academy as 'post-colonial studies') has analysed how discursive formations such as 'Orientalism' have positioned 'Europe' as superior to non-European Others. Foucault's work on the

articulation of particular power/knowledge relations through the production of discursive formations, provided a theoretical basis for what has effectively become the founding text for contemporary 'postcolonial theory', Edward Said's Orientalism (Said, 1978).

Said's work established a general theoretical paradigm through which the cultural forms of colonial and imperial ideologies could be analysed. By shifting the study of colonialism away from the positivist focus on economic and political structures towards a consideration of the complex fields through which discourse operates, Said demonstrated that a range of representational practices in literary texts, travel writings, memoirs and across academic disciplines, were implicated in the complex power/knowledge relations underpinning colonialism.

His work has been important in opening up areas of study dealing with the centrality of issues relating to imperial and colonial histories in fields where they were traditionally overlooked (literary and legal studies for example), and has encouraged the development of a critical and theoretical vocabulary which can deal with such phenomena<sup>4</sup>. The application of Said's approach to different contexts has demonstrated the way 'colonialist' texts function as more than mere documentation or 'evidence'. As Hulme argues:

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<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that Orientalism has subsequently been the object of wide-ranging critiques which have focused on the way Said ended up replicating the totalising discourses he set out to dismantle by constructing his own version of an essentialised 'Orient'; which James Clifford describes as a 'hermeneutic short-circuit' (Clifford, 1988; Mills, 1991; Ahmad, 1992).

Underlying the idea of colonial discourses the presumption that during the colonial period large parts of the non-European world were produced for Europe through a discourse that imbricated sets of questions and assumptions, methods of procedure and analysis, and kinds of writing....normally separated out into discrete areas of military strategy, political order, imaginative literature and personal memoir (Hulme, 1986: 2).

While such an approach provides an important and different framework for analysing the political, economic and administrative aspects of colonial power (by emphasising that the language used to enact, enforce, describe or analyse colonialism was never transparent, innocent, ahistorical or simply instrumental), it tends to focus on colonisers' accounts of Others rather than examining how European identities themselves were constituted differently in different colonial contexts.

So-called 'postcolonial' encounters in the West (such as the post-war migrations mentioned earlier), have given rise to an identity politics focused on notions of cultural hybridity, diaspora and difference which together articulate a particular kind of contemporary 'metropolitan experience'. Theories of postcoloniality have tended to universalise these encounters as representative of an emerging global condition: a move which replicates the imperial hierarchies of 'the West and the rest' (Hall, 1992:275).

Thus it can be argued that the term 'post-colonial', in describing both a 'global condition' and a theoretical approach which critiques Eurocentrism,

attempts to designate 'too many things, all at once' (Dirlik, 1994). As a temporal marker 'post-coloniality' suggests a binary - colonial/post-colonial - representing history as a series of stages in a teleological narrative from the 'pre-colonial' to the 'colonial' and on to the 'post-colonial'. Used in this way, the term is monolithic and glosses not only geo-political distinctions in relation to specific regional histories and differing forms of colonisation/decolonisation but more importantly, fails to account for complex forms of 'neo-colonialism' which are re-aligning global economic relations.

The phrase 'colonial discourse' belongs to the critical vocabulary of 'postcoloniality', a concept which as Terry Eagleton wryly points out, it has become almost de rigeur to problematise:

There must be a secret handbook for post-colonial critics which reads 'Begin by rejecting the whole notion of post-colonialism'<sup>5</sup>.

This uneasiness is linked, in part, with the fact that so-called post-colonial theorists find themselves not only speaking on behalf of 'colonial subjects' but invariably from a position inside the Euro-American academy. To this end Aijaz Ahmad argues that the terms of the debate which he defines as 'the condition of post-coloniality', have been determined from an Anglo-American 'centre', often by those 'diasporic intellectuals' who have left the periphery

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<sup>5</sup> Eagleton's comment appears in his review 'In the Gaudy Supermarket', *London Review of Books*, 13 May, 1999.

to take up privileged positions within this academy.  
He argues that:

the figure of the migrant, especially the migrant (postcolonial) intellectual residing in the metropolis, comes to signify a universal condition of hybridity and is said to be the subject of Truth (Ahmad,1995:13).

He suggests that the drive to carve out an academic 'niche' has meant that colonial encounters in the 'contact zones' of the peripheries have tended to receive less attention not least because circuits of academic production and consumption are dominated by the Euro-American academy and related cultural industries, in particular publishing.

Certainly, in post-colonial studies the 'whiteness' of settler colonies such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada has been largely taken for granted or simply ignored. Even in the United States (which despite its status as a modern imperialist nation was also a white settler colony), the linked discourses of multiculturalism and post-colonial theory have marginalised issues around indigeneity in relation to Native American Indians. As Nicholas Thomas argues:

Debates about race, minority identities, representations of ethnicity ...are almost always about Afro-Americans, Hispanics and other immigrant people of colour...there is no widely read theoretical text that speaks from the indigenous perspective in the way that the works of Gates, bell hooks, Cornel West speak from the Afro-American experience or as Said's Orientalism and Spivak's work presents the positions of diasporic intellectuals from the Middle East and South Asia respectively....there seems scope for the marginal societies of Australia, New Zealand and Canada for which indigenous assertions and identities are powerfully

present to write back into the debates  
(Thomas, 1994:172).

The invisibility of whiteness as a dominant ethnicity in places such as New Zealand, Canada and Australia, and the way in which the current political struggles of indigenous peoples has been overlooked, has occurred partly because these places tend to be peripheral in terms of global flows of culture, information and knowledge production. Across all forms of cultural production (from academic and literary publishing to television and the news media, advertising, cinema and popular music), cross-border circulation of texts tends to flow unevenly, and although the pan-global circulation of capital and culture makes it increasingly problematic to speak of a binary 'centre/periphery' axis, cultural production and distribution takes place 'elsewhere' (Tomlinson, 1991:14). This apparent marginality further complicates the field of the 'postcolonial', suggesting that issues to do with globalisation and cultural imperialism, the circuits and flows of cultural production and consumption at a global level, are inextricably bound up with colonial histories; to this end the Taiwanese-based academic Kuan-Hsing Chen has called for an international cultural studies which 'provincialises the dominant Anglo-American cultural studies' (Chen, 1996:37)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> For Chen, the 'post-colonial' is an Anglo-American invention which now claims universality and legitimacy to 'frame' other parts of the world, arguing that:

Beyond the therapeutic function, so that previous colonisers feel better, postcolonial discourse in effect obscures the faces of a neo-colonial structure in the process of reconstructing global capitalism and potentially becomes the leading theory of the hegemonic re-ordering (Chen, 1996: 51).



Colonial encounters in the West's peripheries prefigured, by centuries, the dislocations which the paradigms of 'post-modernity' now universalise<sup>7</sup>. As Anthony King argues:

The first multi-racial, multi-cultural societies on any substantial scale were in the periphery not the core and they were constructed under the very specific economic, political, social and cultural conditions of colonialism (King, 1993:8).

In settler colonies, where majority white European populations were installed on territory appropriated from indigenous groups, 'multiracial, multicultural' encounters took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These encounters resulted in long struggles by the 'First Peoples' of colonised territories focused politically on land-rights and culturally on claims to an 'authentic' indigeneity. Such struggles, in apparently 'peripheral' places where the colonisers never left, not only complicate the notion of 'post-coloniality' but also problematise theories of diaspora and hybridity which articulate a specifically metropolitan experience based on an anti-essentialist critique of racialised identities.

The analysis presented in the following chapters examines struggles over indigeneity and 'belonging' in a specific geo-political context. It shows how the reassessment of colonialism in New Zealand can write key issues back into 'postcolonial' debates which

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<sup>7</sup> Hannerz suggests that the First World has been present in the consciousness of many Third World peoples a great deal longer than the Third World has been on the minds of the first (Hannerz, 1991: 110).

have been largely framed within a metropolitan context.

New Zealand was the last of the settler colonies to be established in the British Empire. Historically, there was a straightforward link between settler appropriations of land, the economic power and privilege of the white majority and the dispossession of the Maori. Land taken from Maori tribal groups provided the basis for a pastoral economy structured around a political, economic and legal relationship with Britain which guaranteed relative prosperity for white immigrant settlers and their descendants.

Until recently it was a commonplace (in dominant accounts at least), that New Zealand was Britain's most successful colony in terms of racial harmony, largely because of the 1840 treaty made with the Maori. In colonial territories the installation of a political, economic and social structure which could facilitate a capitalist social formation was underpinned by legal apparatus (based on liberal notions of formal universal equality) protecting the concept of private property and systems of contract. As Chapter Three discusses, recent reinterpretations of the nation's history have shown that while the Treaty of Waitangi (1840) has functioned as a powerful symbol of nationhood and racial assimilation, notions of 'civility' which were brought to bear on the Maori people meant that the terms of the treaty were never honoured - it was used primarily as a means to legitimate and expedite the imposition of colonial power.

More broadly the project of modernity was based on a commitment to progress: to material, moral, physical and political improvement, the mastery of Nature and the promotion and development of civilisation. Thus the structural inequalities and exclusions built into the process of colonial nation-building in New Zealand were shored up by moral (and racialised) discourses, based on universalised doctrine of self and society, which legitimated the dispossession of the indigenous people, but also positioned the nation's citizens unequally in relation to the supposed entitlements of modernity (as enshrined in the ideals of democratic governmentality). As Goldberg puts it:

As modernity commits itself progressively to idealised principles of liberty equality and fraternity, as it increasingly insists on the moral irrelevance of race, there is a multiplication of racial identities and the sets of exclusions they prompt and rationalise...race is irrelevant but all is race (Goldberg, 1993:6).

While it is possible to argue that race has been the dominant organising category for the imperialist expansions of modernity it continues to function as an impossibly slippery and contradictory concept. Broadly, discourses of race signify socio-political conflicts and interests by differentiating between, and ranking, different types of human bodies (Winant, 1994:270). Although race appeals to biologically-based human attributes (for example the epidermal schema i.e. skin colour), the selection of particular human features used to signify race is always a social and historical process (and is therefore necessarily imprecise and arbitrary). Importantly, while there is no biological basis for

distinguishing human groups along the lines of racialised attributes - in other words 'race' is a not a natural attribute - it has real material effects.

As Foucault has shown, the newly emerging natural sciences produced 'knowledge' through practices which ordered and classified according to perceived differences (Foucault, 1986). Historically, the imperialist application of a racialised grid, based on putative biological differences, was global in its reach but delineated in terms of spatial hierarchies: Africa was the 'dark continent', Oceania the space of the 'noble savage', while the Orient represented amongst other things, the 'exotic' (Said:1979). Spatial distinctions were made through theories of climate and ecology (for example the tropics were seen as places of 'indolence') with different levels of development defined in relation to the Western notion of 'progress'. Within this spatialised schema Europeans were also hierarchically classified on a scale which moved upwards from 'dark-skinned and passionate' southern Europeans to 'fair-skinned and rational northerners' (Goldberg, 1993:29)<sup>8</sup>.

In colonial contexts such as New Zealand, 'whiteness' was represented as the repository of racial purity, sexual virtue and forms of 'civility', while colonial 'Others' in these places were marginalised and excluded in different ways through classifications which defined groups as variously exotic, primitive, savage, childlike and inferior.

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<sup>8</sup> Thus the term 'European' tends to refer to 'northern Europe', specifically to England, Germany and France,

However, within the metropolitan social formation discourses of 'civility' and 'purity' were also deployed in order to maintain the boundaries of bourgeois whiteness against a range of 'others' including the poor, the insane, and the criminal (Stoler, 1992:321). As Foucault's 'archeologies' of the human sciences have shown, regulation through institutional 'technologies' involved the surveillance of individuals and their bodies across the fields of education, the economy, mental health, criminal justice. This has meant that the West's internal Others (those pathologised as weak, sick, insane, poor or criminal) were, like racially Othered peoples in the colonies, classified and excluded (Foucault: 1973, 1979, 1986).

Thus Europe's internal others, from the subaltern classes to oppressed ethnic and national groupings such as the Irish and the Jews, were excluded from the polity at different historical conjunctures. The invisibility of 'whiteness' in this context (it was class-based rather than 'racial') became explicit when deployed in the colonial context. As Kiernan puts it:

In innumerable ways the European gentleman's attitude to his own 'lower orders' was identical with that of Europe to the 'lesser breeds'. Discontented native in the colonies, labour agitator in the mills, were the same serpent in alternate disguise. Much of the talk about the barbarism or darkness of the outer world, which it was Europe's mission to rout, was a transmuted fear of the masses at home (Kiernan, 1986:316).

Hierarchies which delineated difference in the metropolitan context were translated and transformed

in European colonies. Therefore this 'topology of difference' - defining what it meant to be white and European - cannot be defined exclusively in terms of race. It has extended at particular conjunctures throughout the social formation of 'the West' delineating gender, class, national and regional differences with bourgeois 'whiteness' defined in terms of what was marked out as 'low' (Elias, 1994).

While race, constructed in terms of degrees 'blackness', had been defined within a hierarchy of visible differences, 'whiteness' has also been naturalised within hierarchies based on notions of culture and 'civilisation'. In order to link the discourses of race with the discourses of class it is important to examine plasticity of 'whiteness' as it is symbolised through a matrix of distinctions: the 'high' defined in terms of its difference from the 'low' across a range of topographies from the human body to the colonial landscape and cultural forms and practices.

The following chapters, summarised below, develop the theoretical arguments of this thesis showing how contestation in relation to cultural identities and forms of belonging, have been rearticulated and reformulated at different historic moments.

Wallerstein argues that the production of ethnicity - the constituting of peoples into 'fictive' ethnic unities - is the crucial underpinning of forms of national identity which are inevitably racially hierarchised. He poses the question:

Why should the establishment of any particular sovereign state within the interstate system

create a corresponding 'nation' or 'people'?  
(Wallerstein, 1991:81)

Historically the stability of this world system of nations has relied on identifications with nationhood (and Empire) through the interpellation of the inhabitants of a particular territory as a collectively imagined 'people'. Wallerstein describes this experience of 'peoplehood' as the 'complex clay-like historical product of the capitalist world economy' with the rules of what constitutes 'culture' (in relation to the dominant versions of ethnicity in specific national contexts) being transmitted through the institutions of the state in particular the family, the language and the education system (Wallerstein, 1991:83).

Within legal studies a new focus on the historic role of the Law in furthering imperial objectives has extended positivist approaches to the discipline which have traditionally 'sealed off' the law as an autonomous, specialised practice 'removed from the everyday commitments and discourses of social and political conflict' (Goodrich, 1987:5). Such critical perspectives have analysed the Law within a field of practices which have distilled and articulated Enlightenment principles through a reified discourse which draws its power from 'hierarchical, authoritarian, monologic language' (Goodrich, 1987:7).<sup>9</sup>

In settler colonies, the exploitation and displacement of indigenous peoples involved the

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<sup>9</sup>This work, when applied to the colonial context, usefully makes a link between the approaches which have privileged the economic and political aspects of imperialism and 'post-colonial theory' which tends to privilege cultural forms.

appropriation of land for white settlement. Throughout the British Empire this was achieved through treaties made between colonial administrators and native peoples. As Chapter Two argues, the European legal apparatus, underpinned by the civilising discourses which provided ideological legitimation, was a central feature of the colonial process, not just to secure land for white settlers, but also to guarantee favourable terms of trade for the colonisers. Chapter Two shows how the Treaty of Waitangi has been used historically to mediate shifting relations of power within the colonial formation whilst 'on the ground' Maori tribal groups have fought against treaty injustices since the 1840s.

Chapter Three begins by outlining the Treaty's history, drawing on contemporary reinterpretations to offer context, and focusing on the proceedings of a specially-convened land court in New Zealand which has been assessing tribal claims. These claims have been based on re-interpretations of translations of the treaty. With reference to specific tribal claims, this section shows how Maori legal challenges to the Treaty of Waitangi have drawn their power from the recognition of particular attributes of 'Maoriness' (in particular spiritual and communal relationships with the land) which have been set against the perceived avarice and duplicity of colonial interventions.

The final section examines the way in which 'primitive idealisations' have been the basis of a Maori cultural renaissance in New Zealand. While the treaty has provided the constitutional basis for a



state-brokered 'bicultural' settlement between Maori and Pakeha, demands for self-government from tribal groupings continue as the assimilationist impulse underpinning the settlement is resisted.

Within theoretical elaborations of the problematic of race, it has been recognised that the invisibility of 'whiteness' as an ethnicity has been due to the hegemony of 'white' as a normative, naturalised category (Dyer, 1988). 'Post-colonial theory' has tended to privilege the analysis of racialised notions of the Other over forms of exclusion producing an homogenising of both the notion of 'coloniser' as European and 'colonised' as 'native'.

In New Zealand 'whiteness' has always been a contested form of identity, not only because of the nation's on-going relationship with the imperial centre, but also because the colonisers were divided by conflicting economic interests and different visions of the 'civilising mission'. 'Whiteness' was constructed in relation to a complex range of racialised, gendered and class-based distinctions which historically defined what it meant to be a 'New Zealander'.

The transculturation process in which European values and lifeways were reproduced in the colonial context was an important factor in delineating settler differences from the Maori, particularly in relation to the colonial version of 'civilised' domesticity. Settlers were, in a sense recruited to the mission through their enactment of a performative 'whiteness' - a transculturated 'Europeaness' - based around a repertoire of practices which 'repressed nature'

through the repetition of normalised codes delineating domestic and corporeal rituals of 'civility'. These norms were set against the tribal lifeways of the Maori, perceived by Europeans to be based on a transgression of 'civilised' boundaries, particularly in terms of the domestic arrangement of space and lack of control in relation to sexuality, eating rituals and gendered divisions of labour.

Moral discourses about the body included regulation of sexuality, with white women represented as custodians of morality. 'Civilised' sexual behaviour was codified within the normative values of heterosexuality and the family where 'civilised' behaviour was reproduced. The domestic space, the sphere of social and biological reproduction, became the site where the 'inherent' qualities of whiteness (purity, order and cleanliness) were naturalised through the invisible domestic labour of white women (as either wives, mothers or servants).

In recent times, versions of whiteness in New Zealand have shifted from an identity based on a notion of 'Europeaness' to an emergent Pakeha identity which makes claims to indigeneity. This transformation is explored through an analysis of early travellers' accounts and publicity material for would-be settlers. These accounts are compared to a series of recent essays on 'being Pakeha' which show how an indigenised 'Pakeha' identity has been refashioned in the face of Maori challenges to white privilege to effect a decentring.

Although race has been the primary organiser of difference in discourses of nation, Chapter Four

shows that class and gender were also important in defining local taxonomies based on 'cultural competencies' which separated the colonial bourgeoisie from white 'others'. However, this situation was further complicated by an ambivalent relationship with the imperial centre, where the 'creolised' culture of the white settler colony was regarded as producing inferior versions of 'Europeanness'.

Chapter Five examines the way white hegemony has historically been maintained through the local cultural formation and a complex interplay between the centre and the periphery, and the local and the global. It suggests that the one-way flow of cultural products from other places, together with historical links with Empire, has ensured that the 'imagined community' of nation in New Zealand has been fragmented and discontinuous with cultural production in the 'national' context, tending to reproduce globalised forms with specifically 'local' content. To this extent, the global hegemony of whiteness is maintained in cultural form through local versions of difference which draw on more widely intelligible representational practices. For example, components which make up the 'national culture' were provided by forms and practices translated from the imperial metropole, not least because English was installed as the national language.

Such translations have given rise to cultural forms which combine the canonical (in terms of dominant tastes and values translated to the colonial context) with a limited repertoire of indigenised elements. A

national 'imaginary' has been constructed through visual symbols such as flags, maps, statuary, ceremonies and public spectacles which, in given historical periods, served to unify the majority population (despite the rhetoric of 'one people'), through a valorisation of 'whiteness' as the shared characteristic of nation. At the same time an appropriation of the cultural resources of the Maori has been crucial in delineating the boundaries between the 'new' and the 'old' ethnic collectivities, as selected indigenised appropriations have been used to furnish 'local' (unique) versions of nation.

## Chapter 2

This chapter examines the relationship between race, ethnicity and nation in a place where the institutional mechanisms of the state historically guaranteed the majority white population disproportionate access to the wealth generated by colonisation. This unequal access to power and privilege has been the focus of a long struggle by Maori.

As a result of the challenge posed by Maori demands for reparations, the discourses of the modernist colonial formation, which previously sought to assimilate Maori to the national project through the unifying myth 'We are one people', have, in recent times, been reformulated to a 'biculturalist' version: 'Two peoples of one nation'. Thus the on-going crisis of nationhood continues to be contested on the terrain of 'indigeneity'. Its most recent manifestation - biculturalism - indigenises the treaty partners, Maori and Pakeha, in the process denying any pre-eminent status to the Maori as tangata whenua (people of the land) and excluding other ethnic groupings, including the significant population of Pacific Islanders, from the dominant discourses of nation.

The first section of this chapter examines the way in which disparate tribal identities were collectivised under the designation 'Maori' and then subjected to the rule of imperial Law which drew on the civilising discourses to legitimate

the large-scale appropriation of tribal land. As Kelsey puts it, tribal identities:

posed an intolerable barrier to the colonial enterprise. For economic, political and ideological reasons, tribal members and their resources had to be individualised, atomised and abstracted from their pre-colonial location within their 'beastly communism' (Kelsey, 1995: 184).

Gathered under the sign Maori, the tribal groups were classified as a 'knowable' entity in terms of the racialised hierarchy which underpinned the colonial 'civilising mission'.

The second section examines the way in which the construction of 'peoplehood' in the colony required the 'nationalisation' of the white settler majority.

Kelsey has described the settler colony of New Zealand as an 'exemplary modernist creation' which, by mimicking metropolitan institutions and complying with imperial constitutional doctrines, gained admittance to the 'high table' of the world system as a 'western' nation (Kelsey, 1995: 178)

The nation-building process in the colony was based on a template replicated globally, in terms of forms of constitutional democracy, with nations being incorporated into an international community bound by 'standards of civilisation' and regulated through the legal and administrative structures of a European-centred 'international system' (Robertson, 1992:115).

Settler colonies were legally cognizable in international law. They enjoyed the 'comity of nations' and gained admittance to the collectivity designated as 'the West' because they were exemplars of the universal 'civilising' standard of modernity. As Fitzpatrick argues:

The civilisation characteristic of nation has been derived from opposition to the uncivilised. It is this identity in negation that enables nation to exist as an abstracted, even transcendent entity. Nation is dynamically homogenising and universal in being set against ...specific forms of life that are fixedly particular and heterogeneous (Fitzpatrick, 1995: 12).

National identity is produced out of the universalisation of 'fictive ethnicities' which take the form of myths about national character, national histories and narratives of origins. These are continually redefined and set against the particularisms of other groups positioned on or beyond the nation's margins. Thus identity is formed in relation to excluded others, as such it has no positive content, rather, it is formed in terms of 'what it is not':

Identity and its limits are generated from within, by constituting the nation as universal in opposition to what is exceptional to its universality.....The nation must exclude the other - and so be non-universal - in order to be universal (Fitzpatrick, 1995: 10).

Laclau argues that modernity found 'its own body' in the form of a certain particularity - European culture - which became the expression of 'universal human essence'. European universalism constructed its identity 'through the

universalisation of its own particularism' (Laclau, 1996:24). Imperialist expansion was presented in terms of a universal civilising process with whiteness the 'master signifier' of this racialised project:

The resistances of other cultures were...presented not as struggles between particular identities and cultures but as part of an all-embracing and epochal struggle between universality and particularisms; the notion of peoples without history expressing precisely their incapacity to represent the universal (ibid).

In order to participate in world trade, emergent nations were required to adhere to the rules of international law. The formation of an 'international community' in the nineteenth century was regulated by the legal apparatus and discourses of international law (ibid:122). As Roland Robertson argues

Civility became a regulative principle in inter-state relations...the civilising process operated as an external politico-cultural constraint on nation states (Robertson, 1992:121).

The application of these laws was based on the humanist notion that 'humankind' shared essential qualities which could be measured against certain 'standards'. These principles were conceived of as universal system which could be applied to all peoples equally:

The definition of 'positive law' is inherently circular in that 'law' could only exist by the will of a supreme sovereign. A community could not be



categorised as a body politic unless a supreme sovereign could be identified.....Communities which lacked the necessary criteria to constitute a body politic could not be regarded as sovereign entities, nor did they have legal root of title to the territory they occupied. In other words, such communities were legally non-existent because they lacked the contractual capacity to enter into international agreements (Hackshaw, 1989:100).

In the colonial context the Law legitimated European notions of 'property rights' by refuting 'native title' and custom through the deployment of notions of 'civility' which were enshrined in the legal apparatus:

When shipped to the colonies Law stood at a point from which it could legitimately dominate lesser orders ....it could join the 'civilising mission' .... it could fulfil the imperatives of Enlightenment and relate to an essential humanity, yet treat parts of that humanity in radically different ways because of their radically different position in the scale of civilisation or in evolutionary development (Fitzpatrick, 1990:99).

Thus the true meaning of 'terra nullius' (a term used to enforce Britain's 'right of discovery' claims to Australia and the southern islands of New Zealand) was based, not on the notion that the land was empty of people (it manifestly was not), but that the inhabitants were not organised in some form of government or regular system of authority and were therefore not able to make binding contracts about property or participate in international relations (Ward, 1997:2)

Dirks has described colonialism as the 'theatre for the Enlightenment project':

Before places could be colonised, they had to be marked as 'foreign', as 'other', as colonisable. If geography and identity seem always to have been closely related, the age of discovery charted new possibilities for this relationship (Dirks,1992:6).

So for example, Captain James Cook's explorations played an important role in representing and classifying newly 'discovered' territories. The Endeavour's voyage to the Pacific heralded a new phase of colonial expansion and was inseparably linked to the rise of science in the eighteenth century, inaugurating an era of maritime travel which involved the mapping, naming and cataloguing of distant spaces.

In its most general terms, the voyage of the Endeavour was described as a scientific expedition. It was sponsored by the Royal Society. Cook was commissioned to observe the transit of Venus in Tahiti in April, 1769 and then to travel south to find the great southern continent, terra australia incognita. The curved surface of the planet had been projected onto a geometrical grid which squared off empty seas and unexplored regions in measured boxes; Cook's mission was, in part, to 'fill in the blanks' (Fabian,1983:8). The invention of the chronometer in 1761 had made possible the precise calculation of longitudes and prefigured the totalising classification of the earth's surface, eventually represented in the

Eurocentric interpretations of the Mercatorian map.

The Endeavour was 'a floating laboratory'. The crew included Sir Joseph Banks, who was appointed director of Kew Gardens after the voyage to the Pacific. Banks was accompanied by Solander, a botanist, together with Sydney Parkinson, an artist skilled in drawing plants (Obeyeskere, 1992:5).

Solander and Banks used the system developed by the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus to classify plants according to the characteristics of their reproductive parts; classification of flora was designed to reveal the 'rationality' of nature through a universalised taxonomy. Just as the geographies of newly discovered places were being mapped and re-named, so were the life-forms and peoples of these places drawn into European taxonomies which constructed a 'Great Chain of Being'. As Mary Louise Pratt argues:

The eighteenth century classificatory system located every species on the planet within a grid, extracting them from the arbitrary surroundings (the chaos) and placing them within a system (the order) - book, collection or garden - with a new written, secular European name. One by one the planet's life forms were to be drawn out of the tangled threads of their life surroundings and reweven in European-based patterns of global unity and order (Pratt, 1992:31).

The 'global classificatory project' is the subject of Foucault's historical and philosophical

analysis in The Order of Things. He argues that natural history reduced

the whole area of the visible to a system of variables all of whose values can be designated, if not by quantity, at least by perfectly clear and always finite description. It is possible to establish the system of identities and the order of differences existing between natural entities (Foucault, 1986:136).

The classificatory systems of natural science were also applied to indigenous peoples encountered on these voyages. They too, as David Theo Goldberg observes, were inserted into a hierarchical grid of visible typologies defined by the 'racial' classifications of the period :

A hierarchy was thought to be revealed through physical, natural correlates: skin colour, head shape, body size, smell and hair texture....thus ordering human groups on the basis of putatively natural differences. Classification could then claim to provide an objective ordering....enabling their subjection to the cold scientific stare and economic exploitation of Europeans and their descendants (Goldberg, 1993:50)<sup>1</sup>.

Racial hierarchies formed the basis for different forms of European colonisation which emerged in the Pacific. While the Aborigines were seen as 'bestial' and 'uncivilised in the extreme', the people living in New Zealand were 'noble savages', with the result that they were treated very

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<sup>1</sup> And as Chapter 4 shows, in nineteenth century travel accounts of New Zealand there was continue slippage between the description of flora and fauna and the way in which the Maori were described.

differently by the colonisers  
(Beaglehole, 1961:390).

A policy on indigenous rights had been set out in a Royal Proclamation of 1763. When Cook embarked on his Pacific voyage six years later he was instructed to obtain the consent of native inhabitants before taking possession of territory. There is no evidence that he did so (Sorrenson, 1989:21). When he arrived on the east coast of Australia, despite the fact that there were signs of human settlement, Cook took possession of the territory by right of discovery because the Aborigines were deemed to be living in a 'state of nature' and he was therefore able to decree the place 'terra nullius' (land belonging to no-one).

Drawing on eighteenth century notions of 'civility', the Europeans judged that the Aborigines had attained only the 'first stage' of civilisation, described in Cook's journal as the stage of:

a small society whose members live by hunting and fishing, and know only how to make rather crude weapons and household utensils and to build or dig for themselves a place in which to live, who possess a language with which to communicate their needs and a small number of moral ideas which serve as common laws of conduct, and who live in families, and conform to general customs which take the place of laws (Beaglehole, 1961:397).

In Cook's words, accordingly the place was

in the pure state of Nature, the Industry of Man having had nothing to do with any part of it (ibid:397).

In not having reached recognisable states of 'civilisation' (e.g. domesticating animals, maintaining agriculture or establishing a political entity capable of negotiating on behalf of the whole society), the Aborigine had not, in the eyes of the Europeans, subdued and cultivated the Earth so as to obtain 'dominion' over it.

As the Endeavour sailed up the Australian coast Cook and his crew came across small settlements of Aborigines; Cook wrote that the Aborigines wandered

like the Arabs from place to place set them up wherever they meet with one where the sufficient supplies (sic) of food are to be met with, and as soon as these are exhausted remove to another leaving the houses behind, which are framed with less art or rather less industry than any habitations of human beings probably that the world can shew (ibid:399).

It was observations of this kind which provided the basis for subsequent colonisation of the territories. Seventeen years after Cook's visit the First Fleet, eleven vessels carrying more than 600 'convicts', arrived in Botany Bay. With the place designated 'terra nullius' there was no legal requirement to negotiate with the aborigines and the colonisation of Australia, which became the destination for the forced exile of 160,000 members of the British 'criminal class', was undertaken without any negotiation between the British and the Aborigines.

Cook's encounter with the tribal people of New Zealand was very different. Despite their cannibalism they were ranked as 'noble savages' within the racial hierarchy Cook constructed of Pacific peoples. Cook's journals describe them as

a brave, open, warlike people and void of treachery, certainly in a state of civilisation. They are very frequently decorated with a skilfully carved head, the face of which expresses rage. For in this uncivilised state one seldom sees emblems which are pleasant. They almost always represent cruel, deadly passions. While the bodies of their enemies are still palpitating, they are cut into pieces, roasted and devoured with particular pleasure (Beaglehole, 1961:514).

Cook continues admiringly:

I venture to say that for cannibals they display a very good character and are aware of benefaction and humanity.<sup>2</sup> (ibid: 516)

He goes on to suggest that they would benefit from some form of government:

Living dispersed in small parties, knowing no head but the chief of the family or tribe whose authority may be very little, subjects them to many inconveniences a well regulated society united under one head are not subject to (Beaglehole, 1961:518).

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<sup>2</sup> Beaglehole notes that when Cook returned to New Zealand the second time, in 1772, his ship was a 'Noahs Ark' loaded with 'two young bulls, two heifers, two young stone horses, two mares, two rams, several ewes, rabbits and poultry'. Many of the animals died en route: 'With now only the bull and the bull calf left, hopes of changing the cannibal diet of the New Zealanders was fading' (Beaglehole, 1961 Vol 2:101).

The subsequent European colonisation of New Zealand was based on recognition of the Maori as the indigenous people of the territory. The Treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840, is legal evidence of this status. It has been argued that legal recognition of the Maori meant that (compared to the Australian Aborigines) they were always able to take on the colonisers militarily and politically although, new interpretations of the colony's history suggest that the ability to challenge colonial power had as much to do with the ways in which tribal life has been organised as it had to do with the trans-historical legacy of Enlightenment Law (Belich, 1997)

Treaty historians have noted that the Treaty of Waitangi was the first official document where the term 'maori' was used to designate the indigenous people as a collectivity (Orange, 1987; Kawharu, 1989). Before the arrival of Europeans, Maori people had no single term for themselves: they were distinguished from one another by tribal whakapapa (genealogies) and tended to identify with tribal affiliations and the natural environment in specific locales (Durie, 1998:53).

The word 'maori' meant 'normal', 'usual' or 'ordinary' but after the treaty designation it was capitalised to refer to the collectivity of New Zealand tribes while the term 'pakeha', which meant 'imaginary beings resembling men with fair skins', changed from designating 'strangers' to referring specifically to the European settlers<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> As discussed in Chapter 4, 'Pakeha' is currently a highly contested term in New Zealand. There has been much debate about whether the word 'pakeha' should it be capitalised to indicate a stable identity (Sharp, 1990:13).



Defining the Maori as a unified ethnic grouping was an important part of the Treaty's role in the producing the nation; all inhabitants of the territory were drawn within the jurisdiction of the Anglo-settler state and classified in terms of their 'race'. As Balibar puts it:

As social formations are nationalised the populations included within them are ethnicised (Balibar, 1991:96)

The contemporary reinterpretations of meanings embedded in the different versions of the Treaty, (explicated in the lengthy recommendations of the Waitangi Tribunal), have explicitly shown how the rule of law was deployed in the new colony to underpin the 'civilising mission'. Nineteenth century notions of 'civilisation', which were brought to bear on land use, were not only instrumental in ensuring a steady supply of land was available for settlement, but also need to be considered within a broader context, namely the imposition of a monolithic system of political and legal control over the territory. According to Adams:

Europeans theorised that land only acquired value as labour and capital were expended on it and that individual property rights arose from this expenditure of labour and capital, thus they were only prepared to recognise aboriginal rights to land which they tamed and cultivated (Adams, 1977:189).

Various colonial administrators spoke of 'civilisation' being the gift the British gave to

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the Maori people. In other words Maori paid for their engagement with modernity through the loss of land and resources.

Thus in the colonial context, the Law was deployed as a form of 'scientific administration' which universalised the legitimating frameworks required to impose colonial rule. The Law was identified with civilisation and the absence of Law with untamed nature. The unassimilated 'savage' was thus excluded from the polity as 'irrational' and 'unproductive'. In this way the Law was used to police the boundaries of the nature/culture divide which underpinned the 'civilising mission':

Liberal legality creates the rational civil subject and rejects others as rebellious: what is excluded is characterised as savage...The excluded is very difficult to define in terms of legal rationality, quite simply because it is the 'other'. The strongest example is the colonial regime where the 'native' is legally understood in terms of brute custom (Carty, 1990:22).

In New Zealand, following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the implementation of European law provides numerous examples of the way in which Enlightenment principles were used strategically to delegitimize collective ownership (based on shifting boundaries of tribal territory) and use of land for what were deemed 'unproductive purposes'. Ward argues, Maori:

had consistently thought in terms of scattered property rights in land, bird trees, eel weirs, fernroot patches, pipi beds and garden lands...they were now being asked to think of discrete areas of land encompassed by continuous boundaries...but

until boundaries were clearly marked on the ground this would have had little real meaning to Maori (Ward, 1997: 37).

Within months of the treaty-signing in 1840, a Royal Charter from London had ordered the colonial government to survey the territory and redistribute 'waste land'. This has been interpreted by contemporary Treaty historians as evidence that the legal agreement was seen by the colonisers as the easiest way of expediting land appropriations whilst appeasing humanitarian concerns in Britain (Kawharu, 1989).

As the tide of settlers increased, the New Zealand Company (in an attempt to make more land available for settlement) claimed that Maori land titles could not legally extend beyond tribal sites of habitation and surrounding cultivations. The Company called for all other land to be made available for settlement and this view was subsequently accepted by the Crown's House of Commons' Select Committee in 1844. The Crown then issued further Royal Instructions which were more draconian than those of 1840 (when the initial survey of the territory was carried out), decreeing that no claim by 'aboriginal inhabitants' to land should be considered by the colonial government unless:

...they have been accustomed to use and enjoy the same either as places of abode or for tillage or for the growth of crops or otherwise for the convenience and sustenance of life by means of labour expended thereon (quoted in Oliver, 1994:173).

Recent rulings of the Waitangi Tribunal have reassessed land appropriations demonstrating that the monoculturalism of European distinctions between 'cultivated' and 'waste' land failed to take account of the spiritual values the Maori attached to land. The contemporary rulings acknowledge that for the tribes, land was a source of identity that went far beyond the limited relationship enshrined in European law, recognising Maori rights only in relation to 'cultivated' land.

Initial colonial policies directed at the peaceful and voluntary incorporation of the Maori people (enshrined in the Treaty of Waitangi), eventually gave way to physical coercion as Maori tribal groups were forced to become subjects of individualised property law. A series of acts of parliament in the 1860s opened up the country to agriculture. The 1865 Native Lands Act, for example, imposed European conceptions of land ownership and inheritance on the Maori by legislating for the transfer of communally-held tribal lands into individual ownership, a move which created enormous intra-tribal conflict. It is worth noting that the 1865 Lands Act was one amongst hundreds of pieces of legislation relating to Maori land. Ward argues the authorities used the confusion arising from the complex mass of legislation to their best advantage by avoiding consultation and negotiation with Maori (Ward, 1997:309)

By this time the principles of the Treaty had been largely been abandoned, with colonial

administrators claiming the 'civilising mission' had failed (Belich, 1986:328). This view, articulated in an Auckland newspaper The Southern Cross, suggests the extent to which public opinion (the 'we' addressed by the editorial) was constructed from the colonisers perspective:

We have dealt with the natives of this country upon a principle radically wrong. We have conceded them rights and privileges which nature has refused to ratify....The Maori is now known to us as what he is....a man ignorant and savage, loving darkness and anarchy, hating light and order, a man of fierce and ungoverned passions, bloodthirsty, cruel, ungrateful and treacherous (quoted in Oliver, 1994:329).

In 1877, after tribal groups had unsuccessfully turned to the Native Land Court to address grievances over confiscations, the Treaty of Waitangi was declared a nullity by Judge C.J. Prendergast who ruled that the Maori were 'uncivilised' and as a result had no claim on the land. Here, according to McHugh, Prendergast retrospectively applied the doctrine of 'terra nullius':

Prendergast conceded that some forms of recognised title could be given effect in the colonial courts of the Crown but these were only those of 'civilised' societies. Being 'uncivilised' Maori society lacked ....rights to land cognisable in the colonial courts (McHugh, 1991:115).

Settlers were, by this time, numerically dominant - in 1874 the white settler population totalled 250,000 and was increasing annually while the Maori numbered only 50,000 - and as a result there

was even less reason to adhere to the treaty principles (Orange, 1987:185).

Colonial laws increasingly impinged on tribal life; initial colonialist strategies to assimilate Maori into European ways gave way to the coercive strategies of 'white governmentality'. The introduction of rating systems and taxes - local, body rates, road rates, dog registration taxes<sup>4</sup> - together with the compulsory acquisition of land for public works projects (such as the construction of the main trunk railway from Auckland to Wellington), restricted the autonomy of the Maori tribes

Thus, in order to further the economic interests of the colonisers, the 'monologic' discourses of law were used alongside the technologies of government to represent the state as an 'engine of progress'. Census material and Government Year Books<sup>5</sup> from the early colonial period provide evidence of the way in which 'governmentality' relied on standardised and centralised systems of classification for the presentation of 'neutral' information. Data was presented in extensive tables detailing the political economy of state affairs, naturalising the ideology of 'progress' which underpinned expansion in the colony through the representation of statistics as objective,

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<sup>4</sup> According to Orange, Maori response to the dog registration tax introduced in 1880 to reduce packs of Maori owned dogs that threatened flocks of sheep was 'magnified out of all proportion because it was construed as one more government measure to oppress Maori people' (Orange, 1987:198).

<sup>5</sup> The first New Zealand Official Year Book was published in 1891.

empirical and neutral (Thomas, 1994:46, Ludden, 1992:262).

By the turn of the century the information apparatus of the state generated data relating to aspects of economic life - population, production figures (wages, prices and so on), soil types, property values, rateable land, tax liability, mortality, morbidity, livestock, prisoners, bank assets - were all available in statistical form. Underpinning the presentation of this data was the textual construction of 'national progress', based in particular on the 'improvement' and 'cultivation' of land.

In the 1901 Official New Zealand Yearbook for example, a section entitled 'Land for Settlements' details in table form all land acquired throughout the colony (with no reference to the actual purchase). Each provincial district is listed giving figures for 'Value of land and improvements', 'Total Land in Cultivation' and 'Livestock - Cattle, Horses, Sheep'. Also detailed are special loan schemes and subsidies which were made available to property owners who achieved annual improvements on property, while tables show the heavy rates applied to 'unimproved land'. Extending the totalising representations of colonial land surveys, which categorised the territory in terms of a grid of productive and unproductive land, these statistics collapsed localities into identically analysable units of production and erased Maori entitlement in the process.

But however totalising the records of colonial administration appeared (creating an 'aura' of government based on dominance and order), it is evident that on the ground the colonisers had achieved neither practical control nor a transformation of 'indigenous' life.

Maori developed effective means (at least in the short term) to counter institutional power. By the 1850s, a pan-tribal movement focused on 'anti-land selling' had emerged and in some areas tribal groups had developed systems of locally organised government to deal with colonial power (Belich, 1997:232). During this period war broke out between Maori tribal groups and Pakeha. Historically the wars of 1845-72 were known as the Maori Wars (suggesting the conflicts over possession of the land were the fault of the Maori people); in 1982 the Waitangi Tribunal argued that the wars should in future be called Land Wars:

The New Zealand Wars were a series of conflicts involving the British and the Maori tribes of the North Island. They were not, as received versions suggest...storms in a teacup but bitter and bloody struggles... (Belich, 1986:15)

These wars were more than a mere contest for land; as Sorrenson notes, they were 'a contest for authority, for mana and the question of whose law was to prevail' (Sorrenson, 1989:10

It is clear that after Cook's landfall tribal groups welcomed the opportunity to trade for European goods. Ward describes their engagement with 'modernity' as 'outstanding':



The adoption into the local economy of the European pig and white potato meant within a few years the Maori were trading a surplus of these to ships from New South Wales. This showed both a desire and a formidable ability to master and manage the forces of modernity to their own enrichment (Ward, 1997:12).

However, as systematic colonisation replaced the early trading relationship between Maori and Europeans, the colonisers introduced laws to facilitate the large-scale appropriation of Maori lands. The Treaty of Waitangi, which transferred sovereignty to the Crown, was at the time simply a means to facilitate the appropriation of land for white settlement and the extraction of resources. Acquisition of cheap land paved the way for the transition from the 'scavenger' economy based on whaling, sealing and forestry to pastoralism, as permanent white settlements were established on territory acquired through the massive transfer of land from tribal 'ownership'.

From this point onwards the privileging of settler interests (largely coterminous with capitalist interests) over those of Maori was enshrined in a panoply of laws and statutes. It is clear that early contact between the Maori and representatives of the British Crown fostered an image of Britain as a benevolent protector of Maori interests, a neutral force whose concern was largely to govern, control and regulate the behaviour of those Europeans who settled in New Zealand. At first the Crown, adopted a conciliatory stance, mediating between settler and Maori interests for a variety of reasons including

the need to protect trade, the recognition that the Maori were numerically dominant, and in order to appease humanitarian concerns for native peoples which were emerging as a key political issue in Britain

From a Maori perspective, therefore, relations with the colonialists were initially beneficial. The northern tribes had experienced sustained contact with white people from Europe, and had appeared to have much to gain from the formalising of relations between the two groups. They were the first to sign the Treaty at Waitangi and were subsequently held responsible by tribal groups from other regions for the failure of the Treaty to protect Maori 'mana' (authority, prestige) (Orange, 1984).

Initially legislation which directly involved the Maori people was based on an assumption that they could be assimilated into white society. The Treaty of Waitangi acknowledged the presence and rights of the tribes but at the same time the colonial authorities sought the voluntary acceptance by Maori of British institutions, believing the Maori could be evangelised, educated and made subject to European law.

While the British justified their intervention in the colony on moral grounds - to prevent the perceived slide into anarchy - the involvement also had a wider context, namely the 'creation of a single global economy'.

As waves of immigration swelled the settler population during the mid-nineteenth century, the 'scavenger' industries of whaling, sealing and gold prospecting gave way to a more centrally organised economy based on the supply of cheap agricultural products to the British market.

This shift in the New Zealand economy was a direct response to the industrialisation and urbanisation taking place in the European metropole. The dramatic increase in urban populations there meant that consumption of foodstuffs, in particular meat and dairy produce, had outstripped rural production (Denoon, 1983:46).

Demand for commodities to fuel these rapidly industrialising economies resulted in colonial territories being created as zones of specialist commodity production (Hobsbawm, 1987:64).

The economies of the Empire developed in what Hobsbawm characterises as a 'distorted fashion', with the white populations of the settler colonies enjoying 'western' standards of living, despite their failure to industrialise, because of their 'special relationship' with the metropolitan centre (ibid).

In the temperate zones of European settlement, - North and South America, Australia - grain and meat were being produced cheaply. A market had also developed for 'colonial goods': tea, coffee, sugar and cocoa and other raw materials which

tended to come from the 'colonies of exploitation'<sup>6</sup>. According to Hobsbawm:

these developments did not change the shape and character of the industrialised or industrialising countries, though they created new branches of big business whose fortunes were closely tied to specific parts of the globe, such as the oil companies. But they transformed the rest of the world, inasmuch as it turned into a complex of colonial and semi-colonial territories which increasingly evolved into specialised producers of one or two primary products for export to the world market, on whose vagaries they were entirely dependent. Malaya meant rubber and tin, Brazil coffee, Uruguay meat, Cuba sugar and cigars (Hobsbawm, 1983:64).

It is interesting to note Hobsbawm's use of the word 'meant' here - 'Malaya meant rubber'. This is suggestive of the way in which colonial territories were constructed in the 'imperial imagination' in terms of the commodities they produced for the home market. (For example, even now, in everyday British discourses 'sheep' continues to be the referent of 'New Zealand')<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Settler societies can be defined as those where Europeans settled permanently and where their descendants have remained politically dominant over indigenous peoples. Colonies of exploitation were those zones where appropriation of land, resources and labour entailed indirect control by colonial powers through a 'thin white line' of administrators, merchants, soldiers (Stasiulis, 1995).

<sup>7</sup> As Stuart Hall writes: 'People like me who came to England in the 1950s have been here for centuries; symbolically.....I am the sugar at the bottom of the English tea cup...there are thousands of others beside me that are, you know, the cup of tea itself (Hall, 1993: 49).

As a result colonial economies developed in a distorted fashion compared to other emerging 'western' capitalist economies. White settler colonies, in particular, failed to industrialise because of the 'special relationship' with the metropolitan centre. They were caught in 'a cage of economic specialisation', designed to complement metropolitan economies rather than compete with them (Hobsbawm, 1983:65).

In New Zealand the shift from 'entrepreneurial' colonialism, led by private investors, to a public works programme financed by the colonial state ensured the gradual consolidation of colonial rule through the installation of an autonomous political and economic infrastructure which serviced the needs of British capital and attracted considerable inward investment (Ward, 1997:312)<sup>8</sup>.

The Treaty of Waitangi had given the Crown authority to 'obtain dominion' over the territory; and in the year the treaty was signed a Royal Charter was issued in London authorising the colonial government to survey the entire country, dividing it up into districts, counties, towns and parishes. Reserves were to be set aside for roads, town sites, churches and schools and areas of 'waste land' identified. The survey 'classified' every acre of land in the colony as either public space or 'rateable' property.

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<sup>8</sup> Denoon shows that British capital investment in the colonies of white settlement was considerably higher than in any other colony territories. As he puts it 'trade and investment were related to the skin pigmentation of the overseas trading partners' (Denoon, 1983:49).

But to reiterate the question posed by Wallerstein, why should the establishment of any particular state create a corresponding 'nation' or 'a people'? In order to understand the construction of national identity we need to move beyond analyses of population movements and demographics to look at the way in which the production of 'peoplehood' is tied up with an imaginary relationship with the territory. In particular, the way ideas about race and ethnicity are reproduced by a network of cultural and social practices through which individual existence is projected into the weft of a collective narrative aligned with the idea of nation. Crucially these projections of identity are multi-layered, overlapping, endlessly negotiated and contested but nevertheless always bounded by a delimited territory.

### **Producing 'the People'**

Before the publication of James Belich's Making Peoples, New Zealand historiography had been dominated by political and social accounts which developed, in different forms, a teleological narrative beginning with European 'discovery' and the birth of the colony, and moving on to document the gradual unfolding of nationhood.

Belich's book delivers a new historiography which comes out of the seismic transformations brought about by the ending of the nation's colonial relationship with Britain and the challenges to

sovereignty posed by Maori treaty claims. J.A. Pocock has described Making Peoples as:

the first Treaty-based history, dealing with a world of vastly increased contingency and insecurity by recognising that there are two peoples and offering to narrate how they came to be.<sup>9</sup>

Balibar argues that the myth of origins is an effective ideological form in which the singular narrative of nation is constructed by moving back from the present into the past (Balibar, 1991:87). Belich, writing the history of New Zealand as that of the 'two peoples' - Maori and Pakeha, has produced a biculturalist revision of national origins which represents both Maori and Pakeha as 'settlers'. He employs the metaphor of the 'pakeha Great Fleet' to describe the settler exodus from Europe to the colony (Belich, 1997:313). The use of this motif (a replication of the Great Fleet from Polynesia) not only delegitimises claims by Maori to pre-eminence as 'tangata whenua'; it also 'indigenises' the white majority by creating an homologous relationship between the arrivals of both groups, albeit at very different historical conjunctures. While this literary device might appear to create an equality between New Zealand's bicultural partners by narrating the mantra of biculturalism, 'We are all settlers', it effectively depoliticises and dehistoricises the nineteenth century colonisation of New Zealand as a 'local' instance of the global expansion of capitalism by collapsing two radically distinct forms of settlement. Belich writes:

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<sup>9</sup> 'Removal from the Wings', J.A. Pocock, London Review of Books, Volume 19, No. 6, March, 1997.

Both Maori and Pakeha colonisations were driven and structured by myths of settlement, by dynamics and imperatives that were cultural as well as economic. Both replaced mobile and extractive systems with more sedentary and sustainable ones (ibid:447).

Belich's central theme is that white settlement was based on a utopian ideal of constructing a 'neo-Britain' in the colony. He argues that in order to persuade people to emigrate the marketing of the colony in Britain relied on three motifs - 'progress', 'paradise' and 'Britishness' (ibid:287):

The Victorians naturally believed they were best at progress; that they had the best chance of building Jerusalem in their green and pleasant land and this boosted collective pride. At the same time...actual and symbolic encounters with non-European 'Thems' were in the increase, reinforcing conceptions of 'Us' (ibid:295)

The New Zealand Company advertised its new experiment in colonisation as the 'Wakefield Plan'. It would establish concentrated agricultural settlements based on 'the best English corn counties' (Oliver, 1984:60). Wakefield's treatise The British Colonisation of New Zealand, published in 1835, outlined the objectives for this form of colonisation which were underpinned by the vision of white settlement as a 'civilising mission':

The object is to transplant English society with its various gradations in due proportions, carrying out our laws, customs, associations, habits manners, feelings - everything of England in short but the soil (Wakefield, 1829, :158).



The settlers would be

reclaiming and cultivating a moral wilderness and civilising a barbarous people who can scarcely cultivate the earth (ibid).

The New Zealand Company, set up by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, purchased land from Maori tribes for next to nothing and then sold on to settlers for a profit. The New Zealand Company argued that the real price of the land for the Maori was 'civilisation'; it was of little value unless settled. The company's prospectus claimed that the land

is worth nothing to its native owners, or worth nothing more than the trifle they can obtain for it. We are not therefore to take much account of the inadequacy of the purchase money according to English notions of the value of land. The land is really of no value, and can become valuable only by means of a great outlay of capital on emigration and settlement (Quoted in C.Hall, 1992:146).

So on the one hand the land was deemed 'worthless' (in the hands of the Maori) but at the same time it had to be sold at an 'artificial' price in order to ensure that capitalist accumulation could be guaranteed. Wakefield was convinced that a proper balance could be achieved between land, capital and labour in the colony through the mechanism of 'sufficient price'. Land purchases were initially restricted to capitalists by setting a relatively high uniform figure; the proceeds of these sales were used to bring labourers to the colony under assisted passage

schemes thus ensuring that there was a constant supply of (white) labour.

Karl Marx devotes a chapter to Wakefield's scheme in Capital, describing the concept of 'sufficient price' as a euphemism for 'the ransom which the labourer pays to the capitalist for leave to retire from the wage-labour market to the land' (Marx, 1977: 723).

In other words, the only way in which the accumulation of capital could be guaranteed in the colony was by ensuring that there was a surplus of wage labourers who were given sufficient material incentives to emigrate. On this theme Marx writes

Let the Government put upon the virgin soil an artificial price, independent of the law of supply and demand, a price that compels the immigrant to work a long time before he can earn enough money to buy land and turn himself into an independent peasant. The fund resulting from the sale of land at a price relatively prohibitory for the wage-workers, this fund of money extorted from the wages of labour is used.....to import have-nothings into the colony and thus keep the wage-market full for the capitalists (ibid).

The New Zealand Company's policy purported to select potential immigrant groups on the basis of their 'moral character'. Publicity material calling for emigrants claimed that only those 'with character' should apply. As Charles Hursthouse observes:

Wakefield's system of colonisation...drew to New Zealand a much higher class of emigrant than has ever left the Mother Country ...selecting its free-passage

working men so carefully that almost every mechanic and labourer carried to New Zealand has been a picked man (Hursthouse, 1857:642).

It was a widely held belief that industrialisation and urbanisation in the metropole were leading to a deterioration of the Anglo-Saxon 'race'; the salubrious climate and physicality of life in the new colony was seen as offering the possibility of racial regeneration in a place described as 'the perfect environment for Anglo-Saxons' (Belich, 1997:299). The decline of the 'race' was represented in gendered terms with the population remaining in Britain described by the propagandists of emigration as 'effeminate' and 'degenerate'. Thus, white settlers in the colony were not only positioned in a racial hierarchy 'above' the Maori, they were also able to imagine themselves as a superior collectivity of 'Anglo-Saxons'. The New Zealand Handbook published in 1873 suggests that the eugenics of Wakefield's plan had improved on the best of British stock:

No colony was ever so carefully and wisely colonised as New Zealand. One who knows the back slums of every big town in England and Scotland must observe a marked contrast in the appearance of the people in our colonial towns. There is no accumulation of a depraved idle class; squalor and poverty are not to be seen (Vogel, 1873:80).

From a metropolitan perspective however, emigration was seen to produce a mixing of British ethnic groupings (Scots, Protestant Irish and English), resulting in a hybridised 'race' which was distinguished by its 'mediocrity':

The new nation shows no sign of beating the best British or of producing an equal to that best but its average is undoubtedly better than the general British average. The puny myriads of the manufacturing towns have no counterpart in the colony but on the whole young New Zealand is better known by collective usefulness than by individual distinction (Reeves, 1898:174).

While Belich discounts the myth of 'better stock', it is clear that government policies in the colony, such as 'whites only' immigration legislation justified the exclusion of other 'races', in particular the Chinese, on the basis of a need to maintain cultural and racial homogeneity for the good of the dominant majority.

A bill restricting the flow of indentured Chinese labourers into the colony became law in 1879. The New Zealand Governor at the time, George Grey argued the 'aliens' had

exercised a deteriorating effect on New Zealand's civilisation by forcing the white worker to descend the scale of civilisation (quoted in Pearson, 1990:74).

In the case of Chinese immigration, exclusions were applied in particular to Chinese women in order to prevent 'reproduction' in the colony; in 1896 the Chinese population of nearly four thousand comprised only fourteen Chinese women (Belich, 1997:318).

The New Zealand Company promoted emigration through associations in Britain and in other European countries although the company did not have a monopoly on emigration; private

entrepreneurs organised many of the settlements. Such settlements tended to be formed on the basis of shared regional, religious and class affiliations. (There were numerous associations set up to administer the emigration of 'gentlewomen' for example: the British Women's Emigration Society, the Female Middle Class Emigration Society). Small communities from Devon, Scotland, Norway, Denmark and Germany set up their own enclaves in the colony; Scots went to Dunedin, Germans to Nelson, Norwegians to Norswood and settlers from Devon founded the North Island settlement of New Plymouth.

Publicity material advertising the colony to would-be settlers emphasised the similarities between Britain and New Zealand and downplayed links with Australia which was, in Belich's words, 'too Irish, too convict, too digger' (Belich, 1997: 317). Settler expectations about New Zealand being 'the Britain of the South' were fuelled by immigrants' guides which emphasised the similarities between 'Home' and the colony:

New Zealand is an integral part of Great Britain - an immense sea-joined Devonshire. An Englishman going thither goes among his countrymen he has the same queen, the same laws and customs, the same language, the same schools...save that he is in a country where trees are evergreen and where there is no winter, no opera, no aristocracy, no income tax, no pauperism and no beggars...he is virtually in a young England (Hursthouse, 1857:636).

Although Belich suggests that 'strength of community' is difficult to measure, it is clear that the relatively atomistic communities

established in the colony meant that any sense of belonging to a 'nation' amongst the settler groups did not emerge until near the end of the nineteenth century (Belich, 1997:412). Instead, the ability to maintain links with 'home' (because communication networks between New Zealand and Britain were more developed than those inside the territory) meant that settler communities could more easily imagine themselves living parallel lives to their compatriots on the other side of the globe than sharing a sense of community with their fellow 'nationals'.

The New Zealand writer Alan Mulgan describes growing up in an isolated rural settlement, Katikati, towards the end of the nineteenth century. The settlement consisted almost entirely of Protestants from Ulster. Mulgan suggests that geographical and cultural isolation meant that links with 'home' (as Britain was known) were stronger than any connections made 'locally':

For many years Katikati was isolated. To get out was a bit of an adventure. One party took twenty hours to go from 'Athenree' (the Mulgan home) to Tauranga thirty five miles. Society was remote and self-contained....Belfast and London were closer to the Katikati settler than our southern towns. Locals had seen Belfast, and if they had not seen London they had a pretty clear idea what it was like, whereas they had not seen our south island and had only a shadowy picture of it. In those days London, presented to me in books and pictures was much more vivid to me than any New Zealand town...and in that little community English politics loomed larger than New Zealand (Mulgan, 1958:28).

The monthly delivery of 'English post' bringing letters, remittances and copies of the London Weekly News and Punch was the most regular communication with the outside world:

It would have been absurd for people in Katikati to think of themselves as part of a nation. Our roots were in the soil, but they were not deep. The homesteads had their shelter belts of pines, inside which were gardens and orchards of English flowers and trees. Roses bloomed in the gardens, jasmine covered the verandas....in the homes English books and periodicals, English pictures, English letters, talk of England and Ireland. (Mulgan, 1958:31)

However by the turn of the century the white majority dominated the territory to the extent that they were designated a generic grouping, naturalised as 'the population' and 'the New Zealanders'.

In census material generated for the government, settlers were homogenised under the category 'population' i.e. they were unified as 'white', homogenised and naturalised as 'the population' while the nation's Others were classified by a range of 'ethnic' categories defined by 'blood'. For example, the 1901 census of New Zealand categorised the population as follows:

- i) .Population (exclusive of the aboriginal Native race, of mixed European and native blood and Chinese)
- ii). Half-caste and persons of mixed race living as and among Europeans.
- iii).Chinese

- iv). Aboriginal natives (including 249 Maori wives of Europeans)
- v) Half castes and persons of mixed race living as members of Maori tribes

This classification of 'minorities' into 'ethnic' types reproduced discourses of 'race' which delineated the population in terms of 'blood'. Notions of 'tainted', 'flawed' and 'pure' blood defined difference in terms of degeneration and racial purity. The discourse of 'blood' was linked to fears of 'miscegenation' which threatened the fantasy of a distinct, pure white European identity and is evidenced by census categories delineating 'half-castes' as a liminal grouping separated from 'the population' and split between those 'living as Maori' and those 'living as European'.

In The New Zealand Citizen discourses of 'blood' are deployed to naturalise these exclusions:

We do not want people belonging to the coloured races...it would take too long to tell you why we keep out people belonging to coloured races, save to say it is a question of ways of living and ideals, besides of course, the desire to keep the blood of our people pure (Mulgan, 1886:117).

While 'race' was the primary organiser of difference, class and gender were also important in defining local taxonomies based on 'cultural competencies' which separated the colonial bourgeoisie from white 'others'.

As Thomas argues:



It could not be disputed that racial classifications have been enormously powerful, especially since the 19thC, but race is not the only basis for representing others and representing them negatively...a series of religious, linguistic and societal differences may figure in the stigmatisation of particular populations which may be energised as much by analogies with subaltern domestic classes as by their race or by their feminisation(Thomas,1994:53)

This is important in relation to the 'civilising mission' which was not confined to the colonial territories; it was also applied within the lower echelons of the metropolitan social formation where discourses of 'civility' and 'purity' were deployed to regulate the boundaries of bourgeois whiteness against Europe's 'internal Others'. These distinctions were reproduced in the colony, as The New Zealand Citizen makes explicit:

We want immigrants but we do not want everybody. We do not want the destitute, the criminal, the insane....(Mulgan,1886:117)<sup>10</sup>.

In this way, hierarchies which delineated class and regional differences in the metropolitan context were translated and transformed in the colony where the cultural competencies, sexual proclivities and personal habits of 'subaltern' whites continued to be scrutinised and categorised.

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<sup>10</sup> The New Zealand Citizen was produced as a textbook for courses in civics; 'an uncritical course in political socialisation close to indoctrination' (Oliver,1984:320).

In 1903 the compulsory sterilisation of the 'unfit' in New Zealand was advocated in Chapple's 'scientific' study The Fertility of the Unfit :

The unfit in the state include all those mental and moral defectives who are unable or unwilling to support themselves according to the recognised laws of human society (Chapple: 1903, 118).

One of the few books published by a woman during the early days of colonisation in New Zealand, Lady Barker's Station Life in New Zealand, articulates the 'civilising' role of the bourgeois white woman in relation to white colonial 'subalterns':

A lady's influence out here appears to be very great and capable of indefinite expansion. She represents refinement and culture (in Mr Arnold's sense of the words) and her footsteps on a new soil such as this should be marked by a trail of light (Barker, 1870: 104).

Describing the subalterns as 'incapables' Lady Barker draws on typologies reminiscent of racial categories:

The housemaid at the boarding-house where we have stayed is a fat, sonsy, good-natured girl, perfectly ignorant and stupid. She has not been in the colony long and requires to be taught how to bake a loaf of bread and boil a potato. In her own cottage at home, who did all these things for her? (ibid: 43)

In the colony 'whiteness' was cut across by a complex matrix of distinctions. While settler groups were defined and united primarily in terms of their difference from racialised Others (in

particular the Maori and the Chinese) the delineation of dominant groups in terms of gender and cultural competencies was equally important in legitimating inequalities between white settlers groups. Such differences were important in discourses of nation which were constructed around the myth of settler egalitarianism and equality of opportunity and were thus devoid of any explicit 'class-based' differentiation.

### **The rise of the nation state**

The abolition of provincial government in the 1870s led to a state formation which became increasingly pivotal in facilitating the formation of a pastoral and commercial bourgeoisie, as well as uniting the disparate groups of white settlers. This process has been described as 'an exercise in state capitalism' and demonstrates the extent to which the 'liberal democratic' state functioned in the interests of capital, especially in a place which had no tradition of class-based allegiances (Jesson 1991:38).

The state actively intervened to protect settler interests, particularly in relation to land use (for example, heavy taxes were imposed on 'waste land' while incentives were offered for land 'improvements') and ensured that even the lower echelons of the settler collectivity benefited from material incentives and privileges unavailable to Maori.

The colonial government introduced compulsory schooling in 1876 with standardized textbooks,

curricula and examinations initially imported from England. Universal suffrage, granted to all 'rate-payers' in the last decade of the nineteenth century (which in dominant histories has been highlighted as part of New Zealand's leading role as the 'social laboratory of the world') can be read as an attempt to integrate and stabilise a fragmented settler community by reinscribing men and women as 'citizens' united by the common destiny of the new nation and of course by their 'whiteness'.

In an important respect, New Zealand's social formation was built around a paradox - the atomised, individualistic identity of settler society was heavily reliant on the state for economic and social stability. The economy was cushioned from vagaries of the international market by the embrace of the Commonwealth and internally by the state, which operated within a highly insulated framework, providing a 'welfare net' and strictly controlled exchange mechanisms to protect businesses from foreign competition. As Jesson puts it:

A network of restrictions and regulations overlaid the economy as a whole. It was a prosperous and secure existence for New Zealand business, but one which rested on an inconsistency. While the political ethos of the country was individualistic and egalitarian, the freedom on the part of business was limited. The business community itself was dominated by a small number of companies and families with their origin in the nineteenth century economy which constituted an oligarchy (Jesson, 1991:3).

What can be usefully drawn out from Jesson's argument here is an implicit relation between the economic sphere and the formation of particular types of national consciousness and identification. For example, the political structures set in place in the colony reinforced racial divisions, highlighting the differences between the Maori and working class whites, rather than their commonalities (particularly in terms of exploitation in the workplace). Historically, white settlers have been split between two constituencies represented by the main political parties, Labour and National, while four parliamentary seats were reserved for Maori voters. The Labour Party, traditionally the party of the welfare state and the regulated economy, was supported by the unions, public servants and the labouring class, while the more conservative National Party represented the interests of business and the powerful farming lobby. But it was the relative lack of grass-roots political organisation amongst the white working class, as well as the given configuration of political interests and alignments, which explains the speed with which privatisation and deregulation could be implemented during the latter part of the 1980s (Kelsey, 1993).

As has been suggested, the colony's agricultural economy has always been dependent on Britain. This 'special relationship' meant that the economic prosperity and political power of the white settlers was hostage to the fortunes of 'the Mother Country'. In the 1970s the significance of this dependence became especially apparent when

New Zealand's guaranteed market was threatened by the shift in Britain's trading ties towards Europe. No longer able to maintain its monopoly on the supply of dairy produce to the British market, New Zealand began to slide into a crisis which was not only about economic decline in particular but was at the same time perceived more broadly as a 'betrayal'. The 'European turn' exposed the limits of a taken-for-granted relationship. White New Zealanders were forced to acknowledge for the first time the extent to which colonial ties with Britain had not only provided an economic and cultural orientation but also historically shored up their power and privilege.

During this period the complacency of the Anglo-settler state was also shattered by the growing civil rights movement amongst the Maori (linked more broadly to an internationalised process of decolonisation and self-determination). As McHugh points out, white New Zealanders were finally confronted with the legacy of their colonial past. The nation's history which had, until that time, provided a legitimating account describing the transformation of 'the atomised social setting of Arcadian frontierism of the nineteenth century into the suburbia of the twentieth-century centralised state' was about to be rewritten (McHugh, 1991).

When elected to office in 1984 the Labour Party immediately abandoned its commitment to the welfare state. Instead, the party embraced the doctrines of New Right monetarism in an attempt to deal with the nation's economic decline, and set

in motion what Jesson calls 'a process of economic disintegration'. Within six years the economy had been deregulated with almost all state activities privatised:

Policies which took years to develop in Britain, such as privatisation, were inflicted on New Zealand in a matter of months. New Zealand serves as a case study of the economic and social damage that can be wrought by monetarism (Jesson, 1991:40).

While the country's slide into crisis may have been triggered by shifts in the global economy, it is clear that the changes wrought by the Labour Party in the nineteen eighties also came about as a result of disintegration of the consensus around which traditional party politics had been organised. Student radicalism of the nineteen sixties had left behind a layer of white middle-class people with a concern for social, moral and foreign-policy issues who formed the basis for the feminist, anti-racist and peace movements (Kelsey, 1993:145). However, the individualism underpinning these 'identity' movements meant there was no social force willing or capable of defending the welfare state.

As a result the Labour Government pursued a monetarist-driven economic restructuring while at the same time appeasing middle-class liberals with social policies which were directed at specific interest groups. In 1985, for example, the Government broke off relations with South Africa, created a Ministry of Women's Affairs and adopted a nuclear-free policy which brought the country into conflict with the United States and France.

By the mid-eighties, consequently, the economic and social legacy of the nation's colonial roots produced a crisis in the form of an economic collapse brought about primarily by the severing of the former ties of Empire, and secondly as a result of Maori demands for self-determination under the defining terms of the Treaty of Waitangi. The colonial foundation of the nation state in New Zealand had resulted in a dual formation: one of consensus in relation to the white majority and coercion in relation to the Maori who have been described as a 'third world colonised people trapped in a first world metropolitan society' (Kelsey, 1993:361).

The Treaty of Waitangi had also become one of the country's most contentious issues. Maori demands for sovereignty had coalesced into a mass political movement. Assimilationism continued to be used to justify state legislation which secured the remaining tracts of land from tribal groups. In 1967, for example, an amendment to the Maori Affairs Act (1953) gave the government powers to purchase 'uneconomic' land from tribal groups. This legislation ignited a militancy amongst newly urbanised and better educated Maori youth. While tribal elders continued their long-standing and rather conservative demands for recognition of Treaty guarantees, a political grouping called Nga Tamatoa (the Young Warriors) emerged. Led by student activists whose politics were modelled on the Black Power movement in the United States, the group used forms of direct action to make their demands for justice and equality. This was



the beginning of a highly politicised period involving a series of transformations from which emerged new forms of political consciousness amongst different sections of Maoridom.

In 1972 30,000 people took place in the Great Land March from Te Hapua in the far north to the capital Wellington . The marchers demanded recognition as New Zealand's 'tangata whenua' (people of the land) and publicly declared that 'not one more acre of land would be lost' (Sharp,1990:8).

The following year, 1973, the Government acceded to Maori demands by making Waitangi Day a national holiday and by 1975 it passed the Treaty of Waitangi Act which set up a tribunal to 'make recommendations on claims relating to the practical application of the principles of the Treaty' (Orange,1987:246). The Governor General's speech at Waitangi in 1977 acknowledged the tremendous sea change which was beginning to emerge:

in all honesty , it is apparent that the early settlers, the government and even the missionaries...used methods of land acquisition which could be described as contentious (quoted in Sharp,1990:9).

In the 1980s, the Labour Party was forced to recognise the legality of the Treaty, not least because the government's neo-liberal economic strategy relied on stability in order to attract global capital. In an attempt to contain Maori radicals (and send a signal about national stability to international investors), the

government gave wide-ranging powers to a newly formed body - the Waitangi Tribunal. The Tribunal called for Maori tribal groups to lodge claims dating back to 1840:

Maori interests filed claims with the Tribunal for half the country's fisheries, vast tracts of land, and other assets to the horror of the Pakeha population and to the embarrassment of the Government (Jesson, 1991:42).

The success of claims put to the Tribunal resulted in tribal groups eventually being awarded substantial compensation in the form of cash and land. Such claims cut across the Government's privatisation programme, not least because land being returned to the Maori tribal groups by the Waitangi Tribunal was in the process of being sold off. Successful land claims also resulted in the Government recognising Maori rights as 'tangata whenua'. Subsequently the tenets of the Treaty of Waitangi were incorporated into all new Acts of Parliament as 'biculturalism' was institutionalised within a state formation forced to enter into 'partnership' with the Maori in order to maintain national stability.

For critics, while the bicultural settlement has benefited middle class Maori professionals who have enjoyed an expansion of employment opportunities in the state apparatus, the emphasis on identity politics has not addressed more fundamental inequalities - in other words the counter-hegemonic challenges from Maori have been 'co-opted' into the dominant culture and the more radical demands for Maori sovereignty have been

'emptied' of critical content in the process (Poata-Smith, 1997: 178; Kelsey, 1995).

The shift to 'biculturalism' came about as a result of pressure emanating from inside the nation; but it can also be seen as part of a strategy to ensure that the stability of the country was guaranteed as the economy was repositioned within an emerging economic zone around the Pacific Rim.

One consequence of the New Zealand government's loosening of the regulatory aspects of the state and liberalisation of the market (through an intense programme of privatisation and deregulation), was that 'domestic' conditions of production became increasingly favourable to international capital.

High interest rates closed small businesses, while marginal farmers were forced off the land. Unemployment rose dramatically. Privatisation led to the wholesale closure of workplaces in the service industries, with postal, transport and banking services cut back in unprofitable regions. Labour regimes were weakened primarily by implementation of legislation which 'improved' the flexibility of the workforce while changes in employment legislation, together with cuts in welfare provision, eroded wage levels and worsened employment conditions (with women in particular driven into the low-paid, semi-skilled service sector). Amongst the unemployed, the introduction of means-tested benefits led to the formation of a new underclass. As a result of their historically

marginal place in the colonial economy, Maori people suffered disproportionately and formed the bulk of this emerging underclass (Kelsey, 1993:10).

A slightly more detailed consideration of one incident within this complex of changes illustrates the issues at stake as regards cultural identity. In June 1995 a monthly current affairs journal in New Zealand, North and South, ran a feature article about a Maori protest in the tiny North Island settlement of Wanganui. The protest was similar to hundreds of others which had taken place around the country during the past ten years. The local tribal group had occupied the municipal rose gardens in the town's centre for more than a month. For New Zealanders, Pakeha and Maori, the story was familiar one. The background to the dispute involved a grievance dating back to 1839 when local tribes lost the fishing rights to the nearby Wanganui River following the 'sale' of 40,000 acres of land to the New Zealand Company for goods, including muskets and umbrellas. Seen from the perspective of an analysis of the complexities of the current crisis in New Zealand, however, the article's closing paragraph presents succinctly, a set of contradictions which characterise the Maori struggle for self-determination as it unfolds within the context of a nation-state under the sway of a monetarist-driven transformation :

In Castlecliff, Wanganui's working class, barely recovered from the closure of their railway workshops and the decimation of the meat industry, read in the Chronicle that another hundred jobs have just been lost with the closure of the local woollen

mills. In the same paper they read that the Maori down at the Rose Gardens are asking for self-determination, control of their lives and resources. These are tough concepts for Pakeha to grasp...they live in houses mortgaged to the hilt to Australian and British banking institutions, pay interest rates determined on Wall Street, see the backbone institutions of their community, like Telecom, the railways and the post office sold off to foreign owners and the shops in the main street redeveloped by Taiwanese investors. In such a context the suggestion from the Maori that it is time for a change of landlord in New Zealand comes too late. The landlord changed some time ago and we are all paying rent<sup>11</sup>.

This quotation highlights the irony of Maori grievances relating to nineteenth century colonial injustices being acted on at a time when neo-colonial interests from outside the nation were taking control of assets which were formerly state-controlled. While Maori and Pakeha battle over 'race' issues, 'behind their backs' the nation state has been transformed in order to respond to the demands of global capital. Therefore the 'local' response needs to be seen within the context of a number of inter-linked global transformations which have not only undermined the sovereignty of the nation-state but also threatened its viability as an economic unit or bounded cultural sphere.

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<sup>11</sup> North and South, June 1995. Published by Australian Consolidated Press (NZ) Limited.

## **Reconfiguring nation in the Asia/Pacific**

This chapter has described how the colonisation of New Zealand was part of a global process which created an international order of formally distinct states with sovereign claims to national destiny, albeit within the orbit of Euro-American cultural and economic domination. Individual states have historically had the power to protect national economies through local measures such as subsidies for farming sectors, tax concessions for domestic industry and controls on foreign exchange, as well as measures designed to maintain social stability, such as welfare provision. In New Zealand, the nation's fragile economic 'autonomy' (and relative prosperity) was always underwritten by the relationship with Britain, in particular through the protected market for agricultural products.

From the 1970s, the changing economic and political relationship with Britain was part of a much wider restructuring of the global economy within which the role of nation state was increasingly to 'broker' the relationship between domestic and foreign capital. The mobility of trans-national capital has become the locus of economic activity with the state's role primarily to reduce barriers to trade. The geo-politics of this 'trans-nationalism' has been marked by a shift from the fixities of monopoly capitalism, with tight interconnections between corporate capital, the national economy as regulated by the state and in New Zealand's case, with the

metropolitan centre, to the flexible accumulation and investment strategies of trans-national corporations (TNCs). In New Zealand, this realignment has given rise to a weakened state in relation to capital and a strong state in relation to labour.

New regimes of capital accumulation have shifted power to different 'cores' such as the powerful US-Pacific Rim alliance dominated by the economies of South East Asia (Miyoshi, 1993; Ahmad, 1996). This shift has been linked to the emergence of a new international order shaping the global economy; regulation has moved from the national to the international arena. Organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, oversee international capital flows while regional economies are increasingly administered by supra-national organisations, like the European Community (EC), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation Group (APEC).<sup>12</sup>

Within this geo-political configuration, New Zealand is aligned with the industrialising economies of South East Asia where it occupies a semi-peripheral position within a new 'core'. At the same time the CER Agreement (Closer Economic Relations) with Australia has created a free trade zone between the two places, effectively expanding

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<sup>12</sup> APEC, which includes Australia, Brunei, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand the US, Taiwan, Hong Kong and China, currently accounts for 45% of world trade (Robertson, 1996:7).

New Zealand's 'domestic' market from three million potential consumers to 21 million (Robertson, 1996).

Globalisation is characterised by an intensification of international trade, fiscal and technology transfers, labour migrations and the consolidation of global modes of production through post-Fordist forms of sub-contracting, all in the name of 'free-trade'. Ideologically, it is driven by monetarist policies which at the macro-level rework the twin nostrums of 'freedom' and 'equality'. The notion of 'free trade' suggests the international economy is a level playing field with all former national economies able to compete on an equal footing at the level of the global.

Global flows of people, technology, money and information have impacted on locales in different ways. New 'core' sectors have emerged, clustered around telecommunications industries, tourism and leisure. Spatially, many of these services are centred on global cities, including London, Hong Kong and New York, which have all become key sites in highly stratified flows of communications through information and financial services (Lash, 1994:25). At the same time, underdeveloped and impoverished locales provide cheap sources of labour or niche markets for an expanding global tourist industry or, alternatively, many are bypassed altogether.

In relation to New Zealand, the transformation of the economy can be analysed specifically in terms of the globalisation of agricultural production,



and the restructuring of the sector brought about by the trans-national agro-food businesses. The process which began with Britain's shift towards Europe was effectively concluded in 1993 when the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) broke post-war alliances between farmers and the state by banning forms of subsidy in the name of 'free trade' (Frow, 1996). For agricultural producers in a small place like New Zealand it became uneconomic to compete with economies of scale controlled by large agribusiness consortiums.

To describe the complex movement of capital, peoples, forms of media, technologies, money and ideas characteristic of this new phase of globalisation, Appadurai uses the metaphor of 'flows'. (Appadurai, 1996). He identifies four key elements in the reconfiguration of such global flows, arguing that they construct new global imaginaries or 'scapes' which not only challenge the cultural and political hegemony of individual nation states but create new zones of dominance and peripheralisation. He describes such 'scapes' as

ethnoscapes produced by flows of people, tourists, immigrants, exiles... technoscapes, the machinery and plant flows produced by multinational and nation corporations and government agencies... financescapes, produced by rapid flows of money in the currency markets and stock exchanges... mediascapes, the repertoire of images of information, the flows which are produced and distributed by newspapers, magazines, television and film (ibid:7).

These 'flows' impact on economic, social and cultural structures in very different ways. In New Zealand, they result in a 'deterritorialised' economic sphere, in as much as while capital flows through the territory, there is no financial centre.

Deregulation has resulted in a flood of foreign investment which has eroded the autonomy of the state and opened New Zealand up as a market for telecommunications, financial services and tourism. The shift away from primary agricultural production has brought diversification in terms of crops and production sectors generally, aimed at 'niche' markets. Dairy products have been replaced by kiwi fruit, olives and wine; this diversification is linked in with other sectors such as tourism.

Tourism is now the most profitable sector of the global economy (Lash, 1994:194). As a direct result there has been an escalation in the 'museumification' of sites as local economic regeneration has focused on developing abandoned industrial and agricultural landscapes. This process - linked to globalisation - has made the construction of 'local' versions of identity increasingly important as places 'brand' themselves

In New Zealand, tourism has been seen as the means to regenerate isolated areas through the marketing of 'wilderness' and 'settler heritage' and 'Maori tradition' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1994). Tours of vineyards and farm 'home-stays' have become part

of the 'New Zealand experience', an example of the way in which locales increasingly need to forge a distinctive identity as destinations in order to attract flows - of capital, of visitors and so on. As 'lifestyle' and leisure consumption become the dominant economic sectors, globalisation generates 'localisation' (Harvey, 1989:294).

The social geography of New Zealand has been transformed by the flows associated with globalisation. The uneven distribution of technologies and services (brought about in part by the shift from public to private provision) has exacerbated divisions between rich and poor.

The privatisation of services across all public sectors from forestry, coal and electricity to the national airline and telecommunications resulted in job losses and led to the demise of isolated communities where it has been unprofitable for privatised services to continue to operate. The growing isolation and impoverishment of rural areas, together with a decline in small-hold farming, has accelerated the population shift from outlying areas to the cities (although there has been some traffic the other way as urban Maori have returned to tribal marae)<sup>13</sup>.

Unlike other regions of the West (Europe, the US, Canada and Australia) which have seen a huge influx of migrants as a result of post-war decolonisation, the bulk of migration into New Zealand has continued, until recently, to be

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<sup>13</sup> Discussed further in Chapter Three.

predominantly British. However, the expanding post-war economy has drawn on a pool of unskilled labour which was available as a result of New Zealand's neo-colonial interests in the Cook Islands, Samoa and Vanuatu. Pacific Island guest workers initially moved into Auckland's inner-city ghetto; by the 1960s the city had the largest Polynesian population in the South Pacific (Pearson, 1990). As urban regeneration took hold in the 1970s, rising property prices associated with gentrification forced Pacific Islanders into outlying suburbs along with other sectors of the urban poor.

In the 1980s, citizenship in New Zealand was 'deregulated' with the introduction of a business immigration scheme which gave automatic right of entry to immigrants who had at least \$500,000 to invest. The scheme, which attracted 'business migrants' mainly from Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Philippines, changed the socio-geography of urban centres with wealthy Asians moving into formerly all-white middle class suburbs. The new migrants triggered unprecedented xenophobia amongst both Maori and urban middle class whites (Walker, 1996:185). Significantly these groups drew on claims to 'indigeneity' (legitimated by the bi-culturalist reinterpretations of the Treaty of Waitangi) to oppose new migrant groups as a threat to national unity (Kelsey, 1993:306).

The declining role of the nation-state inevitably results in a transformation of the 'legitimising' identities of modernity. The autonomous, self-constituting (usually white) subject of modernity,

organised within civil society and existing within a framework defined through autonomous spheres of social and cultural reproduction (work, home, leisure, culture), is fragmenting (Castells, 1997:356). Increasingly migration, global forms of consumption and the emergence of world-wide communication networks are giving rise to new kinds of identifications which can be characterised as 'post-nationalisms' (Friedman, 1994:86). In New Zealand 'post-nationalist' identities have seen demands from different groupings - Maori and pakeha, Pacific Island and Asian - who have made claims to the entitlements of nationhood and citizenship.

Reinterpretations of the Treaty of Waitangi have led to a settlement between Maori and Pakeha based on a re-assessment of the nation's colonial history. However, the shift from colonialist 'monoculturalism' to a national formation based on the rhetoric of 'two peoples, one nation' means certain groups continue to be excluded from constructions of nation, not least the large number of Polynesians who live in New Zealand. So while biculturalism has meant a shift of emphasis in terms of the way in which the nation is represented, it continues to rely on a binary of exclusivity privileging certain groups over other 'Others'.

The cultural and social landscape of New Zealand continues to be racialised in such a way that the commonalities between economically and socially disadvantaged groups are obscured. In other words identifying as a 'white' New Zealander or a Maori

continue to be the dominant organising categories for narratives of national 'belonging'. As we will see in Chapter 3, while essentialised constructions of Maoriness, as pure, authentic and relatively untouched by the depredations of modernity, have had considerable strategic importance in the struggle for reparations and justice, they have also been co-opted in order to 'brand' the uniqueness of New Zealand as it positions itself within the global market.

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### Chapter 3

The Treaty of Waitangi (1840) is key to any investigation of identity in New Zealand. During the past thirty years a political and legal struggle over the terms of the Treaty has resulted in the formation of a pan-tribal Maori movement which has been focused on challenging the institutional, political and cultural forms which have historically disadvantaged Maori. As Kawharu writes:

Land grievances have been used to attack the legitimacy of Pakeha society. They provided a springboard for a wider all-embracing political attack on Pakeha society claiming that Pakeha social and economic development led to cultural and economic 'genocide'; that the empty and obsessive pursuit of material wealth had debased the communal and organic Maori way of life (Kawharu, 1989:xvi)

The status of the 'tribe' is central to new versions of 'Maoriness', focused on the valorisation of a way of life purportedly based on 'common good' rather than the individualism of the dominant white formation.

The strength of what is now known locally as the 'Maori Renaissance', together with the fact that the large settlements - financial and territorial - have been made as a result of Waitangi Tribunal rulings, has led to an increasing focus on what it means to be a 'New Zealander'.

This chapter examines the way in which the Treaty of Waitangi, remarkable both for its brevity and the expedient way in which it was drawn up in the



mid-nineteenth century, has subsequently functioned as an 'oracle' symbolising and articulating, at different historical moments, the changing relationship between colonisers and Maori.

For the Maori people, the history of the Treaty has been one of betrayal and injustice. The steady stream of white settlers to New Zealand after 1840, together with the rapidly developing colonial economy, meant that the implementation of the legal agreement made at Waitangi threatened to impede the coloniser's objectives. As a result measures were taken to speed up the process of land appropriation, despite the Treaty's emphasis on continuing Maori control of their resources. The apparent weakness of the treaty in controlling the appropriation of land was legitimated by claims that the 'civilising mission' had failed to assimilate and thereby save the Maori, who were deemed by 1870 to be a 'dying race'.

The conflicts which ensued between the British and Maori tribal groups followed the treaty-signing represented a clash between differing cultural interpretations of property rights. On the one hand there were Maori perceptions of their land as a communally-owned symbol of tribal identity and mana and on the other, white settler concerns with individual ownership of land for the realisation of profit.

While some of the massive territorial confiscations of the nineteenth century have been acknowledged, and in many cases recompensed,

through the deliberations of the Waitangi Tribunal (set up in 1975 to investigate treaty-related grievances), there is considerable debate about the extent to which there has been any real shift of economic and political power away from the white majority as a result of the state-brokered 'bicultural settlement'. This chapter argues that 'biculturalism' represents a strategic adjustment designed to appease Maori demands, with the state using the Treaty to orchestrate a drama of national reconciliation during a period when the national economy has been repositioned within the orbit of the Asia/Pacific region.

The first section of this chapter contextualises the Treaty of Waitangi in terms of the imposition of colonial power in New Zealand; the second looks at the way in which recent reinterpretations of the treaty principles have brought about the bicultural settlement which has to some extent incorporated 'Maori values' into the institutional structures of the social and political formation.

The final section of the chapter examines cultural practices in New Zealand which valorise particular constructions of 'Maoriness'. It focuses in particular on the film Once Were Warriors (Tamahori, 1994) which represents a return to pre-modern lifeways as the solution for the contemporary crisis within Maoridom.

### **The role of the Law in nation-building**

For the Pakeha majority in New Zealand, the Treaty of Waitangi has in the recent past, functioned as

a symbol of nationhood rather than as a binding legal document. As such it has provided material evidence for claims that the colony was unified around the ideals of racial harmony and equality of opportunity. As such, the Treaty has functioned as symbolic cornerstone of a myth based on the fiction that New Zealand was an example of a benevolent colonisation process, set against, in particular, the brutality accorded the Aborigines of Australia.

At the treaty-signing ceremony in Waitangi in 1840 the British Governor, William Hobson famously decreed:

E hiwi tahi tatou - We are one people.

Discourses of nation coalesced around this mythologised unity as 'We are one people' became the rallying cry of a hegemonic national identity which naturalised the presence and privilege of the white settler majority and implied the assimilation of the Maori people had been achieved. Such discourses of unity erased historical traces of the violence involved in the acquisition of land on which the colony was built (in particular the nineteenth century 'civil war'), until the mid-1970s, when the Waitangi Tribunal was set up to consider long-standing Maori grievances.

By this time the political pressure for treaty justice had rendered fictions of harmony and homogeneity untenable. The subsequent re-writing of the Treaty's history has been an important

element in the emergence of a new national imaginary constructed around biculturalism's 'two peoples, one nation'.

Extraordinary claims have been made about the Treaty of Waitangi. Until recently it was a commonplace in New Zealand, that the Treaty was a 'unique' document in Britain's imperial history, reinforcing the notion that, in terms of racial harmony, New Zealand was Britain's most successful colony. A school textbook from the 1930s provides an example of these treaty 'fictions':

The Treaty of Waitangi has been called the Magna Carta of the Maori race. It is a unique document in that it was the first time in the history of the British Empire that such a treaty had been made with an uncivilised people. To this day it remains the honoured ground on which Maori and Pakeha meet.<sup>1</sup>

These claims to uniqueness have no foundation as treaties were frequently used by the British in their dealings with 'native' peoples. They provided one of the many ways in which legal discourses were deployed in order to underpin the constitutional power of European colonisation. Treaties were used extensively to regulate and legitimate the economic and political structures installed in colonial territories (Dirks:1992:175). Evidence of the extent of colonial treaty-making is revealed in archives held by the British Foreign Office in London.

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<sup>1</sup>The Young Dominion: A Short History of New Zealand (Whitcombe and Tombs, 1932:52)

Thirty volumes of treaties - Herslets Commercial Treaties - made by the British in colonial territories between 1820 and 1924, contain hundreds of treaties for 'peace and cession' and 'peace and friendship'. The Treaty of Waitangi is to be found in Volume VI, published in 1845.<sup>2</sup>

There was nothing in the text of the Waitangi Treaty which had not been similarly expressed in other legal statements of British colonial policy. However, the Treaty was unique in one important respect. While, in legal intent, it replicated so many others made throughout the Empire (guaranteeing colonial trade and peaceful European settlement), it was distinctive in that the English version was translated into Maori. It is the ambiguities and inconsistencies between the two versions which have provided the legal grounds for contemporary re-interpretations of the document. The Waitangi Tribunal has effectively worked within the 'interpretative space' created between the two versions - Maori and English - of the document and its deliberations have provided a radical reinterpretation of the colony's history.

The Maori translation, signed by the majority of chiefs, was hastily drawn up and failed to clarify the meanings embedded in the English version. Such discrepancies in meaning were almost

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<sup>2</sup> Legal historians researching the Treaty of Waitangi in New Zealand have examined the similarities between this treaty and those made between the British and tribal groups in other colonial territories such as the treaties made in Africa has involved territories such as the Cape (South Africa), the Gambia Fiji and North America (Sorrenson, 1989:18).

inevitable for a number of reasons: the oral language of the Maori had been 'textualised' by British missionaries with little understanding of the complexity of tribal lifeways, while the treaty document itself was selectively translated to ensure the particular objectives of the colonisers would be met. The English version of the Treaty ceded the sovereignty of New Zealand to Britain and gave the Crown exclusive rights to all land the Maori agreed to 'sell', in return the Maori were guaranteed full rights of ownership of their remaining lands, forests and fisheries. The discrepancies between the two texts, in particular the translation of the English concept of 'sovereignty' into Maori, the translation of which suggested to the chiefs they were ceding 'governorship' rather than complete 'sovereignty', meant that all parties to the agreement were left with conflicting expectations about the power they could exercise in the colony. (Walker, 1989:264).

Dr Paul McHugh, the lawyer who, in recent years, has represented the claims of the Tainui tribe to the Waitangi Tribunal argues:

It would be foolish to expect there to have been an exact meeting of minds....the cultural gap was wide and Maori exposure to the literate European world in which men freely entered into bargains in the market place was limited. The English notion of freedom of contract was a nineteenth century idealisation of the way in which human beings behaved towards each other. Its supposition of equality between the contracting parties - the assumption that each enjoyed equal knowledge, bargaining power and the rational judgement to act in and ensure their own interest - was hardly one which could be applied. The very

difference between the two cultures, the Crown on the one hand and the various tribes on the other - meant that the interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi would become an issue before the ink was dry (McHugh, 1991:6).

The 'cultural gap' McHugh refers to has been the focus of the proceedings of the Waitangi Tribunal which has assessed tribal claims for restitution and compensation for appropriated land and resources. The tribunal is the latest phase in the struggle for 'treaty justice' which stretches back to the mid-nineteenth century.

Despite guarantees enshrined in the Treaty, the Crown's strategy in exercising its pre-emptive right to buy land at the cheapest possible price, largely by taking advantage of Maori ignorance about the appreciation of land values, ensured that funds were generated to finance the infrastructural development of the colony. Thus whilst the Crown appeared to be protecting Maori from unscrupulous land speculators it was simultaneously 'pauperising' them (Ward, 1997:28).

Maori chiefs were told that the treaty was the means to protect their rights while ensuring the control of European lawlessness; loss of tribal sovereignty was played down. As Orange puts its

The impersonal nature of Crown authority and the potentially restrictive effect of British law were diminished. Most importantly, there is an absence of any explanation that Maori agreement to kawatanga ('sovereignty' in the English text) would mean British annexation; a substantial transfer of power that would bring international recognition of New

Zealand as a British colony. On the contrary, from the emphasis on protection, Maori might have expected that they were being offered an arrangement akin to a protectorate (Orange, 1987:10).

A diary account by the missionary, Henry Williams, suggests that in discussions with tribal leaders he played up certain aspects of the Treaty in order to secure Maori agreement. His diary (which hints at the paternalistic way in which the missionaries dealt with the Maori) recounts how, during the proceedings he read the Maori text to the chiefs and then explained its meaning

I told them all to listen with care, explaining clause by clause...telling them we, the missionaries, fully approved of the treaty, that it was an act of love towards them on the part of the Queen, who desired to secure them their property, rights and privileges. That this treaty was a fortress for them against any foreign power which might desire to take possession of their country (Carleton, 1874: 12).

McHugh suggests that disputes over the treaty which began 'before the ink was dry', were the result of cultural misunderstandings in particular, around notions of 'sovereignty' but also in relation to definitions of 'private property' and appropriate land use. Maori saw land deals in the context of complex social relations; there were expectations that colonial purchasers were entering not only a transaction but an extended relationship with the tribe which would bring longer-term benefits through connections with Pakeha settlements (McHugh, 1991:137). Instead, Maori were rapidly caught up in a 'tenurial revolution' in which the European



concept of 'exclusive possession' in terms of fixed boundaries gave property owners rights to all resources (such as forests) contained within that boundary.

Thus the wording of the Treaty and its presentation to Maori groups involved a set of discursive compromises which contained sufficient ambiguities that each party emerged with their own version of promises made. Hobson's goal was presented in the first article of the English translation of the Maori text of the treaty:

the chiefs of the confederation and all chiefs who have not joined that confederation give absolutely to the Queen of England forever the complete government over their land.

This wording however, is immediately undercut by a guarantee in the second article of the Treaty. In the English translation of the text this guarantee reads as:

Her majesty the Queen of England confirms and guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand and to the respective families and individuals thereof the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates, Forests and Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess as long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession.

In addition, there are crucial ambiguities evident in the translation between Maori and English versions of the treaty indicating the difficulty of meshing very different cultural understandings of property, ownership, government and

sovereignty. In Maori 'full exclusive and undisturbed possession' was rendered as 'te tino rangatiratanga' which translates more broadly not simply as property ownership but rights of control and cultural and political independence. Similarly, the Maori term used for government is likely to have been interpreted as referring only to civil government, a 'governor's authority', rather than sovereignty and control in any more pervasive sense. From these confusions, questions of exactly who owned the 'shadow' and who owned the 'substance' of the land predictably arose. Ranginui Walker argues that a comment of the Kaitaia chief Nopero Panakareo at the treaty - signing makes explicit Maori understandings of the Treaty:

The shadow (kawananatanga, governance) of the land goes to the Queen but the substance, rangatiratanga i.e. chieftanship, (mana) remains with us. (Kawharu, 1989:265)

The third article of the Treaty proved to be the least contentious, although its underlining intent was the assimilation of the Maori. This article is important in terms of 'identity' because of the use of the word 'maori' in the Maori version. In English the article states:

In consideration thereof, Her majesty the Queen of England extends to the Natives of New Zealand Her Royal protection, and imparts to them all the Rights and Privileges of British subjects.

The translation of the Maori version back into English states:

This (the third clause) is in consideration of the acknowledgement of the Queen's governance. The Queen of England will protect all the maori people of New Zealand. They will be given all the rights equal to those of the people of England.

The English text of the treaty was used to lend legitimacy to the appropriation of the territory and to the emerging mythology that New Zealand was the site of a benevolent and harmonious form of colonisation.

### **National Identity and the Treaty of Waitangi**

February sixth is a national holiday in New Zealand. It marks the annual commemoration of the founding moment of nationhood, when Maori chiefs and representatives of the British Crown gathered in the northern settlement of Waitangi to sign a treaty which, in dominant discourses of nation, claimed for more than a century to have 'peacefully' secured Maori agreement for the transfer of sovereignty to the colonisers.

Despite the contemporary struggles over the Treaty, Waitangi continues to be an important tourist site in a country which boasts few markers of 'heritage'. In contrast to Britain's heritage industry, New Zealand's colonial legacy has meant that heritage has always been an uncomfortable reminder of a short and violent past. During the 1980s, at the height of the Waitangi disputes, economic deregulation and privatisation was accompanied by a process of 'organised forgetting' as an inner-city rebuilding programme, financed by

international capital, resulted in the demolition of the colonial architecture of the main business areas of Auckland and Wellington. (The city of Dunedin slipping off the end of the map, and now a world heritage site, is the only place which displays a built environment with any colonial features).

In 1932 Busby's residence at Waitangi was gifted to the nation and the site was subsequently made a national memorial. Set in an immaculate rose garden, the residence is now a museum which displays the signifiers of a particular version of national History. Here we find the bungalow furnished with the original Victoriana brought from England. Military uniforms and medals are displayed in glass cases; resting on a wooden desk in the study are facsimile copies of the treaty (in Maori and English), quill pen and blotter nearby. The actuality of the event is frozen here in a tranquil mise-en-scene which suggests the treaty-signing ceremony at the residence was an uncomplicated transfer of power; in fact the gathering of signatures was a lengthy affair.

Waitangi Day and the museum at the treaty-signing site are aspects of an inventory of invented traditions surrounding the Treaty. The 'rediscovery' of the Treaty of Waitangi in the period following the Second World War provided a focus for an emerging nationalism amongst the white majority. The establishment of the Waitangi site as a national monument, together with the introduction of annual ceremonies commemorating the treaty-signing, were part of a process which

re-invented the treaty as a symbol of nationhood (Oliver,1984:329).

In 1940, to mark the centenary of the treaty, a re-enactment of the signing ceremony was held at Waitangi. The ceremony provided a moment for 'a demonstration of national pride and unity' (ibid). For the first time the official documents relating to the treaty were publicly displayed (Orange:1987:236). The centenary of the treaty-signing coincided with the New Zealand government's declaration of war against Germany. In global terms this was a whimper from the outer reaches of the Empire but it proved to be a defining moment in terms of the colony's sense of nationhood. Newspaper coverage of the Waitangi celebrations described the site as 'the cradle of the nation' while the treaty became 'the bulwark and foundation of nationhood'<sup>3</sup>. Significantly the Maori did not support the 'celebrations' and used the centenary to focus on land grievances which continued to be ignored by the government.

New Zealand finally attained 'dominion' status in 1947 when the government adopted the terms of the Balfour Report (1926), severing colonial links with Britain. (The delay in legislating for independence was an indication of the continuing importance of economic ties with Britain (Oliver,1984:330). The nation's new independence gave rise to nationalist discourses which placed even greater emphasis on the Treaty as the founding document of nation.

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<sup>3</sup> New Zealand Herald, 7 February, 1940.

In 1946 a flagpole was erected at Waitangi which provided the focus for an annual naval display in the harbour opposite the treaty-signing site. In 1953 the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Waitangi for the first time. The national newspaper, The Dominion opined:

At last Waitangi comes into its own to a degree worthy of its significance and New Zealanders must see its status is maintained and heightened<sup>4</sup>

Following the Royal Visit in 1953, the annual ceremonies at Waitangi on 6th February became increasingly important as state occasions. From 1954 speeches, broadcast live to the nation from Waitangi, were used to emphasise the good relations between Maori and Pakeha. The theme of these speeches, reported extensively in newspapers, was the forming of one nation from the 'partnership' of two races. At the 1960 ceremony Lord Cobham claimed the Treaty was a 'sacred compact' which:

brought together two fine races who settled down together to achieve full nationhood for a young and undeveloped country under the Queen's peace and law.<sup>5</sup>

The following year his reiteration of the theme drew on 'civilising' metaphors of light and dark to proclaim a vision of racial assimilation and national unity:

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<sup>4</sup> The Dominion 15 December, 1953

<sup>5</sup> New Zealand Herald, 6 February, 1959

120 years ago the pattern was set and a new tapestry planned in which light and dark threads were interwoven to form the completed study of a new nation<sup>6</sup>.

Thus the Treaty of Waitangi has provided the symbolic material for dominant discourses of nation which have valorised a temporal narrative (based on a myth of national progress and development) whilst occluding spatiality - rendering invisible, colonial property relations and the role of the Law in that process. The recent re-assessment of colonial history has seen the emergence of a counter-narrative through which spatiality has been re-inscribed into treaty discourses.

### **Reinterpreting Treaty Law**

The setting up of the Tribunal in 1975 triggered a period of intense struggle over the meaning of the two versions of the Treaty. This struggle was played out politically, legally and culturally. During the first ten years of the Tribunal's existence, almost every tribal grouping in New Zealand made claims relating to land and fisheries. The extent of these claims provides testimony to the fact that there was scarcely any territory or foreshore in New Zealand which was uncontested in terms of colonial appropriations.

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<sup>6</sup> New Zealand Herald, 8 February 1960. This 'melting pot' fantasy of assimilation was a common theme. According to Sharp, during the sixties the Prime Minister Keith Holyoake 'spoke cheerfully of the day when there would only be 'light-brown-skinned New Zealanders' (Sharp, 1990:44)

When the Government extended the Tribunal's jurisdiction in 1985, giving it powers to address grievances dating back to 1840, the widened remit produced a flood of claims which went beyond issues relating to specific territory.

Increasingly the Tribunal was called upon to consider the 'cultural treasures' guaranteed by the Treaty, in particular the destruction of the Maori language.

And while the deliberations of the tribunal focused on reinterpreting the treaty text in relation to specific tribal grievances, broader political and social issues raised in the hearings became publicly contested. As the Tribunal deliberated on the place of the Maori language within the terms of the treaty, disputes arose over the use and pronunciation of Maori. Calls were made for the restoration of Maori as an official language alongside English, and for all place names to revert to their original Maori. As a result, New Zealand became known as Aotearoa/New Zealand<sup>7</sup> and in May 1988 the government announced New Zealand Post would accept letters addressed in Maori.

The formalities surrounding the tribunal hearings provided the means to contest the unequal power relations inherent in European legal protocol

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<sup>7</sup> Aotearoa/New Zealand was hyphenated to show the disjunction in understandings and purposes that would be hidden if one of the two words were used alone. Sharp argues that the Maori word for New Zealand 'Aotearoa' (Land of the Long White Cloud) was a late nineteenth century invention of pakeha ethnologists who constructed a name the original inhabitants neither used nor needed (Sharp, 1990:12)



(which in turn impacted on all other areas of the public domain). The first tribunal hearing took place in the plush and intimidating setting of the ballroom of Auckland's Intercontinental Hotel. Following protests from tribal appellants and their lawyers, subsequent tribunal hearings were held on tribal marae and run in accordance with Maori protocol. This was an important step in transforming opaque legal practices which as Goodrich argues, are based on

an ideology of consensus and clarity - we are all commanded to know the law - and yet legal practice and legal language are structured in such a way as to prevent the acquisition of such knowledge by any other than a highly trained elite of specialists (Goodrich, 1987:7)

The lengthy deliberations published by the Waitangi Tribunal on each case included rulings on the place of the Treaty of Waitangi within the legal and political framework of the state. The re-assessment of the Treaty, contained in the rulings relating to specific tribal claims, has been both an affirmation of Maori belief systems (and it is beyond the scope of this work to investigate the extent to which these are themselves 'invented'), and a reassessment of the nation's Eurocentric forms of 'governmentality' which historically privileged scientific rationality and economic 'progress'.

In interpreting the meaning of the Maori and English versions of the treaty the Waitangi Tribunal was required, in Sorrenson's words, to 'examine the nineteenth century climate of opinion

to assess what was in the minds of the men who made, negotiated and signed the Treaty' (Sorrenson,1989:160). Each of the Tribunal's reports comprised rulings and recommendations on the specific claims together with historical analyses of centuries of British jurisprudence interpreted within the context of Maori lore and customs, which were often based on orally recorded accounts.

Eventually the Treaty was recognised as the basis for a social contract between the Maori as tangata whenua and the rest of the population - this became known as the 'bicultural settlement'. The areas addressed in tribunal rulings - such as social equity and reparative justice - were gradually institutionalised within the framework of 'biculturalism' as the Treaty of Waitangi effectively became a bill of rights for New Zealand.

The introduction of wider treaty-driven protocols transformed the organisation of New Zealand's political and social institutions. Local and national government, social welfare and education, and the criminal justice system were all required to incorporate 'Maori ways' into their procedures. After 150 years, notions of 'partnership' contained in the Maori version of the Treaty were reinstated and, more importantly, reinterpreted, to deal with contemporary forms of inequality injustice. As Judge Durie, one of the Tribunal members noted:

as a constitutional document the Treaty must always be speaking. To be speaking in

our time it must be stripped of its old law clothing and its essential body exposed to view ( Kawharu,1989:163).

To this end the historian J.A. Pocock has suggested that:

The treaty has rapidly become New Zealand's ancient constitution, fundamental law and social contract, rendering it perhaps the only unitary state in the modern world prepared to regard its sovereignty as perpetually renegotiable and debatable.<sup>8</sup>

Despite Pocock's positive reading of the political implications, there has been an on-going debate in New Zealand about the extent to which the re-assessment of the Treaty of Waitangi has produced significant redistributions of economic wealth and power. Despite some large financial and territorial settlements made to tribal groups as a result of various Tribunal rulings, critics argue that the treaty re-negotiations have 'watered down' substantive issues raised by the Maori concerning autonomous sovereignty and development.

The foregrounding of Maori beliefs and customs has been used as an effective strategy in a number of legal challenges made to the Tribunal, particularly relating to environmental destruction. The struggle over developments around Auckland's Manukau Harbour which threatened environmental damage, provide an example of the way in which the terms of the Treaty have been reinterpreted to deal with contemporary issues. In the case detailed below, the Tribunal over-

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<sup>8</sup> 'Removal from the Wings', J.A. Pocock, London Review of Books, 20 March, 1997.

ruled local authority procedures which had traditionally drawn on the discourses of 'progress' to deal with planning issues.

The conurbation of Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, stretches some forty miles along an isthmus which spans a narrow piece of land between the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean. The city is built between two natural harbours, the Manukau on the west coast and the Waitemata on the east. The foreshores and fishing grounds of these harbours traditionally provided the base for a number of Maori tribal groups and have been the focus of numerous claims made to the Waitangi Tribunal.

The geography of the isthmus is unusual; the city is built around sixteen extinct volcanoes which, before European settlement, were used by tribal groups as fortified settlements. The volcanic soil in the region is exceptionally fertile - the northern-most points of the city border a wealthy wine-growing region while the southern reaches are surrounded by extensive market-gardening. The black sands of the city's west coast, including the Manukau Harbour, are rich in iron ore. Such a well-resourced region was an obvious choice for New Zealand's first provincial centre but the cost to the Maori was enormous. As Kawharu notes

For more than a century the Tainui tribes, centred today on nine marae around the periphery of the Manukau Harbour, watched the development of the harbour to the detriment of their fisheries. Some developments on the harbour they accepted with equanimity. Others, by private enterprise and local bodies, including enclosures, reclamations, freezing works,

sewage treatment plants and the New Zealand Steel Mill, they viewed with misgiving. (Kawharu, 1989:250)

In the early 1980s the Tainui tribe attempted to prevent further development at the New Zealand Steel plant located at the mouth of the Waikato, a river which runs into the sea at the Manukau Harbour. The steel company had been granted a water right to take water from the river in order to pump iron-sand slurry into its mill and then discharge the waste into the Manukau Harbour.

The Tainui had initially appealed against this decision through local authority planning procedures, on the grounds that the mixing of the waters from two separate sources - the river and the harbour - was sacrilege. According to Maori lore each body of water had its own 'wairua' (spirit) which tribes were bound to protect. To maintain the purity and wairua of the water no 'unnatural' mixing or heating should occur. The steel company's plan to use the river water for slurry involved both heating the water as it passed through the slurry pipes and mixing the waters of the river and the harbour when the waste was discharged into the harbour. The Planning Tribunal dismissed the appeal ruling that the Water and Soil Conservation Act did not allow 'purely metaphysical concerns' to be taken into account in planning procedures, the appeal judge ruled that:

the purpose of planning is to achieve orderly coherent land use. The appeal is dismissed on the grounds that planning requires rational and scientific techniques

in the management of the natural environment.<sup>9</sup>

The appeal had been lodged by a local Tainui woman, Nganeko Minhinnick, who had campaigned extensively to have planning recognition for Maori spiritual values relating to water. After the appeal was turned down she drew attention to the way in her tribe had been forced to engage with the specialised discourses of 'governmentality' in order to air their grievances:

To put forward our view we have become involved in procedures which are foreign to our way of life. We have had to undergo a whole learning process trying to understand planning applications, rights for intakes, rights for discharge, rights of objection and appeal, water and soil legislation, planning legislation, only to be told that despite all these procedures there is no provision for spiritual and cultural matters Maori to be taken into account <sup>10</sup>.

Despite his dismissal of the appellants 'metaphysical concerns' the appeal judge had conceded that he could find no historical evidence to show how possession of the Manukau Harbour had passed into Crown control. This admission enabled Nganeko Minhinnick to take the Tainui's case to the Waitangi Tribunal based on a much wider range of grievances relating to appropriations going back to 1840. These included:

the confiscation of 60,000 hectares of tribal land during the Land Wars, loss of

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<sup>9</sup>Auckland Regional Authority Planning Tribunal report, 1981.

<sup>10</sup> Auckland Regional Authority Planning Tribunal report. 1981

mudflat fisheries to Auckland Airport, pollution from the sewage treatment plant into the Manukau, degradation of the harbour by farming and industrial development, mining of sands by New Zealand Steel and the compulsory acquisition of land under the Public Works Act (1932) for sand dune reclamation (Kawharu, 1989:253).

When the report on the Manukau claim was finally made public in 1985 the Waitangi Tribunal detailed an extensive history of oppression and injustice toward the Tainui people from the time of European settlement.<sup>11</sup> The report supported the tribe's claim that the development of the Manukau Harbour - in particular the steel works - contravened the Treaty's guarantee to full, exclusive and undisturbed possession of Maori lands, homes and fisheries. As the Tribunal put it:

The harbour was as much owned and apportioned to the care and use of different tribes as the land was. To the local tribes the Manukau was their garden of the sea...any loss of the use of the harbour is as much as the loss of land. We are appalled at the events of the past and the effect they have had on the Manukau tribes<sup>12</sup>.

The Tribunal argued that the Manukau Harbour was a 'treasured possession' and should have been protected by the terms of the treaty:

In the Manukau the tribal enjoyment of the lands and fisheries has been and continues to be severely prejudiced by compulsory

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<sup>11</sup>Finding of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Manukau Claim (1985) .

<sup>12</sup> Findings of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Manukau Claim (1985).

acquisitions, land development, industrial developments, reclamations, waste discharges, zonings, commercial fishing and the denial of traditional harbour access.<sup>13</sup>

However the recommendations contained in the report, seen by many to typify the mild and compromising position taken by the Tribunal in many of the disputes, did not support the view that the Manukau tribes could claim sole ownership of the harbour:

In our multicultural society the values of minorities must sometimes give way to those of the predominant culture, but in the Treaty of Waitangi gives Maori values an equal place with British values and a priority when the Maori interest in their taonga (treasures/cultural heritage) is adversely affected<sup>14</sup>

According to the Tribunal, the Crown's failure to provide protection guaranteed under the Treaty had begun in the nineteenth century, with colonial policies which had led to war and the confiscation of land, and had continued to the present day. It recommended that legislation should be introduced ensuring that Maori 'sensibilities, rights and interests' should be taken into account in all future planning and development relating to the harbour. It called for the formulation of what became known as the Manukau Harbour Action Plan to clean up the harbour and demanded that the government appointment guardians to represent

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<sup>13</sup> (ibid:100)

<sup>14</sup> Findings of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Manukau Claim (1985):p.77.



Maori and environmental interests in all future developments.

In relation to the proposed New Zealand Steel pipeline, the tribunal concluded that the proposal did not pose any great environmental threat and although the tribes considered the transfer of water from river to harbour to be culturally offensive it accepted that the steel company had already been granted planning permission for the pipeline. The tribunal suggested that New Zealand Steel and the Tainui people work together to reach an acceptable compromise.

In controversial cases the Waitangi Tribunal has tended to recommend that compromise solutions be voluntarily negotiated between Maori claimants and appellants; the Manukau ruling was similar to a number of other claims considered in the early 1980s. For example, further down the west coast of the North Island from the Manukau, the Atiawa tribe had lodged a claim against a proposed sewerage outfall which it claimed would pollute the tribal fishing grounds at Motonui. The Tribunal recommended the tribe and the local authority reach a compromise; after five years of negotiations it was agreed that the sewage treatment plant would be land-based. However in Rotorua, the proposal by the city corporation to build a pipeline for the discharge into the Kaituna River was deemed to be a threat to the local tribe's spiritual and cultural values and the Tribunal recommended the city corporation find an alternative land-based solution to the disposal of effluent. As Claudia Orange put it:

An uneasiness, even a hostility shown by many Pakeha, suggests that satisfaction of Maori claims depends, as it always has, upon whether or not Maori and Pakeha interests coincide (Orange, 1987: 250).

Compromise solutions offered by the Tribunal generally failed to satisfy tribal groups and in the case of the Tainui the claim lodged over the Manukau Harbour was the beginning of a long campaign for reparations. A decade after the first Manukau report the New Zealand Government finally agreed a \$170 million financial settlement for the Tainui people together with the return of 30,000 acres of Crown land confiscated in 1863. The settlement was accompanied by an apology from the British Queen for 'loss of life in the wars arising from the invasion of Maori land and the resulting devastation' (Reported in Guardian and Financial Times, 23 May 1995).<sup>15</sup>

In 1986 the Waitangi Tribunal ruled on the first non-resource based claim made to the Tribunal; the claim focused on issues to do with Maori cultural heritage. The Te Reo Maori claim was made by Nga Kaiwhakapumau i te Reo (the Wellington Board of Maori Language); it asked that Maori be recognised as an official language in New Zealand.

By the time the Waitangi Tribunal addressed the issue of language and culture the revival of the language was already underway as part of a

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<sup>15</sup> At the time of the Tainui settlement the New Zealand government was negotiating a 'fiscal envelope'. An offer to the Maori people of New Zealand was a one-off payment totalling \$1 billion which would be settle all outstanding grievances. The offer was rejected.

campaign by Maori to address the systematic failure of Maori children in the education system.

A survey conducted in 1970 by the Department of Maori Affairs had provided evidence of the extent to which Maori language had disappeared. At that time fifty per cent of the Maori population was under fifteen years of age; only 15 per cent of that group could speak Maori (Kawharu, 1989:242). In 1981 a nation-wide scheme known as 'kohanga reo' (language nests) was introduced. This project, based around community-run pre-school classes taught entirely in Maori, was designed to ensure that all Maori children were bilingual by the time they entered primary school:

Without the Maori language there can be no Maori culture; the survival of Maori identity is the spiritual force behind kohanga reo (ibid: 238).

The Te Reo report from the Waitangi Tribunal was an example of the way in which the Treaty was re-interpreted to address contemporary concerns<sup>16</sup>. The Maori language was not specifically listed amongst the Maori possessions guaranteed in the second article of English text of the treaty but the Tribunal argued that it was covered by the heading of 'o ratou taonga katoa' in the Maori text, variously translated as 'all their valued customs and possessions' or 'all things highly prized'.

In a section of the report headed Te Reo in the Past the Tribunal outlined the history of the

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<sup>16</sup> Waitangi Tribunal (1986) Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the te reo Maori Claim.

Maori language since European settlement.  
Initially the language was not in danger:

Many settlers were bilingual...missionary instruction was given in Maori, Governor Grey recorded the myths and legends of the Maori in the Maori language.<sup>17</sup>

However the 1847 Education Ordinance introduced assimilationist policies which put an end to mission teaching in Maori; English was made the compulsory language and as a consequence the number of Maori speakers gradually declined. Maori elders who gave evidence to the Tribunal described beatings at school for speaking Maori; one man recounted an incident where a school inspector had told him:

'English is the bread-and-butter language and if you want to earn your bread-and-butter you must speak English.'  
(Kawharu, 1989:15).

The Te Reo Report pointed out that the Maori chiefs would have been unlikely to have signed the Treaty if their language had not been covered by its guarantees. Some commentators, however, have argued that 'it is probably more likely that the question of language never crossed anyone's mind in 1840' (Sharp, 1990:135). Sharp speculates that the attempt to extend the meaning of 'taonga' to include language, culture and education was not so much to rewrite the history of the signing of the Treaty from a contemporary perspective, but rather, to ensure that injustices to the Maori

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<sup>17</sup> *ibid*:13.

could be addressed under the aegis of breach of contract (ibid: 136).

This was an important principle in terms of the way in which Treaty was seen to function as an 'oracle', as a document which was not simply a tract for its time:

It was not intended to fossilise a status quo, but to provide direction for future growth and development; the foundation for a developing social contract <sup>18</sup>.

While the Tribunal recommended that Maori be recognised as an official language it turned down a demand that all public documents including newspapers should be printed in both English and Maori arguing that the cost of this requirement would be prohibitive. But perhaps more significantly, by the time the Tribunal published its report there was not a single newspaper or magazine in the country which was owned by a New Zealand-based company - thus any recommendation for bi-lingualism in the print media may well have been impossible to implement and regulate . (Chapter 5 discusses in more detail the globalisation of media and cultural production and the resultant difficulties of regulating 'national culture'.)

The claim to the Tribunal to have Maori officially recognised alongside English was also focused on the cultural industries. Broadcasting, in particular, was seen as an important way of

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<sup>18</sup> Waitangi Tribunal (1986) Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Te Reo Maori Claim: 28.

promoting the use of Maori language. <sup>19</sup>A submission to the Waitangi Tribunal argued that as the radio spectrum was a 'taonga', the broadcasting institutions were failing to meet their treaty obligations:

It is accurate to describe the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand as Pakeha. Minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day the non-Maori culture of New Zealand has dominated the environment and activities of broadcasting<sup>20</sup>.

The tribunal upheld this view, concluding from the evidence presented during a month-long hearing that:

by the Treaty the Crown did promise to recognise and protect the language and that promise has not been kept. The 'guarantee' in the Treaty requires affirmative action to protect and sustain the language, not a passive obligation to tolerate its existence and certainly not a right to deny its use in any place.<sup>21</sup>

The Tribunal concluded:

The language is an essential part of the culture and must therefore be regarded as a valued possession. It is consistent with the principles of the Treaty that language and matters of Maori interest should have a secure place in broadcasting<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> In 1981 the output of radio and television included only one and half hours a week of programming in Maori).

<sup>20</sup> Waitangi Tribunal (1986) Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the te reo Maori Claim: 20.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*: 11.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*:26.

However the recognition of treaty obligations in relation to Maori language and culture coincided with the deregulation of broadcasting in New Zealand. Maori campaigners attempted to block the corporatisation of state-run radio and television in the courts; the case was taken to the Privy Council in London in 1993 which accepted that the Maori language was in a 'perilous state' but that the Crown was not required 'to go beyond what was reasonable in the prevailing circumstances' (Durie, 1998:70). As Chapter 5 discusses, Maori language programmes do appear in the schedules of New Zealand's deregulated broadcasting system, albeit marginalised in schedules which are designed primarily to target particular sections of the audience, namely consumers of advertised products.

The deregulation of the New Zealand economy, which has been going on in parallel to the treaty negotiations, has resulted in an 'internationalised' economic infrastructure with the regulatory functions of the state reorganised into privatised corporate enterprises. Decisions about the New Zealand economy tend to now be made in relation to pressures emanating from outside the national borders - the state's role is increasingly to broker the flow of capital through the territory and to engender corporate confidence through guarantees of political stability.

Thus while institutional structures (health, education, social welfare and the courts for example) operate new Treaty-driven protocols, particularly in relation to the use of Maori

language, there continues to be considerable conflict between the cultural and political forms demanded by the Treaty re-negotiations, stressing notions of social justice based on the collective rights which have been enshrined in the 'bicultural settlement', and the monetarist economic agenda.

Examining the 'bicultural settlement' in New Zealand without addressing these issues could arguably lead to an overly-celebratory reading of the way in which the struggle has unfolded in New Zealand. Among other things, it would misrepresent aspects of the interests and ideological character of Pakeha.

It is significant that so many of the economic, political and cultural issues dealt with through the Waitangi Tribunal - such as environmental destruction and the deregulation of media - potentially impact on the wider New Zealand population. For example, the debate over Maori language and broadcasting touch on important debates about globalisation and the loss of cultural identity. However, public perceptions of bi-polar 'race' differences have ensured that issues dealt with by the Waitangi Tribunal continue to be represented as solely the concern of Maori. Thus the potential for a more radical use of the Treaty to contest the power of multinational capitalism has been lost as culturalist discourses about identity obscure wider inequalities inherent in New Zealand's social and economic relations of production and consumption.



**Representing 'Maoriness': Te Maori and Lee  
Tamahori's Once Were Warriors**

The history of the long struggle by the Maori people for legal recognition of the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi has only recently been written (Orange, 1987; Belich, 1986, 1997; Kawharu, 1990). The new historiography, dispensing with 'fatal impact' narratives, based on the progressive decline and destruction of the indigenous people, emphasises instead, Maori agency from the earliest days of colonisation. Historians have shown that after Cook's landfall in 1769, tribal groups were keen to engage with European explorers and traders. Alan Ward suggests this early success in accommodating and adapting to the forces of modernity was in part due to the fact that Maori society was competitive and hierarchical (i.e. the interests of group members were not equal). He writes:

In most respects their achievements were outstanding. They showed both a desire and a formidable ability master and manage the forces of modernity to their own enrichment (Ward, 1997:11)

This apparent agency runs counter to notions of Maori communalism and spirituality deployed in contemporary biculturalist discourse. Rather, as Mason Durie suggests, contemporary pan-tribal forms of identification echo nineteenth century constructions 'textualised' by anthropologists and missionaries whose versions of Maoriness reproduced Eurocentric and homogenising constructions of Maori as 'primitives':

The construction of a Maori identity was accompanied by the promotion of a range of stories, legends and traditions based on various tribal accounts but amalgamated to form new pan-Maori versions which drew heavily on both European anthropology and the Old Testament (Durie 1998: 53).

The emergence of 'ethnic nationalism' during the past twenty years has mobilised and unified diverse Maori groupings around the notion of 'peoplehood' and 'sovereignty'. By valorising an authentic indigeneity and spirituality and stressing pan-tribal cultural traditions and customs, 'biculturalism' has produced an empowering but essentialist version of 'Maoriness' in opposition to Pakeha identity which has been stereotyped as hedonistic, aggressive and materialistic.

The classic text of 'ethnic nationalism', Donna Awatere's Maori Sovereignty, called for Maori self-determination. Awatere's tract combined Marxist/Third World Liberationist rhetoric with primitivist mysticism; she compares the 'mowed lawn mentality' of white New Zealanders with the authenticity of the Maori:

Before colonisation we had all the land in communal hands. We knew who were in relation to each hill and tree and to each person in this country. Justice was mediated by the philosophy of reciprocity. We had prodigious memories, intellects trained in the oral tradition, in real lived history, in reading the stars, the trees the cosmos, all the signs of nature (Awatere, 1984:58).

Clearly such 'primitivist' idealisations have strategic political value, playing an empowering role in the affirmation of indigenous culture nationally and internationally. However the 'truth claims' of these discourses police the boundaries of Maoriness by marginalising the inauthentic and inappropriate and have had material effects on significant numbers of New Zealanders identifying as Maori but with no tribal affiliations. For example, all financial and resource settlements resulting from the Waitangi hearings have been allocated to specific tribes groupings; those Maori positioned 'outside' (twenty per cent of those identifying as Maori<sup>23</sup>) have been effectively 'disinherited'<sup>24</sup>.

Two major cultural 'moments' - the first, the 1984 Te Maori exhibition in New York, and the second, a decade later, Tamahori's film Once Were Warriors - exemplify the way in which an essentialised version of Maoriness has been on the one hand productive (in terms of the national and international recognition of Maori culture) but at the same time limited in terms of the marginalisation of political and economic issues in relation to New Zealand's colonial history.

Te Maori, an exhibition of nineteenth century Maori artefacts, opened at New York's Metropolitan Museum in 1984. In terms of the context in which

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<sup>23</sup> Based on figures from New Zealand's 1996 census.

<sup>24</sup> A number of counter-claims by urban Maori with no tribal affiliations, have recently been lodged in the New Zealand High Court, contesting the fishing quota allocation to tribal groupings (New Zealand Herald, 23 April, 1998) .

the exhibition was held, Te Maori represented a significant departure from usual museological practice in relation to Maori material culture. For the first time the artefacts were displayed as objects of art rather than as ethnological specimens; over a period of more than a hundred and fifty years, they 'had been by turns curiosities, ethnographic specimens and major art creations' (Clifford, 1988:189). Nevertheless, the objects' journey across the classificatory divide between ethnography and 'art' was still determined by a primitivist discourse which drew on 'western' aesthetic values and thus marginalised innovative, non-traditional forms made by Maori artists in favour of 'non-industrial authenticity (Thomas, 1994:185).

The exhibition was restricted to objects rendered in 'traditional' materials - wood, bone and stone - and made before 1860. Despite the fact that the artefacts were made in the nineteenth century (obviously a period of intensifying colonial contact and rapid change) the collection represented 'Maoriness' as spiritual and unchanging. (There were no representations of the colonisers for example).

Importantly the restricted range of materials exhibited effectively excluded artefacts produced by Maori women who used fibre materials in the production of weaving and basket work, while the arbitrary 'cut-off' point - 1860 - was based on the presumption that European influences would have negligible at this time. The collection excluded non-traditional contexts of production

(rendering invisible the colonisation process and European influences of all kinds), but what was also conspicuously missing from the selection was any sign of Maori response to the white colonisers.

While the exhibition was an important act of cultural validation (not least because, as with all New Zealand cultural products, international exposure is more prestigious than local), as Clifford argues:

The Maori have allowed their tradition to be exploited as 'art' by major Western cultural institutions and their corporate sponsors in order to enhance their own international prestige and thus contribute to their current resurgence in New Zealand (Clifford, 1988:210).

The selection of objects for Te Maori was made by the director of the Metropolitan's primitivist department, Douglas Newton, who drew on a list compiled by the Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand (AGMANZ), an organisation dominated, at that time, by white ethnologists and art historians (Kaepler, 1994:29). However Newton's final selection of artefacts from the AGMANZ list was based solely on his judgement of their aesthetic qualities (McManus, 1992: 193). As Clifford argues, the exhibition reproduced the modernist impulse 'for appropriating or redeeming otherness, for constituting non-Western arts in its own image, for discovering universal, ahistorical 'human' capacities' (Clifford, 1988:220).

The exhibition's version of 'Maoriness', by glossing differences of gender, religion, social strata, tribal affiliations and so on, positions the indigenous culture as 'authentic' and unchanging. The catalogue states:

The Maori psyche revolves around tribal roots, origins and identity. The answer to the question 'Who are the Maori people?' is about many tribal traditions, myths and stories which provide a solid foundation for our lives....it is about love and respect for our culture, our fellow man and our environment..<sup>25</sup>

When the exhibition subsequently toured New Zealand's four main cities as Te Maori:Te Hokinga Mai- The Return Home all previous visitors records were broken; by the end of its run a third of the population had seen the exhibition - Te Maori had transformed the way in which Maori culture was perceived in New Zealand. A quote from a young Maori visitor to the exhibition, appearing in an academic review, provides a glimpse of a different take on 'Maoriness' (one that is rarely articulated in public accounts):

This exhibition is a bit spooky in a preachy sort of way - it's Pakeha worshipping us like we're a bunch of tree - hugging gurus and we ain't like that!(quoted in McCarthy, 1992:112).

The comment echoes the findings of Wetherall and Potter's analysis of 'race talk' in New Zealand which highlighted a discursive shift with 'culturalism' replacing 'race' in New Zealanders

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<sup>25</sup> Taonga Maori: Treasures of the New Zealand Maori, Metropolitan Museum, New York, 1984.

accounts of ethnicity (Wetherall and Potter, 1992:129). They suggest this form of discourse 'freezes' Maori culture as pure and distinct, separated from the realm of politics:

Maoris...become museum keepers. Theirs is the privilege and the burden of heritage. They are the custodians required to hold the archaic for the national psyche...only those who identify with the past can be seen as authentic actors of ethnic culture (ibid:130).

However, a decade later, the film Once Were Warriors (Tamahori, 1994) marked a significant cultural shift in terms of the way 'Maoriness' was represented. To date New Zealand's top-grossing film, Once Were Warriors was the first 'Maori' film to be seen by an international audience.<sup>26</sup> Significantly the only white characters in the film are representatives of the repressive state apparatus, a judge and two police officers, while the rest of the cast and the production crew (including director, Lee Tamahori) were all identified in publicity material as Maori.

The film explores the tensions existing between contemporary versions of 'Maoriness' in terms of gender, generational differences and the urban/rural divide. Narrative resolution involves a return to the pre-modern lifeways of traditional Maoridom - the extended family and the rural marae - as the means to heal the wounds of urban deprivation, alienation and violence.

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<sup>26</sup> The 'whiteness' of New Zealand cinema is discussed in Chapter Five.

The central characters, the Heke family, live in suburban poverty on the periphery of a metropolitan sprawl (the unnamed location emphasises the sense of urban alienation and anomie). Cars on a six lane motorway thunder past the bottom of the family's barren back yard, a wasteland except for a sagging wire clothes line tied to a solitary tree stump. Most of the film is set inside the cramped two-storey state-owned house where the lives of Jake (Temuera Morrison), Beth (Rena Owen) and their five children are dominated by the multiple deprivations of poverty, racism and alcoholism.

In the context of contemporary debates about identity in New Zealand, the film importantly moves beyond limited, stereotypical representation of Maoridom (based around the binary good/bad Maori); presenting instead a cast who are situated in a contemporary urban environment and whose complex characterisations drive the narrative. The film draws on syncretic elements of global 'black' culture - urban street culture, music and body adornment - to contextualise the struggles of young urban Maori while at the same time making specific reference to key sites of racial tension in New Zealand. As with Te Maori, the overarching theme is constructed around primitivist idealisation - those Maori who recognise their culture and tradition are saved whilst the central character in the film, Jake Heke, alienated from an authentic Maoriness, is finally abandoned by his family and condemned to live out an aimless urban existence which is dominated by alcohol and violence.



In the opening scenes Jake loses his job and teenage son Boogie is cautioned by the police. After the pub closes Jake hosts an impromptu party in the Heke's living room. Their 13 year old daughter Grace looks after the two youngest children sleeping in a cramped upstairs bedroom. Grace promises her brother Boogie she will accompany him to his court appearance the following day. During the party Nig, the eldest son who, alienated from his father lives away from the family home, arrives on the doorstep requesting money. Beth, finding her house-keeping money has disappeared, quarrels with Jake who has used the money for drinking and gambling. In a scene of shocking violence he repeatedly beats her to the ground.

The next day Grace takes Boogie to court where they learn he is to be sent to a reform school. His mother, face swollen and bruised from the previous evening's beating, is devastated. Meanwhile Nig, in a final rejection of his father, is initiated into the local gang.

Weeks later Beth and Jake are still distant; he spends his time drinking with friends in the local public bar. The couple finally establish a rapprochement when Beth persuades Jake to take the family to visit Boogie in the reform school. They hire a car but never arrive; Jake stops off at his favourite bar and after a long wait in the car park Beth takes the children home in a taxi.

That night Jake returns from the pub with friends for another impromptu party. One of the men, 'Uncle Bully' to the Heke children, slips upstairs and rapes Grace in her bedroom. The next day, Beth, sensing something is wrong, tries to talk to Grace but the girl runs away to visit her friend Toot who lives in a derelict car under the motorway. While Beth and her friends are out looking for Grace the girl returns home. When her father shouts at her for refusing to kiss 'Uncle Bully' goodnight she runs into the backyard and hangs herself using a piece of rope tied to the tree. Beth finds her body. The following day she organises a funeral at the rural marae. During the traditional ceremony Beth whispers to Grace's coffin: 'We've come home'. Meanwhile Jake remains in the city drinking with friends. When Beth returns, she reads Grace's diary and discovers the truth about her suicide. She confronts Jake, drinking with Bully in the local bar. At first he refuses to believe her but after reading the diary he violently attacks Bully. Beth walks out, telling Jake she is leaving him for good and taking the children with her. He is left standing in the pub car park as the sound of police sirens herald the end credits.

The claustrophobia of the film's mise-en-scene - most of the action takes place in either the cramped house where the family live or the overcrowded and smokey bar - not only creates a powerful sense of the enforced stasis and immobility induced by poverty, but also provides the bleak urban backdrop for the brutalising cycle of domestic violence which is only broken by

Beth's return to the rural marae at the end of the film.

The family's poverty condemns them to an existence on the margins of a city which remains unrepresented but is signified as a 'white space' precisely by the absence of Pakeha in the film. The family live out their lives in spaces created around and underneath the motorway which signifies a thrusting and progressive modernity from which they are sidelined. As the credits role, an opening shot represents the film's central theme - the connection between modernity, urbanisation and the loss of Maori spiritual ties to the land. A close-up fills the screen with a verdant wilderness scene, as the camera pulls back the vista is revealed to be part of an advertising billboard overlooking a tangled motorway junction bathed in a sickly yellow haze of pollution. The billboard logo - EnZpower - is reminiscent of 'national' corporate branding used to advertise New Zealand internationally (but can also be read as the injunction 'Empower'), while the landscape image projects dominant constructions of New Zealand as a nature paradise. By implication the marginal urban space within which the Heke's exist is far from the highly mobile lifeworld signified by the six-lane motorway or the promised escape offered by the touristic image on the billboard. In their suburban hell stray dogs eat the rubbish and the children play in cars abandoned beneath the motorway.

As the camera pulls back from the opening shot of the motorway billboard, Beth Heke is seen pushing

a shopping trolley along an alleyway running beside the motorway. She passes young Maori men working out in an empty lot (their bodies providing the only available site for power and control) while on the street Maori street musicians (marginalised from mainstream culture) play reggae and rap. As Beth gazes across the motorway her elder daughter Grace, is seen sitting under the broken tree in their backyard reading a Maori myth to the younger Heke children. The story concerns a protective Maori spirit, the taniwha and when uniformed white police arrive at the house shortly afterwards to question Boogie, the youngsters ask their mother, 'Are they taniwha, Mum?'. This questioning of the role of the state 'protectors' implicitly refers to the colonisers Treaty promise to provide protection to Maori -instead of course (as the film demonstrates) Maori youth in particular have been criminalised and disenfranchised. When questioned by the officers Beth looks straight at the camera and says - 'You think you know everything about us, don't you?' - her question appears to be aimed as much to the cinema audience as the police officers to whom it is ostensibly addressed.

Jake's violent behaviour, his failed masculinity (and by implication his non-warrior status) is attributed to his alienation from his roots. The gambling, drinking and maltreatment of Beth mark him out as a victim of corrupt and decayed European values. A band of barbed wire tattooed around his upper arm, reinforces his perception of himself as a slave; at one point he refers to himself as a 'blackface' (i.e. not a 'real

Maori'). By contrast Beth, despite having temporarily lost her way in the city, finally emerges resilient and empowered through her reconnection to her marae and its wise elders. At the end of the film Beth, preparing to return to the marae for good, tells Jake 'Our people once were warriors, people with spirit'. In reply he screams defiantly after her 'You think I need your spirit - fuck this warrior shit'.

His sons - Nig and Boogie - find ways to channel their aggression and disaffection into more ritualistic expressions of anger - each in their own way attaining warrior status by the end of the film. Nig joins an urban 'tribe' - the Toa Aotearoa - where he participates in a rite of passage in order to refashion himself as 'urban warrior' signified by a masculinist code - leather jackets, partially shaven heads with mohican-like locks and full body tattoos. The younger son Boogie meanwhile, undergoes rehabilitation at a Maori-run borstal for young offenders. Here he is told he will learn to carry his weapons inside himself; he is taught to use the haka as a means of acting out his anger. The instructors tells him: 'The haka won't work until you reach out and pull your ancestral lands into your body'. Thus Boogie becomes a true warrior by drawing on traditional Maori custom; in this way he is saved from his father's fate and through his performance of the haka at Grace's funeral wins the approval of his mother's tribe.

Once Were Warriors provides testimony to significant cultural shifts which have been

achieved in New Zealand as a result of the treaty negotiations. An all-Maori film production on international release would have been inconceivable twenty years ago. The film is testimony to the limited extent the Waitangi negotiations have brought about changes in institutional structures and forms of public funding in this case enabling Maori director Lee Tamahori to finance his project. However, it is unlikely that a more radical film - one which challenged white hegemony directly - would have been successful in attracting funding and promotion by the New Zealand Film Commission. Instead Once Were Warriors focuses on the plight of an urban Maori family whose victimhood is resolved by staging a return to authentic community and tradition, rather than through a challenge to the dominant social order. Thus, despite the fact that the film produces complex characterisations it finally reiterates the 'fatal impact' thesis in as much as the Heke's are unable to cope with the vicissitudes of modernity.

To conclude, while it has been argued that the contemporary reinterpretations of the Treaty of Waitangi have imbued the document with an authority which is disproportionate to the motivations of nineteenth century colonialists (who were simply using available legal means to expedite the appropriation of land), it is clear that after 150 years of struggle, the Enlightenment principles underpinning the colonial project in New Zealand have brought some measure of reparation and justice, albeit through a

process of accommodation rather than transformation.

But for the purposes of this thesis, the renegotiation of the meaning of the treaty has been one aspect of an active process of a re-constitution of Maori identities which has in turn brought about a significant redefinition of pakeha identity to which we now turn.

## Chapter 4

### The construction and reconstruction of white settler identities

Historically constructions of race in New Zealand have legitimated the installation of a white settler majority by equating whiteness with 'civilisation'. Recently taken-for-granted notions of white identity, formerly hegemonic and thus coeval with the idea of 'nation' (that is, white New Zealanders were the New Zealanders), have been delegitimated by Maori claims to indigeneity as tangata whenua ('the people of the land'). While the response to the Maori Renaissance by some sections of the majority population has been overtly racist - referred to locally as 'the white backlash'<sup>1</sup> - there has also been the articulation of an indigenised 'whiteness' which positions itself alongside essentialised versions of 'Maoriness' by laying claim to a pakeha identity which is 'uncontaminated' by 'Europe'. This chapter investigates the way in which changing constructions of whiteness in New Zealand have emerged in response to specific political and cultural conjunctures.

Drawing on nineteenth century travellers' accounts together with publicity material which 'sold' the colony to would-be settlers, the first section considers the way in which representations of the landscape and nature have been central to whites

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<sup>1</sup> For example - Te Pakeha: The Search for White Identity - which appeared in the national magazine Metro asked defensively 'Is it still OK to be a whiteman?' (Carrol Wall, Metro, November, 1986:pp 34-48.



in New Zealand. White settlers saw themselves bringing progress and civilisation to the 'pre-modern' culture of the Maori but the settlement of New Zealand was also energised by the utopian fantasy of building a society free of the political and economic divisions and inequalities of Europe.

As previous chapters have shown, land has been the focus of contestation in New Zealand because wealth in the colony was generated primarily through territorial appropriations. For the Maori people, (in as much as Maori nationalism has been an 'invention' of colonialism), land came to symbolise tribal connections with nature, while for the white settlers, it symbolised the promise of a New Jerusalem.

The taming of nature and the productive use of land were themes central both to the 'civilising mission' and a narrative of progress which drew on the imagery of the New Jerusalem to energise nationalist versions of whiteness. Any discussion of white identity in New Zealand must therefore take account of signifying practices which produced particular versions of the landscape at certain historical moments. Several key texts from the relatively limited corpus of European travel writing about New Zealand provide examples of these constructions.

The second section examines the way in which the defining features of whiteness in the colony - 'Europeaness' and 'civilisation' - were delineated through the shifting discourses of race. Despite

the myth of national unity first articulated at the Waitangi treaty-signing in 1840 - 'We are one people' - white settlers imagined themselves as a collectivity primarily in terms of their difference from the Maori. But while racial difference defined internal ethnicities, the settlers were also represented within discourses of nation as 'heroes' of a new imperial frontier and were presumed to be male. Such versions of masculinity defined settler males (agents of Empire) in opposition to the 'effeminate' who stayed in Britain. The colonial frontier was a space carved out by 'real men'; white women were largely invisible aside from their role as 'mothers of the nation' (Ware, 1992).

Despite the myth that the colony was a classless society, it was, from the earliest days, riven by divisions which were to some extent legacies of regional, religious and class-based differences translated to the colony, for example between Protestant and Catholic Irish, Highland and Lowland Scots or more ephemerally between those with 'old' and those with 'new' money (Belich, 1997: 326). While white New Zealanders could imagine themselves 'above' the Maori and a range of racialised Others in the territory, economic divisions and inequalities also existed between settler groups; in other words there was no homogenous form of identification amongst settler groupings.

Nineteenth century travel writers described the colony as 'the Britain of the South'. By the turn of century white New Zealanders were defined (from

outside the boundaries of their nation) as having distinctive 'national' characteristics. From the imperial centre they were constructed as an ethnic group seen as 'the same but not quite' due to perceived cultural 'lack'. This notion of 'cultural lack' articulated an ambivalent relationship between the centre and periphery with the 'creolised' cultures of white settler colonies generally regarded as producing inferior versions of 'Europeanness'. 'Cultural value' in the colonial context was defined in terms of the 'privileging norms' of the European cultural canon. The 'cultural cringe' - a colloquial expression for the national 'pathology' where these discriminations of value were internalised by colonial whites and as Chapter 5 explicates, have historically been used to discriminate against locally produced cultural artefacts (Morris, 1992).

In recent years the strength of contemporary Maori claims as an ethnic group has engendered new versions of white identity; in particular the renovated 'pakeha' identity which claims indigeneity for the descendants of white settlers. Such versions of whiteness have re-worked the 'sedimented traces' of nineteenth century constructions, re-presenting early settler myths in relation to nature and the colonial landscape through discourses of white belonging which are now no longer so much about belonging to the nation as they are about belonging to the land through a metaphysical relationship emptied of colonising traces.

The final section of the chapter explores the ways in which refashioned constructions of whiteness are reproduced in two recent films; Jane Campion's, The Piano which draws on 'primitivist idealisations' to represent an indigenised 'whiteness', and Alison McLean's Crush, which provides a more pessimistic and critical portrayal of hybridised white identities. This section also analyses a touring exhibition of popular cultural artefacts - 'Kiwiana' - which constructs a nostalgic vision of a golden era when a particular kind of 'Kiwi' lifestyle was in the ascendant.

### **White Landscapes**

Economic expansion and the imperial aspirations of empire-building were encoded and legitimated through the creation of a 'global consciousness' in Europe (Pratt, 1992:57). An imperial archive produced 'the rest of the world' for public consumption through a signifying process which defined what it meant to be white and European.

Travel writing, by mainly British explorers, colonial administrators and missionaries, produced detailed accounts of colonial territories for reading publics in Europe. These texts were made available through public libraries, while collections of flora and fauna were displayed in botanical and zoological gardens. Museums (usually attached to scientific institutions), exhibited anthropological artefacts and local geographical societies encouraged hobbyists to participate in the study of Empire (Bell, M, 1995; MacKenzie, 1990). For potential emigrants, the

imperial archive was augmented by a plethora of material produced by associations, such as the New Zealand Company, which detailed the suitability of colonial territories for settlement (Hursthouse, 1857; Ward, 1860).

As a result white settlers emigrating to New Zealand were travelling to a place which had been produced textually in Europe. The space represented on maps as 'New Zealand' had been stamped with European authority and the geography 'domesticated' by the imposition of familiar Euro-Christian place names.

One corpus of particular interest in this context is material published during the latter half of the nineteenth century relating specifically to New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> Accounts, written mainly by British-born and educated men who were 'passing through' the country, had an instrumental purpose in legitimating the imposition and extension of European power in the colony. The dominant forms of writing along these lines were non-fictional, either autobiographical travel narratives or publications which constituted a 'propaganda of migration'. The account of such material which follows draws on a range of texts from this 'literature of invasion' (Sturm, 1991:34), in order to examine the textual production of 'New Zealand' in the nineteenth century.

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<sup>2</sup> Many of the nineteenth century texts used for this thesis were located in a dusty and forgotten 'special collection' located in a back room of Homerton library in the London Borough of Hackney. The layers of withdrawal slips attached to the inside covers of these old tomes provide a palimpsest for an imperial archive once publically displayed throughout London's extensive public library network

Travel writers invented a discursive entity, a colonial canvas, onto which white identities were projected. The landscape was represented as an 'innocent' spectacle through panoptical surveys of the colony's geography, flora and fauna. This was a space of 'anti-conquest' where European travellers could detach themselves from the unequal or exploitative political and economic contexts of imperialism through their communion with 'pure nature' (Pratt, 1992: 39). Rhapsodic descriptions of landscape, with the all-seeing male traveller positioned to take in an impossibly broad sweep of countryside, were woven together with technical information about soil quality, climate and classificatory material detailing the characteristics of native flora and fauna.

These accounts produced the landscape as an aestheticised, uninhabited space. The generic conventions of travel writing 'sealed off' the indigenous - plants, animals and people - from a landscape which was represented as an empty space, an imaginary country. The Maori were textually marginalised from this 'scape', which appeared to reveal no trace of their existence. They were typified as an ahistorical and knowable 'species' and assigned to ethnographic chapters which, in line with the generic codes and conventions of travel writing, usually followed sections on geography, climate, flora and fauna (Hursthouse, 1857; Thomson, 1859; Kennedy, 1874).

As Thomas has argued on this topic:

If a colonial imagining was to be rounded and coherent it had to draw together an affective and aesthetic response to a place with a scientific delineation of resources and some reduction of the natives to barbaric, picturesque or vanishing types.... construed as incapable of asserting serious claim to the land (Thomas,1994:166).

In a journal account typical of the genre, Kennedy writes of his explorations through the 'interior' of the North Island. Describing the view from a promontory, Kennedy presents the scene with the precision and symmetry of a landscape painter:

We obtained a magnificent view of the country and looked down on the plains below interspersed with clumps of forest and intersected with streams and rivers which in the brightness of the cloudless sunshine glittered like fountains of liquid silver. We could not resist the attractions of this enchanting view altogether unbroken and bounded only by the horizon (Kennedy, 1874:180).

The aestheticisation of the landscape evident in the quotation suggests a mastery predicated on a relation of power between the seer and the seen. This discourse of mastery was linked to a common rhetorical device used in travel narratives which 'feminised' the land as an abundant, virginal form. Nicholson's account of his journey through New Zealand makes this explicit, with eulogising descriptions of the seductive landscape which appeared before him in all its 'sumptuous fertility':

The coast of the North Cape presents to the eye of the passing observer, a bold and romantic appearance. A narrow neck of land running some distance forms a promontory which discloses to view an expanse of fertile

grounds with romantic curvities, swelling on sight in beautiful irregularity and covered with perpetual verdure. It is difficult for the votary of unaffected Nature to withhold his admiration when she presents herself in all the simplicity of innocence and all the imposing grandeur of dignified sublimity (Nicholson, 1817: 99).

Such descriptions draw on a 'discourse of mastery' through which an implied compliant sexuality is invoked to support a narrative which transforms nature into 'natural history' through an act of subjugation and domestication (Pratt, 1992: 51). The untamed beauty of nature, in all its innocence, could only be improved by European 'penetration'. By implication, colonisation was the means to harvest the potentialities inscribed in the 'essence' of the landscape. Just as the Maori people could be improved through 'civilising', so the 'natural abundance' of the colony would be realised through 'cultivation'. In Hursthouse's opinion the raw features of the landscape constituted the 'foundational' material of a potentially 'civilised' landscape:

The natural scenery of New Zealand is both bold and beautiful. The scenery we admire in England is often the costly coat of art, rather than the primeval dress of nature. As regards polish of cultivation, the garden's glories, the plough's court robes, New Zealand is much the state that Britain was when Caesar landed; and if Caesar's Britain could now be shown us, many a bright champaign country which we call beautiful, would vanish, to reveal the gloomy forest and repulsive rugged waste. . . . . This stock of 'raw beauty' is a fertile cultivable country where plough, sickle and mill would enrich and brighten the land (Hursthouse, 1861: 97).



Towards the end of the nineteenth century accounts of settler life were published in both New Zealand and Britain in the form of texts marking the incorporation of 'travel' narratives into a nationalist rhetoric. By this time representations of the landscape had been incorporated into a repertoire of 'national' iconography. (for example, in 1898 Mount Cook and Lake Taupo joined Queen Victoria on issues of postage stamps). By this time the use value of 'travel writing' had changed as the colony was advertised in Europe as a tourist destination as well as a place for settlement.

A guide to New Zealand, published in London in 1893, uses the familiar categories of nineteenth-century travel writing to construct a tourist experience replicating early colonial explorations, including the collecting of 'ethnological' artifacts in the form of souvenirs:

New Zealand, as would be expected, possesses but little of interest in the way of architecture; but in its natural features - in geology, botany, ornithology, ethnology - there is enough to delight the most exacting travellers....the principal curios to be collected are specimens of Maori work including carvings in wood and greenstone, and mats woven in native flax; in-laid wood work; pressed ferns and skins of native birds (Pennefather, 1893:12).

The exclusion of the Maori from the national landscape saw their cultural forms re-located in local museum collections as synecdoches of primitivism . Travel guides from the period give details of museums in major towns where tourists can view artifacts of Maori culture. Already,

through the emerging discourses of 'nation', indigenous cultural traditions were being preserved (frozen in time) as national 'treasures', their way of life 'museumified' to form part of the regalia of the colonial state (Anderson, 1996:182)<sup>3</sup>.

At the same time the iconography of a distinctly 'nationalist' landscape was taking shape. In Pennefather's guide and in another, Pictorial New Zealand (Perceval, 1895:140), tourists are encouraged to visit regional monuments commemorating European heroes of the land wars. Pennefather directs visitors to read the inscription on a monument in the small town of Wanganui which is dedicated to 'the memory of brave men who fell..in 1864 in defence of law and order, against fanaticism and barbarism' (Pennefather, 1893:72).

The taming of nature in the colony was part of a narrative of progress which legitimated European intervention; all indigenous species were subject to what has been characterised as the 'fatal impact' thesis. For example, Hursthouse's account of the success of introduced flora provides a metaphor for the fate of the Maori who would also be the victims of a process of 'natural selection' which would see, he claims, the 'indigenous' give way to superior forms imported from Europe.

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<sup>3</sup> As Chapter 5 discusses in more detail, national museums function as the repository of the pre-modern, representing the nation through modernity's narrative of 'progress' assigning the colonised to a different time (outside national history) frozen in the archive of the museum.

Hursthouse's descriptions of native flora and fauna are contemptuous; New Zealand's flightless kiwi is 'a grotesque looking creature' while the native fruits such as tawa 'tasted like sloe steeped in tar' and the karaka was like 'a wizened quince' (Hursthouse, 1861:136). Species imported from Britain on the other hand, flourish in their new environment. Hursthouse here provides a perfect metaphor for colonialism in his description of the domestication of flora and fauna:

Clover, turnip, cabbage, carrot, spinach, mint, thyme...spreading themselves over the countryside in some unaccountable manner are found in many districts mixed up with the indigenous vegetation of the country and almost threatening to oust even the most vigorous natives of the soil (ibid:140).

The domestication of the space, presented in early accounts of the colonial landscape, informed a nationalist discourse in which industry on the part of white settlers produced the 'good things of life'. By the turn of the century white settlement had reproduced 'the garden's glories' in the colony which by then was known as 'the Britain of the South'. A settlers handbook published in Britain in 1883 presents a pastoral idyll filled by:

lazy too well-fed herds of cattle browsing upon pasture lands, the green English grass growing well-nigh high up to their haunches upon land that had never seen the sight of a cartload of manure (Simmons, 1883:32).

In 1895 New Zealand's Department of Education produced a reader for school children which

celebrated the enrichment of the colonial landscape through the transplanting of English flora and fauna<sup>4</sup>:

Grass land spangles with marguerites, just as in English meadows, and whole choirs of Old-country song-birds. The rich cocksfoot grass escaping out of paddocks with clover overflowing...billow after billow of meadow with plump cattle, sheep and horses grazing and corn-land rolling away through hill and dale (Reeves, 1895:226).

In these accounts, introduced into schools at the turn of the century with the explicit purpose of engendering 'national spirit', the fecundity of the tamed land - the plumpness of the herds, the billowing meadows, the choirs of birds - produces a 'cornucopia' which is constantly compared to the poverty of Britain and of course, in an historical context, are co-present with legal arguments being made at that time about Maori failures to develop their own lands.

Thus a nationalist vision is articulated through the image of a New Jerusalem in which whiteness is redeemed and purified in a domesticated landscape, 'civilised' by colonial intervention:

We must all work together so that the sickness, the grinding poverty, the class of hopeless paupers and professional criminals which disfigures so many a spot in the Old World shall never darken our New Zealand lives. (quoted in Malone: 1973, 5)

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<sup>4</sup>The journal was produced following public calls for the fostering of 'national spirit' in schools. Before the journal was introduced into New Zealand schools all textbooks used were British: It was clear such textbooks were inadequate, for example, to find New Zealand on the globe students were advised to first find Britain and then turn the globe through 180 degrees'. (Stenson, 1990:169)

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the colony's 'natural advantages' were seen to be harnessed by settler 'industry and perseverance' with the 'character' of the settlers replacing 'class' as a social marker. Hursthouse writes

The business of pioneer generations has been to turn a wilderness into a happy if not splendid state. Industrious, moral and strong it is too soon to complain that this race has not produced a genius amongst its scanty numbers. Its mission to lay the foundations of a true civilisation has called for solid rather than brilliant qualities - for a people, morally and physically sound and wholesome and gifted with 'grit' (Hursthouse, 1861:169).

This extract encapsulates many of the key elements of settler identity based on a masculinist vision of independence and individualism made manifest by the transformation of 'wild' nature into civilised 'pasture'. Images of a New Zealand 'way of life' focused primarily on rural and domestic idylls, in particular the harvesting, preparation and consumption of food. The profusion of nature's bounty made its way to the table of the settler household:

There were fowls baked or boiled, fresh pork and smoked hams....peach jam tarts and gooseberry 'role-y-poley' and it was a poor home which did not have 'plumduff' too. There was always plenty of milk and cream and mead made from wild honey... (Saunders, 1886: 7)

As in exhibited traditions of 'the pastoral' (Williams, 1975; Jordanova, 1986), workers (including 'housewives') are curiously absent from

this 'whitened' landscape, as is the gendered division of labour required to create the 'land of plenty'. Given that these texts were addressing potential emigrants it may have been important to underplay the hardships of settler life but perhaps more importantly the invisibility of 'labour' ensured that the 'civilised' colonial space, ordered, clean and dominated by mundane rituals, appeared to represent inherent characteristics of 'whiteness'.

Even when physical labour is mentioned, the very abundance of the pastoral idyll minimises the work required to harvest the bounty:

Peach groves everywhere....trees laden with big honey peaches...and those wanted were gathered by the simple process of driving a cart underneath and sending youngsters up to shake the branches until the cart was full. The best peaches were sliced and strung, hung in the high-ceilinged kitchen, criss-crossed festoons, until required for pies (Saunders 1886:11).

Local museums in New Zealand continue to represent this 'whitened' version of the colony's history. In a recent survey of local museums the New Zealand sociologist, Claudia Bell found the story of the 'good (white) citizen' reproduced across the country. Domestic tableaux, glossing inequalities and divisions, presented a past of 'charming innocence':

I saw many tableaux of domestic interiors. These were always immaculate and eagerly displayed the genteel colonial life. Each tableau or diorama maximised the comforts and superior taste of the idealised colonial dweller. The piano or spinnet implied

refinement and leisure; the Sunday dinner service, large-lidded tureens and silver-plated accessories on the table implied a comfortable, bountiful life.....good citizenship, stable family life, cleanliness and good health (Bell, 1996:58)

Bell found that many local museums were reliant on volunteers who contributed artifacts and designed the exhibits themselves, suggesting the extent to which settler myths continue to be lived out:

One museum curator of a reconstructed family cottage told me how good it had been for 'the community'. It brings people together with a sense of common purpose. It's a brilliant retirement hobby...older people are happy to see their family treasures put to such good use (ibid: 57).

This suggests a relationship between bourgeois collecting practices (in particular the way in which personal possessions are transformed into 'heirlooms') and the privileging of 'whiteness' in these local museums. As Clifford argues, all collections (however personal) 'embody hierarchies of value, exclusions and rule governed territories of the self' (Clifford,1988:143). In the case of local museums, personal possessions are reworked through a display of artefacts in reconstructed domestic settings which mythologise white settler lifestyles as the embodiment of particular characteristics of the nation and citizenship.

The installation of white settlers on the colonial territory was accompanied by a shift in the way the colonial landscape was represented. Initially the textual production of 'New Zealand' in Europe was an important element in representing an

imagined space for the realisation of the New Jerusalem; crucially this was a landscape from which the indigenous people were excluded.

As forms of national identity emerged based on a narrative of progress, white settlers were encouraged to identify with a 'tamed' landscape which saw the territory 'civilised' through a domestication of nature which involved the importation of English flora, fauna and of course, 'European' lifeways. The productive use of the land, made possible by the 'character' of white settlers, was set against the perceived indolence of the Maori, thus legitimating territorial appropriations of 'waste' land. At the same time these constructions were gendered, with the settlers defined as strong, masculine and independent in relation to the 'effeminate' English. The dominant group developed a strong sense of themselves as a collectivity of white Europeans through the incorporation of a repertoire of myths, memories and symbols which energised a local version of 'whiteness' organised around a Janus-like matrix looking inward and outward from the nation: nature/(Maori)/culture(Pakeha) and in relation to the metropolitan centre: 'tamed' nature (white settlers)/culture (metropolitan Europeans).

### **Gendered and racialised identities**



Early colonialist writing referred to the Maori as 'New Zealanders' but towards the end of the nineteenth century, as discourses of nation emerged, white settlers became the New Zealanders; in other words the majority group was unified by the designation 'white' and made coterminous with the idea 'nation'. This was a concept which not only naturalised a 'racialised' national identity, it also glossed gendered constructions of nation.

The transformation of the colonial landscape required the perceived masculine attributes of 'physicality' and 'character'. The colony provided a challenge for 'real men'; as Hursthouse puts it:

Emigration is a career which calls up pluck, bottom, energy, enterprise - all the masculine virtues. The feeble-minded the emasculate, the fastidious, the timid do not emigrate, they bow their heads to the yoke, ply the distaff and spin wealth for the great at home (Hursthouse, 1857:169).

Hursthouse's guide goads men with 'character' to escape; his invocation narrates the possibilities of migration as an Oedipal drama with the 'boy' escaping the 'apron-strings' of the Mother Country to become a 'real' man:

Rather than grow up here cumberer of the earth with no better chance than that of finding myself some day behind the counter with a bonnet on, measuring tape and bobbin to mincing misses, or of becoming the snubbed clerk with a pale wife and seedy children nailed to the dingy desk for life, I would turn, pull on my coat, take six months at some manly handicraft and then, spite the

dark warning of Aunt Tabitha, spite the twaddle of my male friends in petticoats I would secure cheap passage to New Zealand...trusting to God and myself to achieve me a happy escape and a good deliverance from that grinding social serfdom, those effeminate chains, my born and certain lot in England. (Hursthouse, 1857:637)

In these versions of national identity, white men represent the progressive agents of modernity: forward-thrusting, potent, and historic (McClintock, 1993:66). Captain James Cook has been such a figure in New Zealand historiography. He is represented as an exemplar of white masculine virtues: a man of 'character', a figure of historical agency, hero of the Enlightenment and the father of the nation:

He embodied all the pioneer virtues, qualities and skills in developing a new settled land. Adaptability, resourcefulness, endurance and doggedness...he was a big rawboned individual, the epitome of the pioneer type...a self-made man who had eschewed the easy road to success and pushed himself to the top largely by his own efforts (Fisher, 1979: 150).

This is a version of white masculinity which continues to have important resonances in New Zealand's literary, cinematic and sporting culture. The 'Man Alone', exemplifies the powerful trope of individualism in national narratives, figuring as a cultural archetype, reproduced across all forms of popular culture (Phillips, 1987).

As 'whiteness' became coterminous with dominant versions of 'national identity' the settler majority was also represented as a collectivity in terms of their difference from the metropolitan centre. The 'special' relationship with the land and nature was central to these constructions. However, the attributes required to transform the colonial landscape into a 'simulacrum' of Home were, from a metropolitan perspective, the very factors which prevented the colony attaining levels of greatness in terms of cultural achievement:

The sons of pioneers do honourable and useful work ...but of artistic, poetic or scientific talent, of wit, originality or inventiveness there is yet but little sign. On the whole young New Zealand is better known by collective usefulness than by individual distinction. Brilliant talkers there are none (Hursthouse, 1857:174).

During the nineteenth century 'race' had become the organising grammar for an imperial order in which modernity and the 'civilising mission' were framed through discourses legitimating colonial interventions. As a racial category 'whiteness' has been largely invisible, submerged within the imagined geographies of modernity through which the West and Europe came to be defined. In other words, the category 'European' naturalised an identity saturated with 'whiteness' in terms of culture within the globalised geographies of capitalism which were gathered under the sign of the 'West', as the international space of progress, development, democracy and 'freedom'.

By the latter part of the nineteenth century, the discourses of 'scientific racism' provided the dominant paradigm for racial categorisations (Goldberg:1993). The romanticism of the 'noble savage', which characterised Cook's descriptions of the Maori, had been replaced by discourses which drew on the natural sciences to mark out racial difference in terms of hierarchies of 'civilisation'.

Lady Martin's tract, Our Maoris, published by the London Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, suggests that the romanticism of Cook's 'noble savage' had been shattered by the reality of the colonial encounter. She writes:

The New Zealanders were just emerging from barbarism and in our part of the country only ten years before had been wild, impulsive heathens. The old picturesque dress we had seen and admired in Cook's 'Voyages' had given way to slop trousers and a blanket (Martin, 1884:8).

Here the reference to 'slop trousers and blanket' suggests degeneracy and filth attributable to the character of the Maori; rather than to the poverty induced by colonialism.

In another travel account, the British military surgeon Thomson draws on what appears to be the crude empiricism of phrenology to pronounce on the inability of the Maori to 'estimate high numbers':

It was ascertained by weighing the quantity of millet seed skulls contained that New Zealanders' heads are smaller than the heads of Englishmen, consequently the New Zealanders are inferior to the English in mental capacity (Thomson,1859:81) <sup>5</sup>.

As has been well-documented in relation to other colonial contexts (see for example Stoler,1995), cultural identities in New Zealand were constructed within a hierarchised grid of 'high' and 'low' elements which defined the boundaries of 'whiteness' through a delineation of the denigrated social practices of the Maori and the lower orders, in particular Irish Catholics.

In their analysis of the way 'disgust' energises the demarcating imperatives between 'high' and 'low' domains, Stallybrass and White have shown how these hierarchies connect across four inter-related domains: the human body, psychic forms, geographical space and the social order. They suggest that divisions and discriminations in one area are 'structured, legitimated and dissolved' by reference to the vertical symbolic hierarchy which operates in the other three domains:

The division of the social into high and low, the polite and the vulgar, simultaneously maps out divisions between the civilised and the grotesque body, between social purity and social hybridization. These divisions cut across the social formation, typography and the body in such

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<sup>5</sup> Theories of race based on approaches such as phrenology have tended to be labelled 'pseudo-scientific' but this textual strategy delegitimizes racial theories and leaves the discourses of the biological and human sciences 'pure', ahistorical, neutral, empiricist and 'value-free'. (LaCapra 1991:72)

a way that subject identity cannot be considered independently of these domains. The bourgeois subject has continuously defined and re-defined itself through the exclusion of what is marked out as 'low' - as dirty, repulsive, noisy, contaminating (Stallybrass, 1986:191).

These 'domains' provide a means to examine the complex ways in which identities - racialised, gendered and class-based - are remade and redefined as boundaries between categories are 'transgressed' through discourses which are overlapping and inter-changeable. For example European fears of degeneracy in the mid-nineteenth century located progress in the physical health of 'races'. The body had become the site where anxieties about urban poverty, degeneracy and national decline were played out (Butler, 1995:229). In the colonies these fears were projected onto 'racialised' others (Brantlinger, 1988; Bristow, 1991).

One of the most striking generic characteristic of nineteenth century travel writing about New Zealand was the preoccupation with intimate details of Maori personal appearance and hygiene, eating habits, sanitation (in particular 'drainage') and sexual relations. In his guide for would-be settlers Hursthouse writes:

Their habits of life are destructive...their huts are too close and ill-ventilated. They require advice on cleanliness, the use of soap, eating three meals a day instead of the customary two. They need to be told of the fearful revelations of old-world cities proving that promiscuous intercourse results in barrenness and sterility; that the woman

is the 'weaker vessel' and should only do indoor work and that the sight of a girl staggering a dozen miles with a 60lb potato kit would be disgusting among the wretched black fellows of Australia but is both disgusting and disgraceful among the Christian Maoris of New Zealand (Hursthouse, 1857:183).

Hursthouse's description is typical of a white European preoccupation with purity and cleanliness. 'Civilised' behaviour is codified within the normative values of heterosexuality and family. Gender has therefore been central to the ranking of racial difference. The decadent communality of tribal life is set against the health and cleanliness of the European 'family', with the white woman, as wife and mother, a central figure in the reproduction of the ordered and 'civilised' domestic space.

Given, as Appadurai argues, the project of modernity has been in part about the social regulation of consumption practices centred on the body, we see here how daily eating and cleaning rituals become important spheres for repetitive forms of consumption underpinned by gendered and racialised moral discourses (Appadurai, 1996:67)<sup>6</sup>.

In May, 1904 the New Zealand Illustrated News proclaimed:

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<sup>6</sup> McClintock provides an example of early imperial commodifications in her case study of soap:

By the late nineteenth century soap advertising took its place at the vanguard of Britain's new commodity culture and its civilising mission.....as the fundamental form of a new cultural system representing social value. (McClintock,1995: 208)

The pioneer women... who took pride in clean homes and clean, healthy children, these are the women who established a race...<sup>7</sup>

And of course these discourses centred on the body included regulation of sexuality with white women represented as the custodians of a bourgeois morality, the exemplars of 'purity' and virtue:

A Maori will never marry a white women because he feels her superiority and he cannot make a slave of her as a native woman. A white woman, not even the most degraded, could be induced to unite herself with a Maori - to herd native-fashion in a pa, amid dirt, vermin and discomfort...and to perform other laborious work exacted from their women by barbarous races (Reeves, 1898:175).

While bourgeois white women exemplified civility, the perceived degradation of Maori women, measured against white femininity (as in the quotation above), was symbolic of the general degradation within Maori society. For example the alleged physical degeneracy of native women in old age was attributed to sexual promiscuity and inappropriate forms of work:

The ladies are by no means so good-looking as the men. Highly precocious, often leading a sexually dissolute life from childhood, marrying early and then performing a large share of field labour, are old at forty and repulsively weird and witch-like at sixty (Hursthouse, 1857:169).

These classifications of the Maori made European interventions both credible and necessary. The legislation introduced by the colonial

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administration during the nineteenth century in order to regulate and control Maori 'communalism' - taxes on waste land, legislation regulating marriages, child care, health, town planning and so on - were interventions legitimated by these 'civilising' discourses. At the same time white settlers were called upon to unite in their colonial mission to improve the Maori race through example:

It seems impossible to persuade the natives to live in separate families after European fashion. They like to herd together at night to talk. They like the stifling heat of their huts where they squat on their haunches and smoke and prate about land, their eternal topic. How to describe the figures of dirty unwashed men, women and children of all ages lying about accompanied by pigs and dogs; some wrapped in dirty blankets, suggesting the unwholesome effluvia of the place (Hursthouse, 1857:176).

Thus 'whiteness' was represented as the repository of sexual virtue and forms of 'civility' within which the 'Other' was marginalised and excluded through a grid of classifications which defined them as primitive, savage, childlike and inferior. The typification of the Maori in early travel narratives drew on many of these themes, as in this extract from Thomson:

Reason and judgement, the noblest of all the intellectual faculties was little cultivated by the New Zealanders previously to the advent of the pioneers of civilisation. It was from totally neglecting these faculties that they were frequently embroiled in war, ate each other, killed female children, were unable to estimate high numbers, devoured at a summer feast all their winter food.... They eat food civilised men abhor from the disgusting associations its smell suggests to

the imagination and few of the impressions transmitted in their brains are ever fructified into beautiful ideas. The New Zealanders have the minds of children. Tried by the European standard, their conversations are sensual and their ideas unclean. They are dirty and indolent. When mastered, either physically or mentally they become as manageable as children (Thomson, 1859:84).

In the colonial context, civilised white identities were conceptualised through a repertoire of practices based on domestic and corporeal rituals which 'repressed nature' and naturalised whiteness as the repository of 'civility'. The transgression of boundaries, in terms of the domestic arrangement of space and the perceived lack of control in relation to sexuality, eating rituals and gendered divisions of labour, marked out 'difference' with the Maori positioned as the antithesis of 'whiteness'.

Thus bourgeois white 'sensibilities' were redefined in the colonial context. The hierarchisation of racial difference, reproduced through discourses of 'purity', was defined biologically (in terms of 'blood'), hygienically (in terms of 'cleanliness'), intellectually (in terms of 'rationality') and aesthetically (in terms of 'beauty'). Bourgeois white women were constructed as the 'gold standard' of civility in terms of reproduction, domesticity and physical appearance. Historically they played a pivotal role in the articulation of 'race', class and sexuality in an imperial zone where white subjects were encouraged to see themselves as agents of Empire.

## **Indigenising Whiteness: The 'new' Pakeha**

As Chapter 3 details, in recent decades the Waitangi Treaty negotiations have resulted in a form of Maori nationalism which has essentialised the indigenous relationship to the land and nature. In response white New Zealanders who identify as 'pakeha' have reformulated nineteenth century settler identifications with the landscape to reinvent themselves in terms of their 'spiritual' links with nature. 'Belonging' is no longer so much about belonging in the country - where 'country' signifies nation - as it is about belonging to 'country' where 'country' signifies a land-based spirituality based on claims to a non-indigenous metaphysics rather than geopolitics. This has been a strategy which not only perpetuates the erasure of colonial violence; it has also been a means of dealing with the perceived cultural 'lack' which continues to haunt white New Zealand.

The re-appropriation of the Maori word for white New Zealanders - 'pakeha' - to designate an indigenous form of white identity has been an important aspect of a contemporary 'primitivist turn' which seeks to avoid the connotations of supremacy 'white' has acquired. Recent attempts to refashion 'whiteness' have involved the construction of a 'pakeha' identity which claims indigenisation through attachments to the land and nature which have close associations to New Age pronouncements on personal transformation (Ross, 1991).

Chapter 3 outlined ways in which versions of Maoriness have also drawn on primitivist constructions in order to valorise cultural tradition and authority. This has been an important and empowering aspect of the broader political struggle against white domination in the colony. On the basis of the historical context presented in the previous chapter it is now possible to examine constructions of a 'renovated' white identity - the 'pakeha' - which have drawn on a similar repertoire to transform 'whiteness' in the face of the contemporary crisis of identity in New Zealand.

The 'pakeha' response to the Maori Renaissance can be seen as a strategy which reworks earlier appropriations through a narratives of personal transformation, a process of therapeutic self-actualisation, which perpetuates the amnesia relating to the material conditions underpinning white privilege, whilst drawing on the myth of the New Jerusalem to lay claim to a special relationship with the land thus disavowing links with the imperial past.

The refashioning of the 'whiteness' is exemplified by the publication, in 1991, of the Penguin best-seller Pakeha: The Quest for Identity in New Zealand, edited by historian Michael King. King collected fifteen essays which he describes in the introduction as 'personal explorations of the origins, metamorphoses and current state of an evolving Pakeha culture in New Zealand' (King, 1991:6).

The text was aimed at a non-academic readership and followed in the wake of King's hugely successful autobiography Being Pakeha (King, 1985), forming part of a stream of articles and books published during the 1980s which dealt with the identity crisis afflicting white New Zealanders. The shared characteristics of this genre were defined by one commentator as the search for 'the Holy Grail of pakeha uniqueness'<sup>8</sup>.

In the collection of essays edited by King, each of the writers recounts a narrative of personal growth which leads to their self-awareness as 'born-again pakeha'. This 'psychologising' of identity is commensurate with King's implausible claim that the white identity crisis has its roots in the experience of 'diasporic' alienation which is implicitly linked to modernity's deprivations:

Pakeha people will cease to feel threatened by the enlarging Maori presence... when they have begun to feel whole and secure again (ibid: 10).

The themes running through the essays are reformulations of tropes identified earlier in the chapter based around gendered constructions of New Zealand as the New Jerusalem; a place where Europeans could enjoy equality of opportunity and egalitarianism. This new version of 'whiteness' can be characterised as a New Age form of primitivism which idealises nature and pre-modern

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<sup>8</sup> A New Zealand critic reviewing King's Being Pakeha suggested 'pakeha-ism' was in danger of becoming an 'industry'. Gordon McLauchlan, New Zealand Herald 23 November, 1991.

forms of community and effaces 'difference'. The writers share a defensive position which challenges Maori status as tangata whenua (people of the land) and is in a sense a 'writing back', particularly to Donna Awatere's tract, Maori Sovereignty. Christine Cole Catley makes this explicit in her piece:

I don't think any Maori could love his or her tribal lands more passionately than I love the hills of my childhood...I dream about them (ibid: 40).

Catley appears to acknowledge Maori claims to the land whilst universalising these claims by emphasising that Maori do not enjoy such connections exclusively.

In his introduction to the collection, King begins by questioning Maori claims to indigeneity through a reinterpretation of the country's foundational narratives:

In the beginning we were all immigrants to these islands, our ancestors boat people who arrived by waka (canoe), ship or aeroplane. The ingredients of our indigenous cultures, too were imported: the Polynesian language that became Maori and English; Paptuanuku (Maori myths) and the Bible; Maui and the cultural heroes of western Europe and North America; the kumara (sweet potato) and the kiwifruit. All these things - and many more had their origins elsewhere (ibid:9).

King's pairing of aspects of Maori and European culture (Maori myths with the Bible, the kumara with the kiwifruit) is a rhetorical device which appears to collapse features of 'difference' by means of a parallelism which decentres whiteness

by constructing symmetrical relationships between all the inhabitants of New Zealand as migrants: 'we are all migrants and we are therefore all the same'. And yet King's choice of representative examples from each 'culture': Maori myths, Maori language and the kumara versus the Bible, English and the 'kiwifruit' simply reiterates the power imbalances between Maori and Pakeha. For example, in what could be characterised as a typically 'white' act of appropriation, King claims the 'kiwifruit' as a 'pakeha' fruit, comparing it with the humble kumara, a sweet potato which - like the taro - only grows in the South Pacific. Previously known as the Chinese Gooseberry, this fruit has itself been subject to a 'nationalist' renovation when it was renamed the 'kiwifruit' and launched as the export item which would replace the collapsing market for wool and lamb.

At the same time King adroitly repositions myths of Maui's exploits (fishing the islands from the sea) as a 'discovery' story as important as European arrival in order to erase 'difference', a textual strategy which constructs all New Zealanders as 'settlers' who therefore have equal claim to indigeneity although in this case the 'pakeha' have become the victims:

The fact that one of these peoples has been here longer than the others does not make them more 'New Zealand' than later arrivals, nor does it give them the right to exclude the others from full participation in national life (ibid:9).

Throughout King's essay this device is repeated as he sets up homologous links between himself, his

ancestors, the Maori people and the collective love of the land. King's 'genealogies' stress continuity and tradition and can be read as mimicry of Maori 'whakapapa' in which tribal groups construct their history generationally. Describing the childhood of his great-grandparents King presents a nostalgic reconstruction of a past in which Pakeha and Maori lived in harmony with nature - outdoor cooking, the ability to name all flora and fauna and call wild birds are motifs for 'closeness to nature':

They spent weekends fishing for flounder in the estuary in the company of their Maori neighbours from the Ngati Toarangatira pa and cooking cockles and pipi on corrugated iron sheets laid over open fires. My father...played and rode horses with Maori children from the communities alongside the railway route. And he explored neighbouring farms and bush in the hinterland. After his family moved to Wellington he retained his relationship with the land.....he came to know the name of every New Zealand plant, tree and bird and he relished being in lonely places that had not been ravaged by humankind (ibid:10).

Here again King glosses direct 'pakeha' involvement in colonisation by attributing the 'ravages' of the landscape to a generic 'humankind', a universal category which implicates the Maori to the same degree as everyone else.

The narration of King's own childhood is a manifesto for his claims to indigeneity :

I was imbued, like my mother and father, with a feeling of deep attachment to the land and its flora and fauna. We planted ngaio and kowhais around the house and called to fantails and warblers...we tramped the



coast..boiling the billy and cooking sausages on driftwood fires as we went. I too came to know the names of trees and birds and regarded them as companionable presences....(ibid:12)

He sentimentally conjures up the image of white New Zealanders living as a community of hunter gatherers. This is mere New Age Primitivism: 'foraging for food' and the use of native timber for furnishings signify a return to 'nature' which glosses not only the colonial, capitalist foundations of the nation but also the material wealth of the white majority. The 'simple way of life', the return to nature is, in the context of white privilege, almost always a matter of choice rather than necessity:

In the houses of the people among whom I moved as I grew up could be seen natural wood shelves, the wood sculptures of Russell Clark...and the kinds of food for which one foraged at the weekend with family friends - mussels, paua,crayfish (ibid:14).

Compare this to Mulgan's unsentimental account,written at a time when white New Zealanders were confidently 'European', about life at beginning of the century in Katikati, where once again the naming of birds and trees suggests a form of 'belonging' which Mulgan never experiences:

I hardly knew any New Zealand history and could name few New Zealand trees or birds. In the long summer days a bird often sang...I heard it so often I came to associate it with the happiness of those summer days...The point I want to emphasise is this, no-one in Katikati told me the bird's name, I do not think anyone was interested (Mulgan,1958:32).

In Michael King's collection Pakeha, themes of continuity and closeness to nature are reproduced in essays by women who articulate their oneness with the land and nature through their bodies. This is a re-working of the gendered discourses of nation; here the atavistic body of the white woman stands for an authentic 'belonging' in which 'nation' and 'nature' are one. Christine Dann writes:

From my study window I look across the water to the little port where my great-great uncle was born and I reflect on what became of my ancestors..... I know the tracks on the flanks of Sugarloaf so well that I could walk them at night without stumbling. I know many other things besides...the little blue and copper tussock butterflies, the white and blue native bluebells, the porous red volcanic rock, the pale yellow soils.....  
(King, 1991:46)

Dann links the nocturnal explorations of the 'flanks of Sugarloaf' with the sensual contours of her own femininity. She is 'sugarloaf' and here, her body, with its capacity to reproduce, signifies the 'nation'. Significantly Dann does not claim to know the names of plants and insects, she 'knows' them in an almost metaphysical sense, she and the 'butterflies', 'bluebells' and so on are 'one'.

In many of the essays the motif of 'homecoming' marks an epiphanic moment in the discovery of 'pakeha' identity not least because it provides a moment for re-inventing 'white' origins, inverting the usual use of 'Home' by white New Zealanders to signify 'Europe'. Dann writes of her homecoming as a return to 'nature' in which she stages a

baptism of belonging, a union between her body and the land:

That summer I came back to Canterbury, bashed through half a mile of scratchy scrub to get to the riverbed, stripped off, waded into the river, knelt down, splashed the water over my body and gazed with longing at the mountains upstream (ibid:50).

Another of the essays, written by Lyndsay Head, reiterates the tropes of 'belonging' which have their roots in nineteenth century constructions of an empty landscape:

My landscape of the heart was always in those mountains...Central Otago, the beating heart of the world. The water's clear as glass. The waves blow down the lake from the mountains chattering of creation, aliveness. New Zealanders like the silence, the absence of the gabble of old ideas. The land isn't an abstraction and it isn't scenery. It's the experience of freedom...and it explains why social category doesn't dominate identity the way it does in England (ibid: 23).

Here the 'call of the land' is set against the deprivations of modernity found in Europe. The country/city binary which has come to represent the alienation of modernity in opposition to a nostalgic rural idyll is, in the colonial context, translated into a binary opposition between New Zealand and Europe which simultaneously inverts the centre/periphery hierarchy. For Dann, a visit to London leads to personal revelation:

London I found crammed, dirty, ugly...I felt prickling hostility to the place....I realised that my New Zealand is a landscape of intense light and colour, an almost uninhabited place where the presence and

nature of people is deduced from the structures they impose on the land...I felt desperately homesick for this place, so unlike the crowded cities of Europe with their life of noise and bustle and distraction. Home seemed to be a place where I was free to be...(ibid: 50)

Similarly, Michael King mythologises his family's migration from Europe, drawing on the tropes of the New Jerusalem myth to construct a narrative of 'organised forgetting' from which colonial violence has been erased:

I was reminded by both grandmothers why they had abandoned the UK; to raise healthy families in a land of open options and to achieve identity and status on the basis of what they did rather than the circumstances of their birth My mother's parents...when they arrived in New Zealand rejoiced immediately in the clean air, open spaces ...the absence of a class system, which would permit their children to succeed on the basis of their own efforts rather than their rank, even to the point of owning their own property - a prospect that seemed unattainable back Home (ibid:11).

Here King here is reworking the myth of 'systematic colonisation', attributing a particular kind of 'character' to his ancestors at the same time disavowing their role in New Zealand's colonial past. The notion of 'false consciousness' seems a particularly apposite metaphor for the process through which the material foundations of white settler prosperity have been naturalised by the myths of individualism. The 'real' history of colonial appropriation continues to be denied as the re-fashioning of whiteness by means of an indigenised pakeha identity, enables white New Zealanders to

articulate a form of hybridity through which their peripheral status within 'the West' leaves them the victims of modernity. The following passage by King exemplifies this 'victimhood' and demonstrates the way in which environmental issues in New Zealand tend to be bound up with white preoccupations with 'belonging' through a special relationship with the land:

We have moved from the belief that the land belongs to us to the feeling that we belong to the land. And we fear betrayal of that relationship if this same land is strip mined, denuded of trees, or sealed off in asphalt, concrete and high density housing....'All is seared with trade, bleared smeared with toil'. Gerald Manley Hopkins wrote ... That is an expression of the loss that I fear if the march of development/corporatisation/industrialisation is allowed to proceed unchecked. It is not simply the loss of an aesthetic outlook, it is the loss of relationship with the planet that has spawned us. For me, as much as for any Maori person the songs of this land are still to be heard...I hear them because they vibrate from the ethos of the land and I am open to them...they heal me, they uplift me, they nourish me...they are an integral part of my being a New Zealander, of being pakeha (ibid: 21).

It is as if by assuming a pakeha identity, white New Zealanders may be able to effect a 'de-centring' of their identity through a disavowal of privilege. This strategy becomes almost credible in the context of the nation's peripheral role in global culture and politics, enabling the pakeha to claim 'minority' status alongside the Maori; in a sense they position themselves as 'victims' of modernity. Thus the 'primitive idealisations' of pakehanness provide the means to refashion

whiteness through a return to 'nature'. I would argue this is a move which is reproduced in Jane Campion's film The Piano.

### **Representing 'whiteness'**

The Piano (Jane Campion, 1993) re-presents the story of colonisation in New Zealand as a narrative of reconciliation; in doing so it addresses the concerns of the white majority. It is, in a sense, a textual palliative for postcolonial anxieties. The critical international acclaim surrounding the film constructed The Piano as a feminist exploration of nineteenth century sexuality and tended to ignore the way in which 'race' was problematically embedded in the film. My analysis below supplements the existing range of critical commentaries by focusing on the way in which the film reproduces a familiar repertoire of colonial tropes to construct a version of 'whiteness' through a matrix of 'race', class and gender differences.

In the film, Ada McGrath (Holly Hunter) travels to New Zealand for an arranged marriage with the white settler landowner Stewart (Sam Neill). Ada arrives on the coast of New Zealand accompanied by her daughter Flora (Anna Paquin), a grand piano and a clutch of possessions. She is an elective mute and communicates with the world using sign language which her daughter verbalises. The colonial landscape provides the setting for Ada's sexual awakening. Stewart agrees to trade Ada's piano for a block of land belonging to Baines

(Harvey Keitel), a white man who speaks Maori and has moko (tattoos) on his face. Ada is forced to give Baines piano lessons, but when it transpires that the transaction is an attempt by Baines to get closer to Ada they strike a deal in which the keys of the piano are traded for caresses. An intimate relationship develops which Stewart eventually discovers. In an act of brutal retribution he severs Ada's index finger with an axe. Soon after, he agrees to let her leave to start a new life with Baines and Flora.

The fantasy of colonial reconciliation is played out through the developing sexual relationship between Ada and Baines. At the end of the film Ada chooses 'life' after jumping overboard with her piano. She leaves the instrument (the symbol of bourgeois European culture) at the bottom of the ocean, thus severing her connection with the imperial centre and begins her life anew with her man who has already 'gone native'. They become 'born-again' New Zealanders living in a gleaming white house where the mute Ada moves into the world of language, finding a new voice as she takes up her position as an encultured 'post-colonial'.

This romantic melodrama is set in a landscape where 'natives' provide the backdrop for the emotional drama of the principal white characters. The Maori are located on the margins of the film as the repositories of an authentic, unchanging and simple way of life; they play 'nature' to the white characters 'culture'. If we read The Piano as Ada McGrath's rite of passage from the twilight

gloom of Scotland to the bright, white place in Nelson, New Zealand, then the white settler fantasy of creating a 'New Jerusalem' is represented through the negotiation of the nature/culture divide. Ada McGrath and George Baines negotiate in different ways the nature/culture split in order to assume an indigenised pakeha identity. With her piano at the bottom of the sea and her severed finger sheathed in metal - a symbol perhaps of colonial lack - the film ends with Ada speaking of 'the silence where no sound hath been'. She has sacrificed her silence in order to take up her place in the new land. The ending suggests an attempt to articulate the perceived cultural emptiness which continues to haunt white New Zealand.

In The Piano Ada, as a symbol of white bourgeois femininity, has access to a spiritual world denied the other female characters in the film. Her emotions are expressed through a powerful fusion between the musical score and the movement of the camera. A recurrent motif in the film is the close-up of Ada's shimmering face, skin bleached out, eyes closed in rapture as she plays her piano. As she plays the camera circles her, caressing the bared shoulders and delicate stem of neck; her vulnerable spine ('good bones') is exposed and elided with the whiteness of her bodice. While the eroticised image of Ada appears translucent, fragile and free from blemish, the Maori women are desexualised through their representation as lank-haired, toothless and devoid of the conventional markers of femininity;



they are represented almost as 'anthropological' objects.

In this film, hair is an important signifier of the nature/culture opposition. Hair which has been 'worked on', aestheticised and femininised signifies culture; it is also used to symbolise Ada's sexual awakening. The camera continually fetishizes her elaborate coils - at one point the camera literally draws us into the coil at the back of Ada's head, as if giving us access to her emotional world. She finally 'lets her hair down' after her first sexual liaison with Baines. We see her and Flora, with their gleaming hair swirling around them as they tumble on the bed, bathed in a golden glow.

Ada's cultural and racial 'purity' - exemplified by her shimmering whiteness and her sublime relationship to her music - is reinforced by the class differences represented in the film. The two plump, white female servants are accorded the status of characters but like the Maori women they are desexualised. Morag - with her prominent facial mole and carefully positioned kiss curl - and Nessie with her high pitched mimicry, provide comic relief from the emotional preoccupations of Ada and her men. These women represent the lower orders and as such, exhibit a lack of 'refinement'. In one scene Morag urinates amongst the trees, her bodily functions serving to reinforce the high/low oppositions which mark out Ada's bourgeois femininity.

Throughout the film the primitivist discourses which construct this opposition are expressed through the juxtaposition of the repression of the white characters against the 'authenticity' of the Maori. With their bold, sexualised chat the Maori provide a textual echo for all that has been lost through 'civilisation'. This is an inversion of colonial constructions of the 'noble savage' with native peoples now privileged as the keepers of pre-modern values.

Baines bridges this nature/culture divide. His facial tattoos and his ability to speak Maori signify that he has 'gone native', while his 'self-fashioning' and attachments to the land construct him as a pakeha: a 'real New Zealander'. While never relinquishing his whiteness, he is able to arouse Ada's passion because he is closer to nature than Stewart. He too is a member of the lower orders; in an early scene Ada describes him as an 'oaf' because he is illiterate. She insists that he wash his hands before touching her piano. However, his baseness is constructed through the eroticisation of his body. In one scene we see him washing himself in the river while a group of Maori women discuss his sexual needs. Later he strips naked and wipes Ada's piano with his shirt.

Baines's affinity with the land and his easy relationship with the Maori stand in contrast to Stewart. While Baines's hut is surrounded by trees, Stewart's is set in a muddy clearing amongst burnt stumps. He complains to Baines: 'What do they (the Maoris) want the land for? They don't cultivate it or burn it back. How do

they even know it's theirs?' Through the primitivist inversion Stewart is increasingly shown to represent the 'bad' colonial Other and stands for all that is negative in the white coloniser. He is greedy for land, sexually repressed -the Maori continually refer to him as 'old Dry Balls' - and violent. His relationship to the land is one of brutality and exploitation and this is mirrored in his treatment of Ada.

As Sue Gillett usefully argues, The Piano links sexual and racial structures of domination, exploitation and dispossession:

Stewart's defensive negotiation of his sexuality parallels his efforts to keep himself aloof from the Maori, untouched by and ignorant of their culture. He rigidly erects boundaries between himself and others along the lines of race and sex. Unlike Baines he is unwilling or unable to play with identity, to risk being unfixed, to leave his boundaries unprotected. (Gillett, 1995: 284).

While Stewart exploits the bush, Ada and Flora work on and aestheticise the liminal space of the beach. Early on in the film, Ada's hoops are used as a shelter which is surrounded by a wall of gleaming shells, and in another scene they construct an enormous sea-horse from shells while the camera swirls overhead, erasing all traces of labour. It as if their femininity - played out through their emotions and aestheticised in the realm of culture - separates them from the degradations of colonialism; in this sense they are closer to nature.

Whiteness as purity is a recurring motif in the film. While the Maori are at one with the bush (to the extent that they are even visible) the film continually privileges whiteness through the play of light against dark, emphasising the binary oppositions at work in the text. This whiteness is enhanced by the use of filters, which means that while the darker skin tones of the Maori are barely discernible in the brooding shadows of the bush, the faces of Ada and Flora, framed by their bonnets, take on a luminous quality. The film's photographic director Stuart Dryburgh has described the use of 'naturalistic' lighting as an attempt to capture the 'authenticity' of the landscape:

We've tended to use strong colour accents in different parts of the film. We tried not to light the bush ourselves but to use natural light wherever possible. So we played it murky green and let the skin tones sit down amongst it. We tried to represent it honestly and let it be a dark place. (Campion, 1993: 141)

Dryburgh's technicist discourse naturalises the use of photographic technologies and codes which mediate visibility, desire and endow 'whiteness' with what Dyer, in a discussion of representations of 'white', has described as 'a glow and radiance that has correspondence with the transcendent rhetoric of popular Christianity.' (Dyer, 1988:63). This 'glow' of whiteness and its associations with light, purity and cleanliness recurs throughout the film, for example in an early scene when the Maori approach Ada and Flora on the beach exclaiming, 'They look like angels'. Later on in the film, Flora, caught rubbing

herself in a sexually explicit way against the trunks of trees with a group of Maori children, is forced by the repressed Stewart to scrub gleaming white suds into the tree trunks in the sombre twilight - an act of ritualised cleansing.

The primitivist discourses which construct the Maori as outside 'culture' are exemplified by the way in which the Maori are seemingly unable to distinguish between representations and the 'real'. When the Bluebeard shadow play is performed a group of Maori leap onto the stage to rescue the female performers. In fact, this staged performance foreshadows the moment when Stewart grabs his axe and sets off to sever Ada's finger. But in this scene the Maori, relegated to the narrational margins, remain mere witnesses to his actions - once more misreading the signs. This scene registers that a suspension of disbelief depends on a set of assumptions or white cultural codes that allow representations to be read as real without violating any anterior reality (Gordon, 1996: 200).

The cultural layering described within the film is not confined to its own codes however. The critical acclaim which surrounded the release of the film in Britain not only ignored the film's colonial setting but by focusing on links between The Piano and the English literary canon, Campion and her work were appropriated as distinctly 'European'. While this appropriation can be understood within the context of the relationship between the metropolitan centre and the periphery, historically the 'privileging norms' of the

European cultural canon have defined 'cultural value' in the colonial context, it also seemed to consolidate the 'whiteness' of the text. In a sense, the critical reception reinforced the way in which 'whiteness' is universalised in the film.. As Dyer argues:

This property of whiteness to be everything and nothing is the source of its representational power. (Dyer, 1988: 45).

The invisibility of white settler colonialism, was exemplified by the way in which The Piano was marketed in Britain. Publicity material and media coverage constructed the film for its viewing public as an art-house movie about nineteenth century sexual repression<sup>9</sup>. The focus on gender was heightened by media interest in Jane Campion as author.

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<sup>9</sup> In other words while the critical reception does not determine the way in which a film is read by audiences it certainly contributes to the context within which audiences respond.

The film's accolades were those conventionally reserved for high cultural texts: Campion's work was described in various broadsheet reviews as 'lyrical', 'sensitive', 'original' and 'spiritual'.<sup>10</sup> Her 'romantic vision' was compared to that of nineteenth century writers such as the Bronte sisters and Emily Dickinson. The hyperbole surrounding the film's release reached its peak in the Independent on Sunday which ran an extensive feature on Campion's life and work. Having described her looks as pre-Raphaelite (an unthreatening and fragile vision of white European femininity), it went on:

The Piano feels steeped in literary tradition, entirely original but rich in reverberations. It is Wuthering Heights, a romance of the soul with the wild New Zealand beaches standing in for the stark moors. It's Emily Dickinson, a romance of the soul with its wavering between ecstasy and terror, eroticism and renunciation. (Independent on Sunday, 17 October, 1993).

The credits at the end of The Piano acknowledge the assistance of Maori 'cultural advisers'. The use of 'cultural advisers' to guarantee the 'authenticity' of the Maori reinforces the discourses of primitivism in the film which construct the 'indigenous' people as the repository of unchanging traditional values, in harmony with nature, childlike, the textual echo of all that has been lost. (And importantly, the use of 'cultural advisers' also signals the way in which the politics of race in contemporary New Zealand inflects and problematises all areas of

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<sup>10</sup> The Independent 17 October, 1993, The Guardian 22 and 29 October 1993; Sunday Times 31 October, 1993 and Sight and Sound November, 1993.

cultural production). This particular version of Maoriness is reiterated in other texts connected with the film, for example in the production notes published along with the script where the 'authenticity' of the Maori on and off the screen is discussed:

In common with his character Baines, Harvey Keitel was struck by the way in which the Maori cast, in role and out of role, tended to have a more profound relationship to the earth and the spirits than the pakeha do. Keitel is quoted as saying: 'I was very affected by Tungia, the woman playing Hira in the film. She came down to the beach and the first thing she did was cross to the sea, bend over and sprinkle herself with water. And I said 'What are you doing'...and she said: 'I'm asking the sea to welcome me'. (Campion, 1993: 143).

The Maori are attributed with a timeless essence in The Piano; they are positioned as a collectivity outside of history. This primitive idealisation provides the back-drop for the 'self-fashioning' of Ada McGrath and George Baines: Ada whose colonial rite of passage enables her to discover her true femininity and Baines, who has undergone 'partial indigenisation', reinvent themselves as born-again pakeha. By restaging the colonial encounter the film indirectly addresses white New Zealand's crisis of identity; its reworking of the nature/culture trope provides a means of representing and affirming an 'indigenised' identity whilst at the same time providing for an international audience (at a time when the New Zealand economy was being renovated



for the penetration of international capital) a depoliticised version of nation untroubled by Maori claims to sovereignty.

### **Exhibiting Everyday 'Kiwi' Life**

The mundane and repetitive practices of everyday life (from the preparation and consumption of food to leisure pursuits based around family and community) are important aspects of 'local' culture which construct a sense of place and belonging. Given these practices are organised through rituals of consumption it follows that sets of values and meanings cluster around material objects.

Over and above their instrumental use, objects play an important part in constructing collective, shared memories. When the meaning of objects is reinscribed within collections, for example, they take on an 'aura' which is imbued with a temporal and spatial identity (Appardurai, 1996; Hebdige, 1988). As Radley argues

In the very variability of objects, in the ordinariness of their consumption and in the sensory richness of relationships people enjoy through them, they are fitted to be later re-framed as material images for reflection and recall (Radley, 1990: 57).

In 1990, a touring exhibition, funded by New Zealand's Queen Elizabeth Arts Council and entitled New Zealand, New Zealand: In Praise of Kiwiana, constructed a nostalgic version of 'belonging' based on the re-presentation of

commodities from the post-war period of the fifties and sixties.

The exhibition was aimed at 'Kiwis', a colloquial term which refers to all New Zealanders but which, in the context of this exhibition, uses the invocation, 'we, the ordinary New Zealanders' to denote a collectivity of unreconstructed white New Zealanders who are emphatically not 'new Pakeha'. The collection recontextualises everyday objects for self-narrations of identity through the valorisation of 'ordinariness'. The collection offers white New Zealanders the possibility of writing themselves individually into a narrative of belonging, through their relationship to everyday mass-produced objects, endowed with a national specificity, which function as souvenirs of an 'authentic', albeit recent, past.

The timing of the exhibition was significant; it coincided with the sequecentennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. As the nation celebrated its new 'biculturalism' the exhibition revealed a taxonomy of objects and social practices which valorised a particularly conservative form of populist modernity. It comprised an archive of domestic objects which shared a common characteristic; they carried the patina of a by-gone and more confident era when white New Zealanders were untroubled by issues of identity and belonging.

The objects were reproduced as memorabilia commemorating an era of 'certainty'. In the introductory section, the exhibition's catalogue

makes this aim explicit, suggesting that for white New Zealanders the fifties and sixties were a period of continuity and innocence: 'ahead of us lay the cold winds of international economics (deregulation), social divisiveness (biculturalism), the realisation that Manila is closer than Manchester ('Asianisation')'<sup>11</sup> (Barnett, 1990:2).

While the 'primitivist turn' of the new Pakeha valorises pre-modern ways of life based on a return to nature; this assemblage of 'Kiwiani' constructed local versions of a tradition which transformed everyday commodities into folkloric objects:

There is a growing concern for traditional folklore and imagery. It is to celebrate Kiwiana, the New Zealand 'difference', that this exhibition has been compiled. In the case of Kiwiana, not all of it has survived the global-villagising of television, travel and urbanisation (Barnett, 1990: 9).

In the catalogue the curators acknowledge their personal investment in the collection; it 'lingers over the 1950s and 1960s ...because this period spanned the authors' formative years, their earliest memories' (ibid). Thus the exhibition's celebration of the supposedly ordinary and everyday (the normative) is based on both a nostalgia for a period when the national economy was sheltered from foreign intervention by the highly protectionist policies of the National Party (from the vantage point of the deregulated

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<sup>11</sup> Italics mine.

nineties the period has been reinvented as a 'Golden Era'), and for a time when white boys (i.e. the curators) inhabited a world of clearly defined gender roles and ethnic identities. The collection speaks to particular sections of the white population, addressing the unease that many have felt about deregulation - as Kelsey puts it 'there has been a pervasive fear amongst whites that they're losing control of their country' (Kelsey, 1993:114). But perhaps more importantly it seeks to counter the 'primitivist turn' of urban liberals (the new 'pakehas') by representing an era when a white 'kiwi lifestyle' was in the ascendant.

The catalogue provides the context for the celebration and recuperation of a particular taste culture - lower middle class 'kitsch' - which is the focus of the exhibition. Featuring photographs of scantily clad marching girls, the walls of weatherboard houses displaying multi-coloured, fibreglass butterflies (emblematic of a formerly denigrated sixties suburban aesthetic), and Zephyr cars (associated with a particular kind of sixties machismo), the catalogue offers a 'sub-cultural' challenge to both the values and tastes of bourgeois 'pakeha' culture and the new-found authority and cultural 'purity' of Maori collections.

Objects in the exhibition serve as traces of 'authentic', everyday experience - series of cards collected from packets of breakfast cereals, labels and containers bearing logos for 'local' brands of imported products such as soap, tea and

chicory. It is the design and marketing which inflects these commodities with a local identity. The transfer of individual consumer items (such as bars of soap and tins of nugget) away from the sphere of mass production and consumption into the collection imbues them with the 'folklorish' aura of traditional 'craft'. The branding insignias - old-fashioned typographies and non-plastic packaging - signify a form of commodified heritage. The extent to which this commodification was used to energise ideas of nation was exemplified by the release of a set of postage stamps in 1994 which used artifacts from the exhibition to illustrate aspects of national life. The stamps featured 'national' clothing and footwear in the form of swanndrai (heavy duty check shirts, jandals (plastic thongs), gumboots (wellingtons) and 'national' food: kiwifruit, pavlova, fish and chips, and hokey-pokey ice-cream.

In the exhibition New Zealand, New Zealand: In Praise of Kiwiana tins of Edmonds' 'Sure to Rise' baking powder, Watties canned green peas, bars of Sunlight soap were accompanied by advertising logos and jingles illustrating the extent to which corporate discourses draw on nationalist tropes to 'brand' products. The Watties display includes an aural presentation of a radio jingle from the 1960s aimed at the housewife (that most potent symbol of gendered and domesticated certainty):

If it's rich in flavour and it suits the  
innerman,  
If it saves you money in your household plan,  
If it's nourishing, flourishing, goodness in  
the can, Then it must be Watties!

It is worth noting the importance of Watties here. It was a New Zealand-owned company which was taken over during the 1980s by the international food conglomerate Heinz. In a small place like New Zealand (where there has always been limited range and therefore competition between brands) Watties products appear in contemporary culture as signifiers of a particular local experience.

In the exhibition the domestic division of labour is celebrated through the rituals of cleaning, cooking and shopping with the emphasis on 'home-baking' as the essential aspect of 'home-making'. In the context of growing multinational control of the food industry, the corner grocery shop and the milk bar are romanticised as timeless places:

In the 1950s the grocery store was an unhurried, dusty and aromatic place. The main physical features were the long worn Kauri<sup>12</sup> counter almost hidden behind stacks of biscuit tins...on the counter were the Avery scales and hand-cranked National cash register, the bacon slicer and a simple wire device for cutting cheese. There were rolls of wrapping paper and a sleeping resident cat (ibid: 89).

The exhibition re-works versions of dominant nationalist myths through the organisation of categories distinguishing various zones of everyday 'Kiwi' life. The farm, the beach and the suburb delineating separate (gendered) worlds of leisure and consumption: for men (drinking, sport, DIY), women (cleaning, cooking, child-rearing) and

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<sup>12</sup> A native timber.

children (toys, confectionary, ice-cream). This is a representation of a 'simpler' time when clear divisions appeared to exist between work/leisure, public/private, outside/inside, and of course, men and women - divisions which have been disrupted by feminism, 'bi-culturalism' and globalisation.

Underpinning the exhibition is the myth of (male) settler resilience and ingenuity. As the curator, Richard Wolfe, writes in the catalogue, the primary aim of the exhibition is to show there are 'local solutions...local ways of doing things'<sup>13</sup>. To this end the catalogue begins with a paeon to the stripped-down life of the settlers:

By and large the bits and pieces that go to make up New Zealand's popular life and customs are pretty robust - the sheer isolation of the country saw to that. The early settlers had only what they brought with them; anything else they had to make themselves (Barnett, 1995:9).

This mythologised positioning of white settlers existing in a utopian space existing outside economic relations is a reiteration of the tropes analysed in King's 'being Pakeha'; the disavowal of any links with colonialism through the myth of the settler as the individuated 'Man Alone'. The myth of settler resilience continues to have contemporary resonances. 'Kiwi ingenuity' is celebrated in the exhibition by such artifacts as the 'Taranaki Gate' (the colloquial expression for any farm gate 'cobbled together' from scraps of wood and wire). The emphasis is on practical

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<sup>13</sup>Quoted in a Reuters news agency report on 26 September, 1990.

solutions rather than aesthetics; as the catalogue details in a section entitled 'In the Sticks':

Number 8 fencing wire has come to be synonymous with Kiwi versatility and innovation.... With a piece of number 8 and a kerosene tin there wasn't much you couldn't do. Rural recorder Jim Henderson once published a list of 30 applications of kero tin from the basic bucket (with number 8 handle) to cake tins, roasting pans and nesting boxes to ash trays, chimneys and a portable toilet. (ibid: 155)

Rural 'bricolage' - now recuperated and celebrated as Kiwi 'folklore' - exemplifies the exhibition's focus on objects and rituals which valorise ('good, honest') manual labour over more sophisticated technologies. These artefacts embody an anti-intellectual conservatism which challenges bourgeois discourses of taste and cultural value linked to the new age primitivism of the indigenised 'Pakeha' identity. In the exhibition, artefacts are recontextualised to challenge bourgeois discourses of taste and cultural value associated in New Zealand with the 'New Age' primitivism of liberal, urban 'pakeha' who, refashioning themselves in terms of a spiritualised relationship with nature and the land, participate in consumption practices which place considerable emphasis on 'natural' materials and practices such as the use of native timbers, non-synthetic textiles and design features incorporating 'ethniced' aesthetics in the home.

The collection of 'Kiwiana' is imbued with a nostalgia for a brief period in the nation's history (the first two decades post-war) when white New Zealanders lived in place known



colloquially as 'Godzone Country'.<sup>14</sup> The subsequent economic and political transformations brought about by globalisation and biculturalism have disrupted the certainties of this period - in a sense the 'Kiwi lifestyle' has been 'colonised'. But while the 'Kiwiana' exhibition looked to the past for succour the 1990s saw the emergence of texts which tackled the crisis of 'whiteness' without recourse to nostalgia.

### **The Dialogics of 'Race' - Alison McClean's Crush**

Unlike Once Were Warriors and The Piano which, in very different ways, represent essentialised versions of 'local' ethnicities, Crush (Alison McClean, 1992) offers a more complex depiction of contemporary gendered and racial identities in New Zealand.<sup>15</sup> The film opens up a space for an ambivalent version of 'New Zealandness' which explores ethnicity in relation to themes already examined in this chapter, in particular landscape and nature and gender.

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<sup>14</sup> New Zealand is referred to as 'Godzone' a contraction of Thomas Bracken's nineteenth century poem 'God's Own Country'.

<sup>15</sup> The film was, according to British critics, flawed in terms of characterisation and 'narrative drive'. As with The Piano critics tended to ignore the references to New Zealand's troubled colonial setting. See for example the review in Sight and Sound, BFI, April, 1993.

By exposing the tensions generated between three 'local' characters (all white) and an American 'femme fatale', the film comments on shibboleths of 'identity' in New Zealand, at the same time addressing wider issues relating to the flow of global culture in the context of a 'weak' national culture. In a sense it interrogates the way in which everyday life is lived out, in part, through representation. The film can be read as a comment on Meaghan Morris's claim that antipodean whites are both 'colonisers and colonised'<sup>16</sup> ; exploring the way in which white New Zealanders are simultaneously colonisers in relation to the Maori and 'colonised' by representations produced elsewhere (Morris, 1992:471)<sup>17</sup>.

An instability of identity is embedded in the film's structure, particularly in the way it plays with genre. The film begins as a road movie; a local journalist Christina (Donagh Rees) is travelling with her American friend Lane (Marcia Gay Harden) to Rotorua to interview prize-winning author, Colin (William Zappa). They are on a quest initiated by Christina to discover the truth about her fantasy figure. The glove compartment of her car is stuffed with newspaper clippings about the author's life.

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<sup>16</sup> Morris has described the 'antipodes' as places which are:

Dubiously postcolonial, prematurely postmodern, constitutively multicultural but still predominantly white.....we oscillate historically between identities as coloniser and colonised(Morris:1992:471)

<sup>17</sup> As Mark Williams writes:

Living in and writing about New Zealand are activities governed by the rooted prejudice among New Zealanders that their experience exists inescapably on the peripheries, at a remove from the centre, away from reality itself. (Williams, 1995:44)

The 'road movie' ends abruptly when the car, driven recklessly by Lane, overturns on a corner. Christina is hospitalised with severe brain damage while Lane escapes shocked but unhurt. At this point the road movie ends and 'horror' takes over, movement is replaced by stasis.

After the crash the American woman retreats to a motel and then decides to keep the appointment with the author. Arriving at his house she meets his teenage daughter, Angela (Caitlin Bossley). The two strike up a friendship. Some time later Lane seduces Colin and moves into the house. Angela, who has a crush on Lane, begins to visit Christina regularly in hospital.

The palsied Christina has completely lost control of her bodily functions; she can do no more than grunt and dribble as she emerges from the coma. Angela, jealous of Lane's relationship with her father, primes Christina with a hatred of Lane as the person responsible for her injuries.

When Colin, Lane and Angela go to stay at a lakeside cottage Angela arranges for Christina to join them. Both Lane and Colin are shocked by the arrival of the wheelchair-bound woman. When they go on an outing to a waterfall they arrive at a look-out point where Christina staggers from her wheelchair to give Lane a fatal shove over the parapet into a ravine below.

The film is set in one of New Zealand's key tourist resorts, Rotorua. This setting provides

an ironic comment on the incongruity between the way in which the place is represented for tourists through the packaging of 'traditional Maori culture' and 'nature', and the banality of everyday life in small-town New Zealand.

My analysis of the film is predicated on the possibility of a reading of the cinematic text which requires 'local' knowledge. There is a sense in which referents embedded in the film's margins signify a subversive construction of received representations of 'New Zealand'. For example, throughout the film the viewer is offered snapshots which ironise these versions of New Zealand in relation to Maori 'traditions', nature and the landscape. A roadside display, featuring a mannequin dressed in a 'traditional' Maori piupiu (grass skirt), suggests the casual way in which 'Maoriness' is commodified while a shot of tui (native birds) frosted into the glass pane of Colin's front door makes passing reference to the traffic between touristic constructions of nature and suburban kitsch.

References to contemporary political struggles in New Zealand are almost subliminal. In a scene where Lane seduces a local in the car park of a discotheque, the exchange between the two takes place in front of a wall on which is painted a graffitied sign - 'Land of the Wrong White Crowd' (a play on the translation of the Maori word for New Zealand 'Aotearoa' - Land of the Long White Cloud).

As the credits roll the narrative begins with Lane and Christina in the car driving towards the town of Rotorua, through unremarkable farmland lit by a wintry sun. The first view of Rotorua is a long shot of the city with a large sewage treatment tank foregrounded beside a sign reading - Haere-mai - (Maori for 'welcome'). This downplaying of landscape (sumptuous landscapes are as ubiquitous to New Zealand films as heritage is to British productions), continues throughout the film. When the American woman remarks: 'It's so empty' (a comment on both the landscape and the lifestyle) Christina's reply hints at themes of spiritual emptiness and sexual poverty (the failure of New Jerusalem) which continues to haunt white New Zealanders:

McCahon<sup>18</sup> said it was a landscape for too few lovers. It's not like Australia, no predators, no poisonous spiders; it's totally benign, paradisal.

Rotorua is an area of extensive thermal activity where steam rises from cracks in the pavement; boiling mud pools and geysers dot the landscape. The opening credits are superimposed on a close-up shot of a boiling pool. In this shot, the surface of the ochre-coloured mud pool is punctured by the rhythmic and sinister bubbling of the liquid. This is a place where the skin of the earth is ruptured by the smouldering elements beneath; the terrain is unstable and in the film the volatility of these natural forces provides a metaphor for the way in which Lane's arrival disrupts life in

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<sup>18</sup> A contemporary New Zealand painter.

small-town New Zealand. The presence of the white, American woman signifies wider issues relating to the dominance of American culture in New Zealand. Her power to seduce both Colin and his daughter Angela, is less a comment on her polymorphous sexuality than on her starring role as a Hollywood-style 'femme fatale'. Their desire for the sophisticated American suggests the way in which representations, (in Crush symbolised by Lane as female icon) offer a scopophilic escape from the stifling parochialism of small-town New Zealand.<sup>19</sup> For Colin, an inept and failing figure of white masculinity, and the adolescent Angela, awkward and plain, the tantalising figure of Lane wafts, like an apparition, into their suburban lives.

Colin (whose failure as a writer is signalled by his day job in a fish factory) is mesmerised by her. His clumsy and gauche behaviour (in an early love-making scene with Lane he slides away from her down the hillside on his plastic raincoat; in another he trips over beside the bed, one leg trapped inside his trousers as he attempts to undress) parodies dominant constructions of white masculinity - virile, heroic and self-contained.

At one point in the film Lane and Angela visit to a tourist site called 'Hell's Kitchen', a replica Maori village built around a boiling mud pool. The visit to Hell's Kitchen is juxtaposed with the drab and unaestheticised domestic space where

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<sup>19</sup> At another level this can be read also as a comment on the New Zealand film industry; in order for locally produced films to compete on the international market they invariably need to feature 'foreign' actors.

Colin waits for the American woman in a 'kitchen hell' devoid of women.

Commenting on the geysers at Hell's Kitchen, Angela tells Lane 'They're not nearly as big as they used to be', to which Lane replies ironically: 'This country's obsessed by size'. This is a moment of wonderful prescience in the film; a comment on the disillusionment of adolescence when the place known as 'Gods Own Country' reveals its insignificance; on the excruciating insecurities of a nation which perceives itself to be peripheral (and is therefore obsessed with its size) and obviously, on the masculine phallo-centrism.

As in The Piano the Maori provide a backdrop for this film, but in this instance their marginality comments on both their political and economic exclusion and the appropriation of 'Maori traditions' in dominant versions of 'New Zealandness'. In a sense the liminality of the Maori people represented in the film creates a space for an interrogation of the way in which 'whiteness' is centred within narratives of nation. For example stereotypical forms of Maori culture appear in the film refracted through the television screen. In the hospital, a set in the corner of the ward broadcasts a Maori concert party performing a 'poi' dance; in another scene, set in a bar, a pre-match 'haka' is glimpsed. The 'constructedness' of Maori cultural traditions as seen on the screen, contrasts with the 'ordinariness' of the Maori characters within the exegesis of the film itself.

Much of the film is set in a hospital where two patients lie in adjacent rooms but significantly, never meet. Their incarceration and their separation represents racialised 'dysfunction' in New Zealand. In one room, lies a Maori man called Horse, emasculated by a broken leg held in traction and in the other, the grotesquely disfigured white woman, Christina.

Horse, is constantly surrounded by a family group who spend their time laughing and singing. This stereotypical image of Maori sociability and physicality is parodied in a number of ways. The adolescent Angela is drawn by the clamour emanating from Horse's room; she spends some time watching the group through a crack in the door. When she finally makes Horse's acquaintance a teasing intimacy quickly develops between them. However, instead of seducing Angela, Horse (with his leg encased in plaster) finally asks the girl to scratch his itching thigh with a knitting needle. His seemingly predatory overtures turn out to be nothing more than embarrassment over the need to deal with an itch. Here the film constructs a scenario (in this case, an apparent seduction scene) which is then parodied as Horse is revealed as a humorous and gentle character.

The effect of this scene is magnified when shortly afterwards a white doctor appears wearing a carved Maori pendant around his neck. He informs the female nurse her that Christina's recovery will be a spiritual matter. As he and a nurse struggle to get Christina onto her feet he tells her:



We've got a lot to learn from the tangata whenua...they talk about wairua - the spirit- she needs spiritual sustenance and that's where the family comes in, the whanau...

At this point Christina defecates on his shoes. The scene is both shocking (not least because the representation of defecation is cinematically taboo) and amusing, as the doctor's political correctness is subverted by the patient's uncontrolled bowel movement. The doctor's exhortation suggests that Christina's palsied body is a metaphor for the contemporary condition of white New Zealanders who have somehow lost control. However, unlike Baines in The Piano, the doctor's ethnic self-fashioning positions him within this film as a figure of ridicule.

The film begins as a road movie; the characters embark on a journey of self-discovery which is quickly disrupted by the crash. For the white New Zealand women, Christina, movement turns to stasis at the hands of the American women driving the car. For the rest of the film the white woman's palsied body stands in for a contorted and moribund whiteness which can be read as the contemporary condition of pakeha New Zealanders. As Lane works her magic in the town Christina struggles to regain control of her body and to make herself understood. When she finally kills Lane by pushing her over the cliff the three local characters are left gazing over the precipice as the end credits roll.

While the film is flawed in terms of its uneven narrative drive, it is notable as an attempt to disrupt the way in which the 'burden of representation' falls automatically onto the Maori who function metonymically as 'ethnics' in dominant representations of New Zealand. In this film the American woman stands in for the power of Western culture while the white New Zealand characters in the film are unformed, tentative and awkward, their lack stands in powerful contrast to the Maori characters who appear profoundly at ease with themselves.

This chapter has investigated the 'plasticity' of whiteness as a dominant racialised identity which has the capacity to remould and reinvent its parameters in reponse to different historical and cultural conjunctures.

White settler culture in New Zealand has been marked by an ambivalent attitude towards itself, poised between the metropolitan centre ('Europe') from which it seeks differentiation and the indigenous peoples who serve as a reminder of colonial exploitation. While historically 'whiteness' has been naturalised through hegemonic constructions of Empire and nation (with the the state drawing its power historically from the universalised 'Western' values of civilisation and democracy), in recent times the recognition of Maori claims to 'treaty justice' and the perceived betrayal of Britain has left the dominant group no longer able to seek succour as 'European' and forced instead to negotiate multiple versions of

'whiteness' which disavow the centre and any notions of supremacy whilst continuing to articulate settler entitlements to the land. As we shall see in the next chapter these 'localised' constructions are in constant dialogue with transnational, globalising forms of identity circulating in a variety of cultural forms.

## Chapter 5

### Narrations of Nation

Haere Mai, God Defend, silver fern,  
Kowhai, Southern Cross,  
Sheep and mates,  
Plunket, ANZACS, corrugated iron,  
Swanndris, gumboots, marching girls,  
meat pies, Sure to Rise and beer  
Mt Cook, Tip Top, hokey pokey,  
she'll be right, All Blacks, baches  
and beaut.<sup>1</sup>

Cultural identities are not obvious or 'natural' propensities of populations living in territory delineated as a national space. In the preceding chapters we have seen how Maori and Pakeha identities, 'invented' as distinct groupings through the processes of modernity, have been made and remade in response to economic, political and cultural shifts.

In recent years, 'biculturalism' has transformed the unifying myth of 'one nation, one people' into the binary 'two peoples one nation'. This shift to 'biculturalism' has also challenged the historic formation which centred the white majority within narratives of nation. Fuelled by 'indigenous' claims to a powerful cultural

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<sup>1</sup> New Zealand 'traditions, images and customs' listed in the catalogue of an exhibition of local popular culture (Barnett, 1990:11).

tradition, the 'Maori Renaissance' has brought about an anxious debate about white identity in New Zealand focused on the question 'What is Pakeha culture?' (King,1991; Novitz,1989)

This chapter examines the difficulties involved in attempting to define 'Pakeha culture', arguing that constructions of 'whiteness' in New Zealand are in a sense 'janus-faced'; looking outwards from a peripheral position (in terms of global circuits of culture goods) for legitimation through cross-border flows of images and narratives, and inwards for 'indigenising' symbols which can be appropriated for local forms of ethnic self-fashioning.

Benedict Anderson has described national identity as a particular way of 'imagining' made possible through the mass consumption of forms (such as the novel and the newspaper) through which the nation may be experienced as a 'deep horizontal comradeship' existing in 'homogenous empty time' (Anderson:1996:6). Anderson's formulation is useful in detailing the complex ways in which modernity (defined by secular rationalism, a calendrical perception of time, mass literacy and mass communications) has given rise to collective forms of identification through the consumption of hegemonic cultural forms, enabling the nation to be imagined as a bounded, unified space.

In New Zealand, however, the predominantly one-way flow of cultural products from other places, together with local struggles over ethnicity, have meant that the 'imagined community' of nation has

always been fragmented and discontinuous. There the 'constructedness' of nation is all too apparent, (the place has a short and uncomfortable history), and local versions of 'whiteness' have been historically based on the maintenance of racialised boundaries and myths of common descent extending beyond the territory of nation back to the imperial heartland.

As we have seen in previous chapters, the civilising mission in the colony valorised 'whiteness' as a repertoire of behaviour, rules and ideas organised around the notion of autonomous individuals regulated by codes operating in both public and private spheres of national life. In other words notions of 'whiteness' underpinned the rational organisation of everyday colonial life, administered through independent spheres of social and cultural activity designed to 'safeguard' the moral and spiritual fibre of the nation with the Maori 'abjected' as inferior. As Said suggests, national culture operates as a system of exclusions which define the limits of the national 'imaginary'. He describes it as a process legislated from above but enacted through the polity in order that:

such things as anarchy, disorder, irrationality, inferiority, bad taste and immorality are identified and then deposited outside the culture.... kept there by the power of the state and its institutions (Said, 1983: 94).

Historically nation-building in New Zealand involved the centring of white settlers within narratives which interpellated them as both

'citizens' and imperial subjects through the production of 'creolised' forms of Europeaness. Narratives of '(white) nation' have been reproduced within the educational system (in particular through standardised curricula in English and History) while in the domain of 'high' culture, local cultural production (particularly in the spheres of literature, art and cinema) has always bound up with imported canons of taste and value. Although, in the colonial context, cultural forms have addressed distinctive national preoccupations (most notably a concern with the specificities of 'place') the forms themselves are institutionalised by repertoires of taste and value measured against norms defined elsewhere (Ashcroft, 1989).

For example, the national 'structure of feeling' expressed in literary form, is bound up with the way in which the canonical texts of English literature have been taught in schools; while the local literary establishment (supported by systems of patronage in the form of grants and prizes to authors) has institutionalised the reproduction of these forms (Williams, 1995). Similarly the cultural competencies required by producers and critics working in broadcasting and film are based on dominant practices which have been imported but local funding policies have inflected with a specifically 'national' content.

While national imaginings are always geographically delimited, or as Anderson puts it, 'no nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind' (Anderson, 1996:7), in New Zealand, the

creolised culture of the white settler majority has historically been based on a shared language (English) and a shared myth of descent (European) which has resulted in constructions which have been energised more by a 'global imaginary' (based on versions of 'whiteness') than a local 'imagined community'.

Thus when applied to a marginalised locality such as New Zealand, the notion of an 'imagined community' needs to be considered in relation to the peripheral context within which cultural production and consumption takes place. Local cultural production competes unevenly with a flow of artefacts from elsewhere. As a result, forms of national culture are relatively weak, suggesting a more complex formulation of 'imagined community' is necessary - one which addresses the extent to which the 'local' is produced through the 'indigenisation' of globally circulating narratives and taste cultures (Morley 1996a).

Although forms of pageantry and 'pseudo-tradition', (exemplified by a repertoire of symbols and rituals such the flag and anthem, public holidays, and the rituals surrounding sporting events), provide a focus for collective national identifications, the country's colonial legacy has meant that the even the most fundamental signifiers of nation (such as the currency, the flag and postage stamps) have been inscribed with imperial iconography. New Zealand's currency, symbol of the 'national economy', bore the British Queen's head on one side until 1990 while the national flag connotes 'New Zealand of



the South' with a Union Jack nuzzling the top left corner in a sea of blue overlaid with a five-star Southern Cross.

At the same time, the process of nation-building in the colony required a means to delineate the 'uniqueness' of the national collectivity within the context of strong imperial links with Britain. Discourses of national unity have been constructed through particular forms of a 'national popular', disseminated through the media, the educational system and the invented traditions of the state, which is based on a 'New Zealandness' defined as something more distinctive than an impoverished version of 'Britishness'.

In order to achieve this distinctiveness, Maori cultural forms have been appropriated in various ways. Maori kowhaiwhai (scrolls) have been used on banknotes and stamps, albeit as the border design for framing representations of enduring colonial icons such as the British monarch and the explorer, Captain James Cook (Thomas, 1995:91) while 'indigenous' songs and dances furnish the symbolic regalia of nation while the tourist industry reproduces an internationally recognised repertoire of 'miniaturised' Maori artefacts - greenstone and bone pendants, flax bags, and wooden carvings - as souvenirs of the nation (Stewart, 1984).

Clearly the impact of uneven global cultural flows on a small place like New Zealand, means that white identities have been reconstituted at the 'local' level by universalised versions of

'whiteness'. This chapter examines the interplay between global structures, such as multinational communication industries, and national institutional formations in producing culturally meaningful 'local' narratives.

A tension, which has existed between state regulation of the public sphere (limited by the weak tax-base of a small population) and the trans-national commodification of culture, has been exacerbated in recent years by a radical programme of deregulation in New Zealand. Control of all forms of media has been transferred to foreign-owned companies suggesting new and different issues in relation to identity construction, namely the extent to which the 'deterritorialisation' of culture has given rise to the fragmented and shifting constructions of 'postmodern identities'.

The instability of national culture in New Zealand highlights the way in which any notion of an interpretative community based around the nation is too homogenising. Anderson's concept of an 'imagined community' fails to deal with the centrality of dominant and 'normalising' representations (in circulation globally) which provide a repertoire of images and narratives valorising the bourgeois lifestyle enjoyed by privileged clusters of consumers. In the context of New Zealand's economic and social demographics, such a repertoire privileges 'whiteness'. How do such constructions feed into, and reflect, what Bhabha has described as 'the complex strategies of cultural identification and discursive address

that function in the name of 'the people' or 'the nation'? (Bhabha,1991:291)

Focusing on the slippery concept of 'national culture', this chapter draws on examples from key cultural institutions - museums, film and broadcasting - to show how, despite attempts to define a 'common culture', any sense of 'nation' based on collective memories and an idea of common destiny, continues to be fractured and discontinuous.

The first section examines the way in which 'collecting' - the gathering up of possessions in arbitrary systems of value and meaning - continues to be a crucial aspect of identity formation in New Zealand (Clifford, 1988: 217).

Museums have played a central role in defining hegemonic versions of nation and have therefore been sites of struggle over competing definitions of national culture. Historically museum collections, constructed within the rule-governed systems of anthropology and art, have been organised through hierarchies of difference which, in New Zealand, have marked out the shifting parameters of 'Maori' and 'European' culture. In ethnological collections Maori artefacts have been used metonymically to fix 'tribal' forms as specimens of an authentic, pre-modern culture existing outside the time of the nation, while European/Western art has been classified within a canon defined by the teleological narrative of art historical discourses (Clifford,1988:192).

In ethnological terms the 'modern' culture of the white settler majority has been unrepresentable but with the nation's recent 'bicultural turn', museums have become sites where the contemporary struggle over definitions of national culture have been played out. This section examines the complex tensions underpinning the representation of biculturalism in New Zealand's new national museum - Te Papa Tongarewa.<sup>2</sup> The museum, which opened in February, 1998 on a prime waterfront location in Wellington, represents a substantial state investment in a new version of nation. In order to construct a monument to the nation's bicultural 'settlement', a version of 'whiteness' has been presented alongside Maori culture in the museum - in a sense Maori and Pakeha have been 'indigenised' by the rhetoric of 'two peoples, one nation' <sup>3</sup>

The second section explores the institutional structures of film and broadcasting, analysing the ways in which the texts of cinema, television and advertising are produced and circulate at the local, national and global levels. The one-way flow of information, images and professional cultures (all supported by international capital flows) tends to deterritorialise cultural production (Hannerz, 1991:117; King, 1993:10). This section argues that the cultural forms of modernity have to a certain extent been 'indigenised' through regulation, subsidy and quota systems. with the New Zealand state acting

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<sup>2</sup> Translated as 'the repository of things precious'.

<sup>3</sup> The museum's website can be found at:  
<http://www.tepapa.govt.nz>.

as a 'broker', rather than a 'player', between the trans-national and the local.

In the spheres of broadcasting and film, the protection of 'national culture' has been justified through a rhetoric which variously emphasises notions of originality, authenticity and independence in order to safeguard a cultural formation perceived to be under siege. Recently, deregulation has transformed the media in New Zealand with free-market nostrums of 'choice' and consumer freedom being deployed to legitimate the dramatic decoupling of links between media ownership in all spheres - newspapers, publishing, television and radio - from the regulatory power of the state.

The concept of 'national cinema' is examined to show how globalised systems of cultural production, distribution and consumption are 'creolised' at the national level. This section analyses the documentary Cinema of Unease (Neill, 1994) - funded and produced by the British Film Institute - to highlight the complex interplay of global/local within cinema defined as a national institution.

The ubiquity of television in everyday life means that the medium provides a powerful means for symbolic modes of participation in the national community, not least because the routines of broadcasting (the way in which programme schedules have shaped and reflected the patterns of everyday life) play an important role in constructing national communities of viewers and listeners

(Scannell, 1988). However, in terms of content, New Zealand television broadcasters rely on imported products - mainly British and American - to fill the schedules.

While the state has historically attempted to protect local cultural production through funding, regulation and quota systems, there is evidence that New Zealand audiences, used to a diet of imported film and televisual material, have been resistant to locally produced artefacts which mimic 'foreign' genres. Within this context the analysis of the complex notion of a 'national' audience is crucial; to what extent does the 'indigenisation' of forms rely on the meaning-making of 'interpretative communities' whose consumption of cultural texts is determined by their position within a social and spatial formation?

Historically New Zealand broadcasting has tended to address the nation as a collectivity predominantly in the 'interstitial' spaces of television flow; through station/channel branding, advertising and sub-genre such as local news and weather. Following deregulation there has been a renewed emphasis on uniting dispersed communities of viewers through 'live' events, such as sporting contests and charity fundraising 'telethons', which construct 'moments' inviting particular forms of national identification.

This chapter will show how the global/local nexus is mediated within cultural industries - each of which is operating in a specific political and

economic context. It will argue that with the reconfiguration of New Zealand as a 'bicultural' nation, the production and circulation of cultural artefacts addressing 'the people' or 'the nation', operate through a complex matrix of racialised, gendered and class-based distinctions which continue to privilege hegemonic versions of 'whiteness' while incorporating the new commitment to 'biculturalism'.

### **Exhibiting Ethnicity at Te Papa Tongarewa**

Museums have been described as 'secular temples to the nation' providing the means by which a nation represents its relationship to its own history and to that of 'other' cultures (Hutcheon, 1994:209). As authoritative public spaces (institutionalised as apolitical, objective and empirical), museums function as monuments to the nation and as such they have played a pivotal role in the formation of the modern state. Their imposing architecture and prime metropolitan siting, together with an interior space designed to regulate forms of behaviour for visitors, variously positioned as 'citizens' or 'tourists' have endowed them with an authority and historic role unlike any other public institution (Karp, 1991).

Historically, national collections (organised within the disciplinary distinctions of art, ethnology and natural history) represent power/knowledge relations through the generic delineation of familiar hierarchies and exclusions: men over women, European over non-European, modern over pre-modern, high art over

traditional crafts. Thus the collections themselves, in terms of both content and presentation, invest artefacts with particular meanings which are, more often than not, legacies of a colonial history, while the history of the acquisition of artefacts themselves tends to be erased. Tribal grievances considered by the Waitangi Tribunal have included claims for the return of artefacts confiscated by the colonisers, often as trophies of war during the nineteenth century. Many of these - including a meeting house displayed in London's Victoria and Albert Museum<sup>4</sup> - have been returned to the tribes as museological practice has been forced to consider the politics and ethics of collecting (Allen, 1998: 144).

National museums in New Zealand have been established at key historical moments. For example, during the decade prior to the centenary of the Treaty of Waitangi there was an intense period of cultural nationalism in New Zealand. In 1936 the Centennial Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs was established in order to develop a sense of nationhood. The setting up of the Centennial Branch which, within a decade, had produced the 11-volume series Making New Zealand, a centennial atlas and founded the national archives and a Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, coincided with the development a national museum and gallery in Wellington

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<sup>4</sup> Mataatua was installed in the courtyard of Victoria and Albert Museum in 1882. Following the recommendations of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1992 the house was returned to its tribal owners in Whakatane who have subsequently allowed it to be exhibited in Te Papa Tongarewa (Allen, 1998: 152).



(Oliver, 1984; Phillips, 1996). The National Art Gallery and Museum opened in the capital in 1936. The building's architecture and the collections housed within, were shaped by the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion at that time. The architecture drew on neo-classical motifs - the front colonnade was modelled on the portico of a Greek temple - signifying the nation state's 'civilisation' and power. On the front facade of the building, an inscription dedicating the building 'to the services of Art and Science' was embellished with icons relating to the various 'fields' represented within the museum and gallery; painting was depicted by a palette; sculpture by a 'roman' bust (toga-clad and bearded); architecture by a building; and ethnology with a tattooed Maori head.

This depiction of a Maori head highlights the way in which New Zealand's museum collections have represented 'Maori culture'. The heterogeneity of 'European' culture (exemplified in this case, by the references to painting, sculpture, architecture) stands in contrast to ethnology's construction of 'the Maori', essentialised as an homogenous object of study with the tattooed head displayed as an icon of a knowable entity - the nation's 'Others'.

In the past, the selection and presentation of Maori objects displayed in New Zealand's museums of ethnology, have been based on the perceived 'cultural purity' of the artefacts. In ethnographic collections dissimilar groups of objects have been invested with meanings relating

to notions of 'tradition' and 'authenticity' and displayed within interpretative contexts emphasising a pristine pre-modern stasis untarnished by European contact. Examples of Maori 'sculpture' have been exhibited alongside utilitarian objects - such as spoons, bowls or spears - as representative of an atemporal, pre-modern culture. Defined within such a taxonomy, carving has been collected and displayed as an instrumental tribal practice, its status within collections signalled by the absence of the sculptor's name. Conversely, in art museums, 'works of art' are displayed for their aesthetic qualities; selected on the basis of 'beauty' or 'originality' or because they represent a defining moment in the teleology of the 'Western' art historical discourses (Clifford, 1988:226). Such works are identified as the creations of named individuals; their place in everyday cultural practices (including the art market) is irrelevant in a context where categorisation is based on 'transcendant' aesthetic attributes defined by a canon. Therefore in the case of New Zealand, distinctions employed in the selection and display of collections ethnological museums have developed taxonomies which (by omission) furnish dominant constructions of 'whiteness'. To parody Wolf, whites have been represented in New Zealand national collections as 'the people with History' (Wolf, 1982).

As Chapter 3 has discussed, the Metropolitan Museum's Te Maori exhibition (New York, 1984) transformed the way in which Maori culture was perceived in New Zealand and has informed the

development of the Maori section in Te Papa Tongarewa. While curatorial direction of the New York exhibition remained in the hands of white ethnologists and museum professionals, Te Maori marked a shift in the way Maori people were involved in various aspects of the exhibition. This shift inaugurated a wider debate about the management and exhibition of material culture and has been crucial to the development of the Maori section of Te Papa Tongarewa which is curated and managed by ethnologists, archaeologists and technicians appointed by an advisory group (Tamarapa, 1996:160).

Described by publicity material as 'a place to stand for all New Zealanders', Te Papa Tongarewa is officially designated as 'a museum of art, history, Maori art and history and the natural environment'<sup>5</sup>. The need to specify the inclusion of 'Maori art and history' signals the difficulties of representing the duality demanded by the discourses of biculturalism, in a place where white dominance is structured into the cultural formation and lexicon. The generic categories 'art and history' continue to naturalise 'whiteness' while the emphasis on 'Maori art and history' makes visible categories submerged within discursive practices of ethnology.

The display of artefacts in the new museum makes a powerful statement about the place of the tangata whenua within the reconfigured nation and also

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<sup>5</sup> Annual Report of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa 1995-96.

demonstrates the museum's commitment to museological practice informed by a 'multiculturalist' approach to collecting and exhibition.

The museum can be read both as a public space representing a collective imaginary based around a new legitimating myth - 'biculturalism' and also as a national institution geared to consumerist culture. In line with the market-driven approach of New Zealand's public sector, the museum's mission statement included, from the outset, a commitment to be 'customer-focused and commercially positive' in its 'celebration of the mana of the two mainstream heritages -Maori and Pakeha'.<sup>6</sup> In a private interview, an historian involved in the design of the Pakeha exhibits expressed disquiet at the way the 'politics had been sucked out of the exhibits'.<sup>7</sup> His inability to speak publically about behind-the-scenes disputes which dogged the development of Te Papa, demonstrate the difficulties involved in a semiotic reading-off of the museum as 'text'. While the minutes of committee meetings and related policy documents reveal, to a certain extent, the institutional tensions steering the development of the museum, the gradual 'neutralising' of the museum's approach to 'biculturalism' is only evident in the absences and shifts which can be gleaned by examining changes evident in development plans for the museum.

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<sup>6</sup> Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Statement of Intent for the Financial Year Ending 30 June, 1997.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Government Historian Jock Phillips, Wellington, May 1998.

Revealed in these documents are the contradictions involved in working to an explicit state-funded brief to showcase the commitment to 'biculturalism' whilst attempting to reflect current museological debates in relation to the politics of collecting and exhibition. This tension has resulted in a disjuncture between the way in which the two 'mainstream' cultures are exhibited. The requirement to be commercially viable in terms of attracting corporate sponsorship, maintaining a balance between populist entertainment forms geared to income generation (such as themed rides, cafes and souvenir shops) and the role of preserving and presenting national collections in a new context, have heightened the institutional tensions underlying the museum's development.

In order to accommodate these conflicting interests, the nation's history has been sanitised by exhibits which downplay the inequalities and injustices underpinning the colony's history in order to construct, yet again, a unified version of national identity. Instead of acknowledging the significant political and social changes which have come about as a result of the contemporary renegotiations, particularly in relation to tribal claims for reparations under the Treaty of Waitangi, the museum indigenises the 'treaty partners'.

In a space publicised as 'Our Place' the museum performs a 'bicultural' balancing act -presenting an empowering and unified 'Maoriness' alongside a

hybrid and potentially de-centred version of whiteness. Te Papa Tongarewa invites visitors to participate in and celebrate the shared cultures of New Zealand's 'treaty partners'.

The discourses of 'biculturalism' sever the time-space co-ordinates of the nation from connections with Europe. In the museum, Maori and Pakeha are joined together in the deeper history of land and nature producing a back-projection of the nation's history which 'skips' the colonial phase, representing a version of nation acceptable to a neo-liberal globalised economy. This is evident in conceptual plans used in the development of the museum. The design of the space was based on a tripartite axis with the tangata whenua (those belonging to the land by right of first discovery), and the tangata tiritiri (those belonging to land by right of treaty) were entwined with papatuanuku (the common land). In planning documents the connections between these areas were depicted figuratively in the form of a venn diagram; intersecting circles showing each aspect separate conjoined. The museum's architects have explicitly stated that the building was designed to represent the anchoring of the nation in 'deep time' through the connections of both Maori and Pakeha to 'nature'<sup>8</sup>. Architect Pete Bossley draws on the discourses of biculturalism to naturalise 'shared' connections to the land, describing the relationships between 'sub-cultures' as expressed in the museum's architecture:

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<sup>8</sup> 'The Designing of Te Papa', Architecture New Zealand, Special Edition, February, 1998.

Common to both sub-cultures were attitudes to openness relationships with sea and sky, the transitional nature of the occupied space between land and ocean.<sup>9</sup>

In Te Papa, the positioning of the Treaty of Waitangi display and the natural history section, play, an important part in making explicit these connections for visitors as they move through the space of the museum<sup>10</sup>. The Maori and Pakeha exhibits sit alongside one another on Level 4, connected by a central atrium area dedicated to the Treaty of Waitangi. This 'treaty space' is designed to resemble a chapel. A facsimile of the original treaty document, meshed between blue glass and embellished with gold leaf, hangs high in the ceiling like an enormous stained glass window. Visitors walking beneath this structure are dwarfed by the scale of the object and need to look up in order see it. The movement of visitors passing through the space triggers recordings housed in pipes embedded in the floor (resembling the pipes of a church organ) which comprise loop-tapes of positive and negative opinions about the role of the Treaty in contemporary New Zealand. This device, apparently giving 'voice' to a range of ordinary opinions signifies the nation's capacity for 'democracy', 'egalitarianism' and 'openness' thus silencing any contentious claims to different forms of sovereignty. Significantly, it does not provide any context for the treaty's turbulent history. Instead, the religious

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<sup>9</sup> *ibid*

<sup>10</sup> The museum's web site uses hypertext links to connect these sections.

iconography of the space elevates the Treaty to spiritual status thus avoiding materialist issues connecting the treaty to a political and legal struggle over land rights.

The Pakeha exhibits at Te Papa, which represent white identities as contingent, heterogeneous and unstable, occupy the museum space alongside a version of 'Maoridom' which appears timeless and pure. Yet, however powerful the 'Maori' space in the museum is - artefacts presented in a beautifully lit space; with the meeting house, works of sculpture, painting, clothing and the use of photographs and video to anchor the collection in relation to specific tribal connections -, the exhibit appears to have been designed primarily to connect the history of European settlement to the 'deep' history of the land.

The Pakeha exhibits were developed by a government department (it appears the 'centre' continues to speak for the 'dominant'). In New Zealand's deregulated environment the contract for 'conceptual input' into the section was awarded to the Department of Internal Affairs. Jock Phillips, head of the Department's Historical Branch, has described the department's function as 'a business with a public mandate to strengthen national identity'.<sup>11</sup> According to Phillips, the department's task in designing exhibits for the museum, was to tell 'the story of the tangata tiriti - the Pakeha who were there by virtue of the Treaty of Waitangi' (Phillips, 1996:115).

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<sup>11</sup> (Comment made in a private interview in Wellington, May, 1998)



Defining Pakeha history continues to be a major conceptual issue for New Zealand historians but as Phillips puts it 'we solved the matter quickly and argued there was no Pakeha identity as such' (Phillips, 1996:115). As a result the three exhibits representing the majority group have been designed within a contingent, non-linear interpretative framework. It remains to be seen the extent to which such a context enables visitors to 'read in' the nation's troubled colonial history, particularly given the museum's showcase status as a tourist-oriented 'gateway to New Zealand'<sup>12</sup>. Phillip's account states that the colonial encounter will be subsumed by what he calls a 'universal truth' of Pakeha 'non-identity'; that the core of 'Pakehaness' is based on 'a founding trauma':

the fact that we are migrant people, attempting to make a new home...is the central truth to our identity (Phillips, 1996:119).

In a reversal of the way settler differences (regional, religious and so on) were collapsed in the nineteenth century in order to construct white settlers as a collectivity of New Zealand 'citizens', the museum's interpretation of 'biculturalism' recuperates diversity and pluralism, presenting migration stories based on the travelling experiences of 'ordinary folk', in an attempt to deconstruct the discredited settler narratives of dominant white identity.

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<sup>12</sup> Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Statement of Intent for the Financial Year Ending 30 June, 1997.

Development documents stress the way each component of the 'Pakeha' section avoids an overarching 'master narrative'.<sup>13</sup> This 'post-modern' approach draws instead on anecdotal material to present an account which is intended to signify a de-centred whiteness in keeping with the museum's 'bi-culturalism' (ibid:117).

In Passports visitors are able to open drawers containing details of individual settler stories and miscellaneous artefacts, most of which are related to the journey from Europe to New Zealand:

visitors will be able to play off generalisations about New Zealand identity against particular lives '(Phillips, 1996:119).

This exhibition is sponsored by Air New Zealand and the trope of 'travel', used to describe settler migrations, represents colonial settlement as mere 'event'. This is reinforced by the use of Air New Zealand's corporate logo (the koru scroll) on exhibition signs suggesting a teleology of travel in which ships have simply been replaced by planes. More broadly, the presentation of these 'stories' exemplifies the tensions which exist in a public institution burdened with the task of re-defining national identity for a society 'hungry for a vision of itself' (ibid: 108).

Historians designing the exhibits were battling against public pressure to establish a Pakeha

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<sup>13</sup> 'The Peopling of New Zealand' - Concept Development Report, History Exhibition Team, February, 1994.

'gallery of heroes', despite the fact that, as Phillips puts it:

the clamour for such a solution came from Pakeha who sensed the Maori exhibitions would be affirming of identity and therefore hagiographic in tone (ibid: 115)

One of the sections - Exhibiting Ourselves - is described as 'potentially the most subversive' because of its interpretation of the way in which versions of national identity have changed historically (ibid: 116). The interpretative device for the exhibit is a re-creation of New Zealand's displays at four international exhibitions spaced 50 years apart: the 1851 Great Exhibition in London, the 1906 Christchurch International Exhibition, the 1940 Centennial Exhibition in Wellington and the 1992 Seville Exposition in Spain. At each of these events, it is suggested, a different version of a mythologised 'New Zealand' was exhibited: the 1940 exhibition in Wellington represented the nation as an economically progressive welfare state while the 1992 version, at Seville's Expo, projected New Zealand as a 'go-getting nation of entrepreneurs' (ibid). Phillips suggests Te Papa's visitors may be able to read these constructions as 'puffery and propaganda designed to sell goods and to attract immigrants and foreign investment' (ibid).

For the curators, Exhibiting Ourselves may well demonstrate how different versions of national identity have been 'self-serving projections' linked to specific temporal conjunctures, but it is questionable whether the interpretative

capabilities of museum visitors will lead to similar readings. To what extent will visitors share the values and assumptions that have informed the re-presentation of these exhibitions in the new museum? And if these versions of identity are interpreted by visitors as 'constructions', will this lead in turn, to a deconstruction of Te Papa's 'bi-cultural' projection of national identity?<sup>14</sup>

In the latter phase of the museum's development, a media campaign was fought over plans to use a collection of eighteenth century British antiques to produce an exhibition about class relations in the early days of settlement. Donated to the nation by a descendant of a wealthy hill-farming family, the Elgars, the collection was planned to be integrated into an exhibit which used wool production in order to make connections between class, labour and the generation of wealth in the colony. According to Phillips:

We decided to look at the wool barons by focusing on Mrs Elgar. We planned to reconstruct her drawing room using the furniture and around the walls tell how her family had acquired the wealth which purchased the collection. Well of course, this was not quite what the Elgar lobby wanted...<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> This interpretation of the representation of New Zealand in the context of the Empire also glosses broader issues about way the settler colonies were hierarchised in relation to other territories in the Empire. Annie Coombes argues the Empire exhibitions represented the white dominions at the 'top of a racially hierarchised ladder' (Coombes, 1994:192)

<sup>15</sup> Interview Wellington, March 1998.

After a public campaign the artefacts were housed instead, in a glass compartment and anchored by a large sign entitled Grassy Empires. In two short sentences, the text trumpets the achievements of nineteenth century capitalists exercising their freedoms in the colonial zone:

It was thanks to sheep farming that Ella and Charles Elgar owned Fernside. In the 1840s a few canny entrepreneurs got in quick, leasing and then buying cheap acres.

Interestingly, it is through a collection of artefacts belonging to 'common' people that connections are made in relation to colonial appropriations. John Guard, was sent to Australia as a convict and subsequently settled in New Zealand in the 1820s, marrying Betty, the first white woman to live in New Zealand's South Island. The national museum in Wellington inherited a collection of the couple's possessions - including John Guard's pistol, sword and whaling implements, Betty's Guard's wedding ring and perhaps most importantly for the mythology which surrounds the couple, a tortoiseshell comb which is supposed to have saved Betty's life when she was struck by a mere (Maori club) during a tribal attack which took place when their boat was shipwrecked off the New Zealand coast. As a result of the collection (which provides material evidence of their existence), the Guards have appeared at regular intervals in New Zealand historiography, usually narrated as courageous pioneers (with John Guard portrayed as the archetypal 'kiwi bloke'), despite the evidence which shows he and his wife were involved in 'shady' dealings, most notably

involving unscrupulous land deals and the exchange of sexual favours in which John Guard traded his wife (ibid:122)<sup>16</sup>. Phillips reports:

To present them as noble pioneers was not acceptable...instead it seemed necessary to confront visitors with the reality of power implied by Pakeha settlement....We hope to show that John Guard's settlement in New Zealand emerged from a personal history of oppression and a struggle to survive...we will use him not to condemn him but to make the point that Pakeha settlement inevitably involved conflict with Maori (ibid).

Discourses of commerce and consumption have permeated the museum's design and development with an emphasis on creating a populist space geared to attracting a demographically wide audience. The conceptual plan around which the museum was developed, proposed to organise the museum in order to give the visitor an experience described as 'mall'. According to the plan, a tour of the museum was designed to function as a circulation loop which constantly returned the visitor to the atrium which forms the spine of the building. It was envisaged in the plan that those on a quick tour could 'windowshop' ; cafe facilities and souvenir shops were placed in strategic positions 'similar to the way anchor shops are placed at opposite ends from each other in a mall'<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> The very existence of this collection of artifacts may in fact explain the prominence of the Guards in local historiography - it could be argued that the collection (used as 'evidence') has elevated the couple's place in New Zealand history.

<sup>17</sup> 'The Design of Te Papa', Architecture New Zealand, Special Issue, 1998.

The shopping theme has been extended to one of the most popular exhibits in the Pakeha section - Golden Days. Visitors queue to enter an old-fashioned shop where they face an array of merchandise displayed in front of a window which depicts an 'olden days' Wellington street scene beyond. With lights dimmed, a twenty-minute audio visual show unfolds. The window becomes a screen for the projection of a series of 'magic moments'. Clips from films, television news and advertising are edited into themed sequences (from sporting triumphs to protests - anti-nuclear, land rights- and Royal Visits) condensing a familiar visual repertoire projected over a sound track of 'aural' nostalgia (ranging from the bird call of the native 'tui' to the national anthem). Visitors are offered the opportunity to consume the unchallenging banalities of 'Kiwiana' (described in the programme as 'the spirit of New Zealand') in a space created by the omission of a social history section called 'Life in New Zealand'<sup>18</sup>.

Te Papa Tongarewa is described as New Zealand's most significant piece of contemporary architecture. As a result the building's material infrastructure has provided the means for a cross-section of commercial companies to enhance their corporate identities through their connection to the museum.

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<sup>18</sup> Plans to exhibit a collection of contraceptives dating from the 1930s, in an exhibit about 'love in New Zealand' was shelved when, as Jock Phillips puts it, the Chair of the Museum Board decided 'it would appeal to young people who did not know the difference between love and sex'

In the months following the opening of the building, images of the museum were used to promote a range of products and services - acoustics, electrical, engineering, lighting, graphics, interactive technologies, interior fittings, landscaping, steel, cladding, precast concrete - involved in the building of the museum. Thus the museum has become a site for trans-national companies keen to be associated with and demonstrate their commitment to the 'new' nation through their involvement with the museum.

The development of Te Papa Tongarewa has involved a complex process of resistance and accommodation in the production of a 'biculturalist' identity. By collapsing the hierarchical boundaries traditionally organising museum collections, Te Papa can be read as attempt to construct a 'heterotopia'<sup>19</sup> in which, for the museum's management at least 'taste and caste have been dismantled' in a celebration of the post-modern nation<sup>20</sup>. It remains to be seen whether this new version of nation creates an interpretative space where the conflicts and tensions of New Zealand's bicultural settlement can be interrogated. For the purposes of this chapter however, the development of Te Papa Tongarewa represents a large public investment in a site committed to new version of nation which attempts to reconcile a range of conflicting pressures. As such, the

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<sup>19</sup> Described by Foucault as a place where 'all the other real sites that can be found within the culture are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted'. (Foucault, 1980:24)

<sup>20</sup> Ian Wedde, museum curator quoted in The Australian 6 June, 1998.



museum functions as a monument to a state which appears to have settled accounts with the 'indigenous' people.

In the context of New Zealand's re-focused economic interest in the Asia-Pacific region; together with the growing importance of tourism as the primary service industry, the museum's version of nation demonstrates the way in which state has been able to adjust to (rather than be transformed by) its 'strategic biculturalism' in order to strength its branding in the international marketplace.

#### **National Cinema: Negotiating the global/local nexus**

Writing from the semi-periphery of the 'west', the Australian academic Meaghan Morris has suggested that the category of the 'national' can usefully be used as a relational term to investigate the uneven circuits of cultural production between different 'components' of a world system of cinema (Morris, 1992a:470). She argues such a focus has the potential to 'internationalise' Cultural Studies' approaches which continue to naturalise Anglo-American dominance of film and television production. In non-dominant contexts, where the geo-politics of cultural production mean 'identity' issues are most pressing, recourse to the level of the 'national' provides for Morris at least, an important counter-narrative to the universality assumed by texts emanating from the 'centre'.

However, in an industry characterised by

cross-border networks, defining the components of a 'national cinema' is inevitably problematic (Elsaesser, 1989). With financial, production and distribution networks increasingly organised trans-nationally, categorising a film as a product of a specific geographical space is a classificatory device usually based on a 'cultural nationalism' which constructs boundaries around groups of texts in order to endow them with an imaginary unity or coherence.

Film Studies debates about national cinema have been inflected by wider concerns regarding the parameters and methodologies of the discipline itself. Tensions exist between text-based criticism and materialist/intertextual approaches which address broader issues relating to film histories and contextual fields of production, circulation, criticism and consumption (Hayward, 1993; Higson, 1989; O'Regan, 1996). At a level of generality it could simply be said that all those films made within a particular state comprise the 'national cinema'. However, as Stam argues, the category can be so broad as to be 'common sensical':

As the products of national industries, portraying national situations and recycling national intertexts (literature, folklore), all films are of course national (Shohat:1994:285).

In the case of New Zealand the use of this broad definition has been applied recently in a monograph which appends a chronological listing of one hundred and seventy two 'New Zealand' films dating from 1914. The list is accompanied by a

key translating symbols used against numerous films on the list which suggests the difficulties of applying such a wide-ranging definition to construct a national 'oeuvre'. The key demonstrates the difficulties involved in classifying texts firstly as 'films' and secondly within a category defined as 'national'. The 'key' comprises the following:

doc= documentary  
TVM= made for television  
loc= foreign film using NZ location  
NRS = foreign film with NZ-related story  
% = film is lost  
# = film only exists in fragments  
(Conrich:1997,13)

In other words, attributing national status to a film is an arbitrary and highly contested process. The Piano provides a specific example of the problem of definition. The film was financed by the French company CIBY 2000, produced in Australia and written and directed by a New Zealander (trained in Australia). It starred bankable Hollywood actors (Holly Hunter, Sam Neill and Harvey Keitel) but represented the colonial landscape of nineteenth century New Zealand. When the film was released in New Zealand the media was pre-occupied by the debate about whether it could be deemed a 'local' product; across the Tasman, Tim O'Regan's Australian National Cinema located the film within a corpus of Australian films (O'Regan: 1996).

Historically the global cinema industry has been

dominated by Hollywood and therefore forms an integral, albeit naturalised, part of 'national cultural life'. The success of Hollywood, with its vertical integration of film production (based on the studio system) harnessed to a world-wide distribution network, operates on an economy of scale guaranteed by the profitability of the huge domestic market in the United States (Ellis, 1982).

While Hollywood is in one sense a 'national' cinema (North American), it has been the motor of a global industry which has been organised along Fordist lines (Collins, 1990:153). Standardised production processes have reproduced internationally recognisable genres based on 'classic' narrative forms while equally standardised formula for marketing and distribution have, to a certain extent, determined the way in which products are released and consumed globally. (And here it is important to note that global distribution strategies - timed release in different places linked to advertising campaigns and commodity tie-ins such as toys, games and confectionary - connects film to broader trans-national cultural/leisure industries and patterns of consumption).

Hollywood's dominance of the international film industry is in part attributable to its ability to produce texts which appear to be universally pleasurable. This apparent ability to construct a 'global popular' has yet to be analysed in terms of the meanings made by disparate interpretative communities (During, 1997:820). It would appear

that Hollywood's apparent universality of appeal stems from its ability to offer pleasures and gratifications offered based on the globalised taste cultures of 'westernised' forms of consumption:

Much of American film and television is about the American dream - the world as we would wish it to be - a place in which goodness and reason prevail and things work out for the best (Collins 1990: 192).

Despite 'multicultural' rhetoric and pretensions to sex equality, representations of the 'American dream' reproduce and rework dominant constructions of gender, ethnicity and class. As Richard Dyer argues 'in Western representation whites are overwhelmingly and disproportionately predominant, have the central and elaborated roles and above all are placed as the norm, the ordinary, the standard' (Dyer, 1997: 3). An appropriate methodology for audience research in relation to film, beyond psychoanalytic accounts of specularity, has yet to emerge, but it is clear that such an approach ought to investigate the relationship between the representation of whiteness in the 'global popular' and trans-cultural interpretations.

Within a configuration dominated by Hollywood, there exists a limited market for smaller-scale productions organised at a regional level or within 'alternative' or artisanal spheres. In some national contexts, such as French cinema and India's Bollywood, the size of a 'mother-tongued' diasporic audience is large enough to guarantee profitability for 'regional' productions

(Hayward, 1993:13).

However, in a small place like New Zealand, with a limited tax base and geographically isolated communities of audiences, national funding bodies are the only possible means of supporting local film production. There 'indigenous' productions are developed through state assistance which is provided in a variety of forms - tax concessions, training programmes, and distribution facilities.

This reliance on public forms of support means that despite the recognition of cultural diversity, especially since the 'bicultural turn', locally produced texts are not only required to satisfy a 'mainstream' taste culture, in order that New Zealand-made films can compete with imports in the local market, but at the same are required to meet criteria which are broadly 'nationalist' in order to attract funding. As Roger Horrocks argues:

As a whole the marketplace can only support a limited range of products.... Minorities in New Zealand, ethnic, 'taste' or any other kind of grouping, have difficulty reaching critical mass or the economic take-off point (Horrocks:1995,86).

New Zealand's largest national audiences are equivalent to niche or regional audiences elsewhere and as deregulation has enforced 'market-led' approaches to funding and development, the emphasis on profitability has exacerbated the push towards mainstream tastes (in other words a replication of Hollywood genres). But perhaps more importantly this is a small place

with expensively American tastes in film; locally produced texts tend to be regarded as strangely unfamiliar with New Zealand accents proving unacceptable to audiences.

Morris' account of Australian cinema's 'postmodernity' can usefully be extended to New Zealand cinema. Morris claims film criticism in Australia needs to develop 'a theory of fully positive unoriginality' because local productions are based on 'scavenging, borrowing, stealing, plundering... recoding, rewriting' forms emanating from outside national boundaries. While, at one level, Morris is merely reiterating the notion that there can be no 'authentic' or 'pure' forms of culture, national or otherwise, her argument provides a context for considering film production in 'small' places. She writes

Film is an industry in a Western mega-culture and Australia is simply part of it. Ideals of originality, independence and authenticity are sentimental anachronisms, inappropriate to the combination of industrial cinema. Imitation today is true realism because the broad base of Australian culture from McDonalds to prime time television and everything in between is comparable to the American  
(Morris, 1988:247)

Defining national cinema in economic terms means finding a correspondence between national cinema and the domestic film industry, particularly in terms of ownership of the production and distribution infrastructure. There is a sense in which the notion of film-making as an 'industry' has only emerged in New Zealand during the past twenty years. This is largely because of the way

in which funding, archiving and training have been institutionalised through various channels, following the establishment of the New Zealand Film Commission in the 1970s to co-ordinate production finance and distribution deals nationally and internationally. Through this process of institutionalisation, film has emerged as a practice endowed retrospectively with a history and a national identity.

The New Zealand Film Commission distributes lottery funds to finance local film production but control of production and distribution is generally in the hands of foreign-owned companies. This, combined with the growing convergence between cinema, television and video, has resulted in the development of co-productions which increasingly blur the distinctions between texts and their different sites of production and consumption. For example, Jane Campion's An Angel at my Table (1990), was produced as a series for New Zealand television and then sold on as a three hour-long film for international cinema and video release.

As earlier discussions of Once Were Warriors, The Piano and Crush have shown, an approach focused on 'content' provides the means to link film texts to the construction of national imaginaries. It could be argued that the representation of recognisably 'local' behavioural codes - gestures, words, intonations, attitudes - offers a 'local' subject position. Similarly, representations of



landscape, gender, class and race relations can also be read as nationally specific<sup>21</sup> .

Many of the difficulties of defining 'national' cinema are raised in a documentary written and presented by the ex-patriot white New Zealand actor Sam Neill, for the Centenary of Cinema (BFI, 1995) series funded by the British Film Institute.

Prior to the documentary - Cinema of Unease - Neill's most recent film had been his leading role as Stewart in The Piano. Undoubtedly his reputation as New Zealand's most well-known actor (consolidated by The Piano) made him an obvious choice for a venture funded by a British institution and aimed at an international market. Neill's version of New Zealand national cinema reached a wide global audience.

During 1995 the documentary was screened at numerous international film festivals - Cannes, London, Sydney, Wellington, Melbourne, Edinburgh - and was subsequently on general cinema release in New Zealand and shown on Britain's Channel 4.

Cinema of Unease is structured around a trope which appears frequently in historical accounts of New Zealand's political, economic and cultural formation - the narration of nation through

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<sup>21</sup>However, in the case of New Zealand, with a small production base for both television and film, it is clear that the parameters of national cinema need be drawn at the site of consumption as much as the site of production. The crucial question (and one beyond the scope of the thesis) in relation to 'audience' remains to what extent are modes of interpretation geographically and culturally specific?

developmental stages from childhood to maturation, dependence to independence and international recognition. In Cinema of Unease, this historicist device is deployed by Neill through a chronological and partial selection of 'New Zealand' films which are moulded into a narrative mirroring the actor's personal journey from childhood to internationally-recognised stardom.

Thus narrational unity for Neill's version of 'national cinema' is provided by his own experiences as a cinema-goer, white New Zealand man and actor/practitioner. The solipsism of this 'bio-doc' approach presents an account of national cinema which is gender-specific and Pakeha-centred. Thus, despite its biographical form, the documentary resonates with other dominant accounts of national culture in circulation. To this extent Cinema of Unease exemplifies the 'myth-making' process involved in constructing received versions of national culture and raises important issues about both the 'authoring' of such accounts - who is authorised to speak - and the way in which the articulation of particular kinds of memory coalesce into internationally-recognisable nationalist myths.

For example, in various accounts of cinema-going in New Zealand there are recurring references to an orange-coated chocolate sweet, the Jaffa, which appears to have symbolic significance in relation to the film-based memories of white men. In Cinema of Unease Neill, detailing his boyhood love of film, recounts his attendance at the local cinema's 'Chums Club' (the very name suggests

gender exclusion) where adventure films were shown every Saturday morning. Speaking to camera on the site of the now-demolished cinema, Neill holds a small sweet aloft:

This is a jaffa - a delicious orange and chocolate sweet but here at the Rex it was the weapon of choice.

And as he describes how it was used to pelt fellow 'chums' during the screening a clip from Sam Pillsbury's film The Scarecrow (1982) depicts jaffas being thrown at a boy sitting in the front row of a cinema.

In the exhibition New Zealand, New Zealand: In Praise of Kiwiana (see Chapter 4), the significance of a display of Jaffa cartons is elaborated in the catalogue in the following way:

On Saturday afternoons at the 'local' there was a social get-together with your mates...Traditional was the rolling of Jaffas along the inclined wooden floor...the simmering excitement could explode with a barrage of Jaffas fired at the screen sufficient to knock back the screen (Barnett, 1989:39).

Such accounts not only highlight the importance of cinema-going as a cultural pursuit but also hint at the way social spaces such as the 'Chum's Club' privileged certain groups (in this case white boys) whilst excluding others. More importantly though, is the way the sweet - the Jaffa - becomes condensed as a national 'myth'.

Neill's narration of his adult entry into the world of film is also a story of contacts made

between groups of white men, primarily those he met through the public school system. The documentary shows him visiting his old boarding school where he suggests 'Englishness' was reproduced in the architecture:

there's a touching pretence about buildings like this - they pretend to be somewhere else; as determinedly English as possible from the other side of the world.

But crucially such places were also the foundation of networks of power which prepared certain kinds of young men to live out their 'white destiny'; in Neill's case through New Zealand's burgeoning film industry.

In Cinema of Unease Neill positions himself amongst a coterie of white male practitioners who are narrated as central to the development of national film culture in New Zealand.

Underpinning the narrative is an echo of the 'Man Alone' theme -the lone 'battler' struggling against enormous odds, in this case the dominance of British culture in the former colony, to realise a lifelong love of cinema. Neill portrays himself as a victim of cultural imperialism: 'all our heroes had foreign accents and all adventures happened somewhere else in the world'. For him, childhood cinema-going:

implicitly carried the message that because we were somehow absent from the screen that our own culture was somehow unworthy and we ourselves were less than worthwhile.

Neill's use of the personal pronouns 'our' and 'we' in this quotation, and throughout the

documentary, reinforces the overweening 'whiteness' of his analysis as he extrapolates from his own experience to speak on behalf of all New Zealanders who are portrayed as victims of imperialism.

Neill's story of the struggle for New Zealand film-makers (in his account they are almost all men) to be recognised internationally can be read 'against the grain' to reveal 'national cinema' (in terms of production, distribution and consumption) as a cultural formation which has largely excluded those on the 'margins'.

The Maori film-maker Merata Mita, best known for Patu (1983), a controversial film about the 1981 Springbok Tour of New Zealand, has described the local film industry as a 'white and neurotic' (Mita, 1992:47). In her analysis of the industry she argues that the central themes of films made by white New Zealanders appear to be driven by repression and fear:

the notion of the white person at odds with his/her environment, with his/her country is deeply etched in the national psyche (ibid).

For Mita the denial of the nation's colonial past lies at the heart of what she describes as a 'malaise' which is represented in New Zealand films as 'matters of the heart, acts of rebellion, insanity and misunderstood genius' (ibid). Although these themes, which Mita endows with a national specificity, are elements of a broader 'Proppian' schema, and are therefore applicable

across all forms of narrative, they are deployed by Neill in his account of New Zealand cinema in order to endow his selection with a unique 'structure of feeling'; significantly however he fails to address the difficulties encountered by Maori people, women and other minority groups to make films in New Zealand.

Exemplifying the point made by Merata Mita, in a moment of near-parody and double-narcissism in the documentary, a clip from The Piano shows Stewart (Sam Neill) gazing at his own reflection in a tiny pocket mirror as he prepares to meet his wife-to-be, Ada McGrath. Over this clip Neill, the documentary's narrator, attempts to reflect on himself and his own troubled state when he comments:

The Piano raised a worrying thought for me - if a national cinema is a reflection of ourselves then ours is a troubled reflection indeed.

Using this clip of Stewart (The Piano's bad colonial Other) is as close as the documentary comes to linking white settlement and the nation's troubled present. By 'psychologising' the nation's weak sense of identity in relation to British domination, the documentary blurs the connection between white privilege and colonial history. Instead, the whites of New Zealand (implicitly male) are narrated as victims of forces emanating from outside the national borders to the extent that Neill refers to the Maori and Pakeha as 'two peoples betrayed, living uneasily side by side in paradise'.

Cinema of Unease , produced and distributed from Britain, testifies to institutional structures centred on a Euro-American axis, which dominate trans-national circuits of cinematic production and distribution. The structure of the film industry in New Zealand is too weak and underfunded to have produced this documentary, let alone financed the international distribution which put the text into global circulation.

This documentary's internationally recognisable version of cinema in New Zealand, renders invisible the structured inequalities of the film industry at the level of both global and local and continues the work of disavowing colonial history. More importantly, Cinema of Unease provides an example of the way in which discourses of 'whiteness' permeate circuits of cultural production naturalising structural inequalities and dominant regimes of representation which are available to be interpreted at different levels of specificity by 'global' audiences.

### **Geographies of Broadcasting: Public Service and National Sovereignty on the Periphery**

During the latter half of the nineteenth century the transformation of the territory of New Zealand into a nation state coincided with the development of mechanical means of cultural reproduction in telegraphy, cinema, photography and radio. The process of nation-building in the colony was harnessed to a cultural project in which global communications networks were used to maintain

strong links with the 'Mother Country' and also to develop a sense of community between the geographically dispersed settlements of the colony (Thompson, 1995:151).

European colonial powers were able to exploit technologies - initially underwater cable systems and then later the electromagnetic spectrum - to establish early forms of trans-national media and communications industries linking colonial territories to metropolitan centres. By 1876, underwater cables laid between Britain, Australia and New Zealand constituted the first global system of non-transport communication (Thompson, 1995:154).

As Schiller argues, such developments provided the 'ideologically supportive informational infrastructure' of global capitalism, 'promoting, protecting and extending the modern world system' (Schiller, 1989: 21). Throughout the Empire these technologies were developed largely by British-owned companies working alongside the British government, which funded major projects, such as submarine cabling, primarily through loans to colonial governments for infrastructural development.

The structure of the global telecommunications network reflected the geo-politics of nineteenth century colonial relations, with developments at the national level integrated into a 'world communications system' (Robertson, 1992:70). The emergence of international news agencies - concerned with the systematic gathering and global



dissemination of news and information - resulted in a treaty, the Agency Alliance Treaty, 1869, which divided the world into domains defined by spheres of economic and political influence of the major European powers.

As a result, the British company Reuters covered the territories of the Empire, enjoying as Thompson puts it 'some degree of political patronage...providing information which was valuable for the conduct of trade and diplomacy' (Thompson, 1995: 155).

Similarly in broadcasting, whilst the allocation of the electromagnetic spectrum and related licensing legislation was controlled by national governments, the British company Cable and Wireless dominated the colonial hardware market in wireless sets (ibid). Thus the globalising tendencies of broadcasting and the tensions between public and private spheres were already inherent in structures established towards the end of the nineteenth century.

This section explores the links between the economics of broadcasting and broader issues of sovereignty, regulation and national identity arguing that the emergence of New Zealand's 'mixed' broadcasting system - part public service/part commercial - resulted in a form of state regulation which attempted to 'ring-fence' designated areas of local production in a broadcasting structure dominated by 'foreign' interventions but servicing, in the main, the interests of the privileged white majority who

have been demographically more appealing to advertisers.

The institutional arrangements of broadcasting in New Zealand, mimicking Britain's public service model, have always been the most heavily regulated cultural sphere in New Zealand. However the public service ideal of an independent broadcasting system could not be fully realised in the colony due to financial constraints - the small population base generated insufficient revenue to fund the service solely through a licence fee - and the difficulty of providing and maintaining a universal service to a sparse population scattered across mountainous terrain. A massive technological and economic outlay was required to ensure national transmission; thus from the outset broadcasting regulation was dictated as much by the needs of advertisers as the state (Bell, 1995a:182)

In the earliest days of broadcasting, regulation was seen as a mechanism for protecting citizens from 'media effects', later coalescing around the threat of 'Americanisation', although wave-length scarcity was the technicist reason used to legitimate such controls. During the 1920s Britain's Reithian public service model - 'devoted to the highest tradition of community and nation'<sup>22</sup> - provided a blueprint for New Zealand's broadcasting structure. Public service was seen as the means by which a regulatory structure could be established to ensure the power of the new medium

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<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Curran (1987).

was constrained and directed towards the 'national interest' (Thompson, 1988: 255).

Initially the paternalism of New Zealand's public service structure reflected fears about the potential effects of radio as a powerful form of mass communication. The Government used draconian legislation to 'protect' the nation's listeners through regulatory measures, first introduced in 1923. Importantly such regulation also involved the temporal domestication of national life through the structuring of daily rituals based around scheduling; this of course is an important element in constructing an 'imagined community' of listeners (Scannell, 1988).

The first twenty years of radio in New Zealand saw the public service requirement to inform the public met by a stream of international news provided by Reuters London news agency, whilst entertainment programmes relied heavily on BBC-produced recordings of orchestral music and drama. This reliance on British programming meant that the majority white population of New Zealand were able to imagine themselves linked to 'Home' through the diasporic space of a broadcasting system which, while making claims to be 'national', relied on programming material produced in Britain and targeted specifically at the Empire (Cardiff, 1987:139).

Significantly, the discourses of 'quality' and 'high culture', which underpinned the debate about the superiority of public service in Britain, were deployed in the colony to distinguish BBC's

imports from US competition. State intervention in the trade of cultural goods (which attempted to guarantee a stable proportion of locally produced programmes in the schedules) was seen as a means of protecting citizens primarily from American cultural imperialism (Collins,1990: 210).

However, as 'information' was increasingly identified as central to the formation of ideas and identity, regulation was used as the means to ensure a congruity between 'polity and culture', its primary purpose being to maintain a strong sense of national identity in the public sphere - in New Zealand's case of course, this was overlaid by an imperial identity (ibid:206).

Following the introduction of television in the fifties (seen as an even greater threat to social cohesion), transmission was restricted to the evenings only while soap operas and other 'polluting' forms were banned during school holidays (Butterworth,1989:147). However, qualitative issues were overtaken by concerns for national sovereignty which came to dominate debates about the media in New Zealand in the post-war period.

Similar economies of scale exist in television production as they do for film; as a result the cost of purchasing imported programmes from the United States or Great Britain, where the size of domestic markets ensures production and distribution costs are covered before export, has always been substantially cheaper than 'home-produced' material (ibid:165).

Thus in New Zealand the economics of broadcasting has always severely restricted the capacity of the state to determine the way broadcasting has reflected and shaped the identity of the national community. Attempts to control coverage of the 'national interest' were undermined by limited resources and the need to maximise audiences in a competitive market. For example, the reporting of international events has always been shaped by a news agenda heavily reliant on a mix of 'raw' visual material brought in from picture agencies (with a locally-produced script narrated over the pictures) or 're-packaged' reports from foreign correspondents working for major national networks in Britain and North America and then sold on to smaller regional broadcasters. Similarly, forms of entertainment programming have been shaped by the finely-honed market-driven genres of major international broadcasting organisations, producing popular programmes guaranteed to deliver audience ratings and generate cross-media commercial 'tie-ins'.

In 1991 television programmes - already proven commercially viable with American or British audiences - could be purchased by New Zealand broadcasters for \$5000 per hour while an hour of locally-produced documentary cost \$100,000. As Horrocks puts it:

Why should Television New Zealand pay \$200,000 for an hour of local drama when it can purchase the most popular television programmes in the world for \$5000? (Horrocks, 1995:81).

As a result, local content has always remained relatively stable at around 25% of programming (compared with Britain's 80%) but, equally significantly, with the exception of nationally televised sporting events, such programming has rarely attracted more than 10% of the total audience. This is primarily because local products are seen as 'foreign' by an audience used to Anglo-American programmes which have constructed production values around 'taste cultures' difficult to emulate within limited public funding arrangements and using local actors:

In the cinema and television imported material is so dominant that it represents the norm, a situation that produces the 'cultural cringe'....actors have been encouraged to develop a 'BBC' accent since this sounded natural or normal in drama. In one sense television in New Zealand has been culturally a leading agent of colonialism - reinforcing the belief that British culture is superior (ibid:93)

The public service agenda, in terms of locally-produced content, has been shaped by a regulatory structure based on the reproduction of imagined versions of nation. In a broadcasting environment increasingly dependant on advertising (over the years the licence fee as a proportion of revenue has declined steeply), broadcasters have needed to guarantee the delivery of specific demographics of audiences to advertisers (the consuming AB's), a factor which has overdetermined content delivery. Despite a rhetoric which has presented New Zealand's public broadcasting sphere as open and accessible, 'citizenship' has tended to be defined through the discourses of consumerism with

the economic ideologies of the state being reworked within hegemonic versions of national identity. As a result 'nationalist' funding formulae have tended to finance a repertoire of 'normative' local programming which has replicated the themes of imported material within a limited range of genres - in particular documentary, soap opera and drama. As Butterworth argues, the need to maximise audience ratings means:

In New Zealand ...television symbolically annihilates whole classes, generations and ethnic groups. Existing institutional arrangements and power structures are replicated and reinforced by television.....(Butterworth,1989:156).

In 1988, the Waitangi Tribunal identified broadcasting as a cultural sphere from which Maori people had been systematically excluded. In its ruling on the interpretation of the Treaty's guarantee to protect Maori cultural treasures, the Tribunal stated that the structures of broadcasting, legislated from an elitist and 'white' centre, continued to reproduce the social relations of domination.

The Waitangi Tribunal's ruling coincided with the deregulation of the broadcasting, along with all other areas of state activity, in the late 1980s. Deregulation in a sense, resolved the contradictions inherent in a system caught between public service restrictions and commercial imperatives. The internationalising tendencies of the broadcast/ telecommunications industry was accelerating with technological developments particularly in relation to transmission by

direct-broadcast satellite. The satellite 'footprint' of trans-national broadcasters such as Cable News Network (CNN) and Murdoch's Sky Channels were able to reach domestic audiences whilst operating outside the borders of the nation; they were therefore not bound by the public service regulatory structure. The globalising tendencies of broadcasting increased with these new forms of delivery and provided the legitimation for the deregulation of a broadcasting structure already under considerable commercial pressure.

In order to compete with satellite and cable, New Zealand's terrestrial radio and television network was restructured as two separate state-owned enterprises (SOE), wholly funded through advertising and sponsorship. Terrestrial television channels continued to be owned by the state although 'foreign' companies subsequently made substantial investments in the sector which was legislated to operate as a commercial business with the primary aim of returning a profit to the state and other shareholders (Kelsey:1993:112).

Deregulation resulted in the removal of local content quotas; in particular broadcasters were no longer required to schedule news or other 'informative or 'educative' programmes. In order to generate acceptable levels of profit, advertising increased from five to seven days a week, with the maximum limit per hour increasing from the pre-deregulation figure of seven to fourteen minutes (Bell, 1995a: 182).



In New Zealand's small and highly competitive broadcasting market, with limited potential for advertising growth, programming has increasingly been forced to rely on formulaic 'lowest common denominator' genres in order to guarantee the delivery of target audiences to advertisers. As a result the range of programming has narrowed significantly: minority and special interests programmes together with arts, religious, public access and children's educational programming have disappeared from the schedules: As Kelsey puts it:

The overseas influence was already putting pressure on local and 'minority' programming before deregulation but this rapidly worsened.....the proportional share of prime time television for local 'public service' programmes fell significantly between 1978 and 1992. (Kelsey, 1993:113)

'Specialist' areas of programming (which previously fell within the public service remit) have been replaced by 'local' products which replicate 'imported' genres - foreign-formatted quiz shows featuring local contestants or locally-fronted foreign affairs programmes screening packages produced elsewhere, masquerading as 'national' programmes.

In order to accommodate the recommendations of the Waitangi Tribunal (regarding the 'bicultural partnership' for cultural production) within the market-driven broadcasting environment, the 1989 Broadcasting Act established a commission which was given an explicit brief to promote 'national' culture. New Zealand On Air (NZOA) was empowered

to collect a licence fee and use the money 'to reflect and develop New Zealand identity and culture' with a particular emphasis on 'Maori language and culture' (ibid:183). Policy makers adopted a funding model which established a Public Service Broadcasting Council to act as an 'Arts Council of the air', commissioning independent productions which were packaged and 'branded' with the NZOA logo for transmission so that, according to Bell 'viewing NZOA-funded programmes becomes a patriotic act' (Bell,1995:195).

This model purported to separate 'public' programming imperatives from the commercial aspects of broadcasting; however, much of the output funded by NZOA has tended to be confined to the peripheral zones of the schedules in a market-driven environment dominated by the need to deliver 'bundles' of targeted consumer groups to advertisers. 'Minority' programmes are competing with versions of the nation which are now powerfully represented in the new broadcasting environment.

The globalising tendency of broadcasting has been accompanied by the emergence of a strong 'nationalist' discourse embedded in televisual content, particularly in forms of 'channel branding', corporate programme sponsorship and advertising campaigns which market 'trans-national' products to 'niche' regional audiences. In many ways deregulated television, dominated by market forces, and no longer mediated by state regulation, has given rise to a global culture of consumption which relies on recognisably local

iconography for its reproduction. As Butterworth argues:

New Zealanders are sold a happy-family, good-society story, a story of sporting prowess and rural prosperity, a story of boats and freezers and late-model cars, a story of racial harmony in what an alien viewer would assume, in any case, to be an homogenous white society (Butterworth, 1989:156).

It is worth examining in detail the way in which nationalist narratives are reproduced across the 'flow' of television programming. Televised sport, the most popular form of local programming, provides an apposite example, particularly because the 'live' events are staged for transmission. (In other words television coverage does not simply record a game as an event; rather it stages a performance around the game).

New Zealand's peripheral international standing in the spheres of politics, economics and culture has meant that historically, rugby has been overdetermined with signifiers of nation - heterosexual masculinity, physicality, egalitarianism and racial harmony are key attributes mythologised in representations of the national game. In recent times the sport has become a site of contestation; the 'whiteness' of rugby (in relation to the game's colonial and class history and its ties with South Africa), together with the masculinist focus of the game, has meant rugby is no longer seen as a 'neutral' vehicle for national mythologies. As Fougere argues 'the values and practices embodied in rugby have long been at odds with patterns emerging in

New Zealand culture' (Fougere, 1989:120).

Nevertheless televised coverage of rugby spectacles continues to reproduce a repertoire of themes involving 'magic moments' of 'togetherness'. Underpinning the coverage is the representation of a dominant white 'national' lifestyle.

The segments discussed here date from 1991, a crucial year for the game in New Zealand, with the All Blacks defending two international trophies - the Rugby World Cup and the Bledisloe Cup (a bi-national competition between New Zealand and Australia). The examples discussed below demonstrate the way in which a cross-genre flow of televisual material - channel branding, sponsorship 'infotainment', advertising, news commentary and match coverage - can be sutured together to provide an overarching narrative of 'belonging' structured, in this instance, around the theme of a nation preparing for 'war'. These televisual spectacles (choreographed on camera by white male anchors) provide examples of the way in which nationalist discourses are reproduced through a complex matrix of gendered and racialised imagery. Crucially it is the 'live' element of the programming which bridges the public and private spheres, constructing a community of viewers as participants in a national 'moment'.

The first example focuses on an hour-long news-magazine special fronted by the white news celebrity/presenter Paul Holmes. The programme

segment begins with a Television One channel branding graphic entitled 'One World of Sport' superimposed on a spinning globe. This graphic parodies cartography's 'Peter's projection' (which normally represents the country sliding off the edge of the world) by filling the space of the Pacific Ocean with an over-sized 'New Zealand'.

Following the 'Holmes' titles and theme music, Paul Holmes (live and in vision), introduces the programme with an invocation uniting viewers in a farewell to the team:

Tonight we are gathered to say good-bye to the All Blacks on the eve of their battle for the World Cup in the UK.

Next follows a clip of the Prime Minister Jim Bolger addressing the team from what appears to be his office:

All New Zealanders are behind you - they know you'll do us proud in the final.

This is followed by the World Cup 'theme song' (replayed numerous times during the programme). A massed-choir sings the 'Brotherhood of Man' hit

united we stand, divided we fall  
and if our backs should ever be against the wall,  
we'll be together,  
together you and I

over a relay of images depicting a Maori haka group and various All Black players scoring tries and 'bedding down' in scrum formations. The clip ends with a chant in Maori from a male choir.

The first section of 'Holmes' is devoted to live interviews with (all-male, all-white) pundits discussing the forthcoming competition. Following an advertising break, a series of recorded pieces headlined as 'The Mothers' features interviews with 'All Black Mums', as Holmes calls them, in their homes, discussing the domestic needs of their sons. Three of the five women interviewed in this section are Maori or Pacific Islanders. These two segments, (the punditry followed by 'the Mums') reproduce the gendered and racialised divisions which characterise the sport; the white men, 'live' and speaking from a public space, discuss the technicalities of the game while the women are relegated to a pre-recorded, behind-the-scenes, domestic zone.

These 'news magazine' segments are interspersed with advertising breaks each of which begins with a short 'infotainment' segment featuring archive footage of the All Blacks playing at Twickenham - 'home of rugby' - edited in time to an instrumental version of 'English Country Garden'. This sequence, using repackaged grainy imagery of newsreel archives, connotes 'heritage' and 'Englishness', endowing New Zealand rugby with a mythologised 'white' history and tradition in the international arena. The segment finishes with the insignia of the sponsors, Steinlager, branding the company's beer as the nation's drink for the World Cup.

The advertising break which follows is dominated by the representation of a normative 'whiteness'.

Given the symbolic economy of advertising is driven by a rhetoric which creates associations between lifestyles and socially desirable subject positions (seemingly attainable only through the consumption of products and services being promoted) it follows that taste cultures and distinctions reified through the representation of such lifestyles (usually involving the maintenance of corporeal, domestic and leisure-based regimes) will reproduce versions of 'whiteness'. In New Zealand, such imagery incorporates dominant (and highly regressive) constructions of 'nation'.

The 'break' begins with an advertisement for New Zealand's National Bank, a subsidiary of the trans-national banking group Lloyds. The Lloyds 'black horse' (the global branding insignia of the corporation) appears throughout the sequence as an integral part of a landscape in which a range of 'universalised' (and emphatically 'white') images of rural nostalgia (the land, the harvest), inter-generational community (the men, the women, the children, the old people) condenses a range of nationalist themes. A quick succession of brown and white 'sepia-tinted' visual clips is edited to time with a segment of Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' (signifying 'nature') which plays uninterrupted on one sound-track. The rhythm of image and music produces 'heartbeat' timing which increases the intensity and unity of the text, potentially eliciting an emotional response from the viewer through a powerful (and banal) distillation of nostalgic imagery. Over the music a deep male voice on the second sound track makes a personalised appeal to the viewer, in sonorous

tones:

Your life is in the land  
Generation after generation  
Watching it grow so that those that follow  
can also watch it grow  
Rely upon those who work alongside you,  
come rain or shine

The visual elements of the advertisement create, in quick succession, a montage of aestheticised shots which signify fecundity of the land and harmony with 'nature', implicitly linking the role of the bank with this nationalist 'structure of feeling'. The sequence of images unfolds as follows : a child (long-haired, blonde) climbs onto a large bale of hay, hand raised to her shield her eyes, she gazes across a rural landscape; a landscape shot featuring the black horse galloping through expansive wheat fields; the broad back of a black-singleted man (white) driving a fencing pile into ploughed earth; a deep ploughed furrow; a single autumnal leaf floating in water; a medium close shot of the galloping black horse; a woman (white) at a farm-house window gazing out; children (white) playing in a yard; the black horse in close-up; sheep being shorn in a yard, a wedding party (white couple) showered with confetti (white) on the steps of a church (white); men (white) playing cricket on a rural green; a pair of elderly hands (white) folded in a lap; the black horse; cows in pasture; an old man (white) gazing at the sunset; a young woman (white) holding a baby; a young man (white) in a check shirt wiping wheat from his hand stands beside the woman and child; a plough; the black horse; milk (white) flowing from a churn; wheat



flowing (like the milk) in a stream across the screen; a bunch of grapes on the vine, the blonde child jumps off the hay bale and the final shot features the black horse standing on its hind legs as a graphic National Bank logo (in Lloyd's colours and typography) appears on screen.

Clearly this 'shot list' cannot adequately convey the powerful condensation of imagery and music which produces a dense layering within the 'micro-format' of the advertisement's narrative. The bracketing of (white) in the shot description above is intended to indicate the way in which the imagery detailed above is freighted with 'whiteness'. Richard Dyer suggests that a 'commutation test', where the imaginary substitution of black people for white in representations, provides the means to interrogate the way in which 'whiteness' naturalises particular kinds of dominance (Dyer, 1988). In this advertisement, such a substitution (of 'Maori' for 'white') would potentially produce a polysemy of meaning with the narrator's pronouncement - 'Your life is in the land' - opening up a space for a '(mis)-reading' which denaturalises the relationship between 'whiteness', the land and nature (and the role of the financial sector, in this case Lloyds, in facilitating this relationship).

Obviously textual analysis begs many questions not only about the way in which texts in general (and this 'micro-narrative' in particular), 'carry' meaning but also the extent to which such 'universalised' images of nostalgia are

interpreted at a local level. Nevertheless this example highlights the way televisual material produces shared repertoires - a semiotic 'common sense' - through a web of intertextual layering which distils and condenses (amongst other things) a range of recognisably nationalist tropes.

More broadly, the representation of ethnicity and gender across the flow of material in the Holmes segment is generically compartmentalised. For example the themed refrain used by Television One before and during the World Cup competition (and featured here at the beginning of the programme), depicts the 'national war cry' (the haka) and massed choirs of Maori and Pakeha singing together to signify 'one nation'. Similarly the interviews with All Black mothers acknowledges the 'racial' mix of a team which is dominated by powerful Maori and Pacific Island players who, in the context of sporting excellence, become eligible for televisual citizenship. By contrast, the advertising break privileges 'whiteness', as advertisers target products and services at the 'consuming' sector of the audience by representing normative versions of bourgeois, heterosexual social relations. (Following on from the advertisement for the National Bank, a local cosmetic company advertises a perfume called 'White Shoulders' while the next advertisement in the segment - for 'Go-boy' dog food reeks of a bourgeois 'white' lifestyle, with two pedigree, golden-blond retrievers bounding through the leisured space of an unworked rural landscape).

In the second example to be discussed - the

coverage of the Bledisloe Cup broadcast from Auckland's Eden Park - the match is produced as a 'live' cultural event for both the national television audience and viewers in Australia. Such spectacles are relatively cheap to broadcast and provide examples of the way in which electronic media have transformed the traditional relationship between physical settings and social events.

Satellite delivery enables spatially dispersed groups to participate in live performances as a community of viewers united by an experience created within the electronically-generated space of transmission. In this case, the commentary of the white male presenter is broadcast simultaneously to the crowd at Eden Park (who are able to view the broadcast on large screens around the stadium) and to the viewers 'at home'. The audience's response to the event is mediated by cameras which provide a mix of shots (including close-ups of the crowd), drawing the viewer closer to the 'action' and potentially organising responses to the event.

The hour-long build-up to the match is scripted in order to create numerous opportunities for advertising breaks and repetitive 'branding' clips for Steinlager - 'sponsors of our boys in black' - edited to a segment of the Thin Lizzy song 'The Boys are Back in Town'.

The unity of the programme is organised through cross-referential segments linking promotional discourses (brand 'New Zealand') with popular

culture in a secular celebration of nation which condenses motifs and myths - 'our boys' and 'the people' - to signify unity in a sporting battle reconfigured as 'war'. A chain of repetitive refrains - the Steinlager riff and channel branding together with clips of local celebrities, sports personalities and politicians wishing the team well - construct linkages between the team, the nation and domestic viewers.

At one point the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra and a chorus of singers from the Australasian version of Lloyd Webber's Les Miserables perform 'The People's Song'. As the words appear on the screen above the stage, the stadium crowd join in the chorus:

Do you hear the people sing  
It is the music of people who long to be  
free  
Singing the song of angry men  
Of people who will not be slaves again

The camera closes in on the crowd picking out faces expressing intense emotion, including a close-up shot of New Zealand's international opera 'star' Kiri Te Kanawa wiping a tear from her eye. This 'melting-pot' of high and popular culture elements - the bringing together of famous and the ordinary - produces a repertoire of visual and aural stimuli encoding a shared sense of community in which mass participation and egalitarianism symbolise belonging in the face of 'adversity'.

The discussion above suggests deregulated broadcasting organisations, operating at a supra-national level, target particular segments of

audience through the reproduction of recognisably 'local' discourses which operate intertextually across different genres. Given the fabric of everyday life is increasingly saturated with a flow of signs which tend to 'disembed' social relations so that, as Appardurai puts it 'the imagination is now central to all forms of agency' (Apparadurai, 1996:6), it follows that in fields of cultural production 'local' identities are increasingly constituted by imaginaries produced elsewhere.

Moreover, in the context of the deregulation of the public sphere (with the attendant profit-driven necessity of the delivery of 'AB' sections of audience to advertisers), the televisual landscape of nation, however non-specific, may be racialised in particularly regressive ways. Without undertaking audience research it is impossible to speculate on the way viewers are positioned in relation to such coverage. However, the flow of televisual material discussed above suggests an overarching spatial identity - 'we the people' - invites viewers to participate in a spectacle addressed to a national collectivity. Crucially the question remains, how do actual groups of domestic viewers identify with a national imaginary produced within a medium which continues to privilege 'whiteness' in representations of 'nation'?

While the globalised commodification of culture, characterised by convergence between formerly distinct spheres such example television, cinema, publishing and the leisure industries, creates

domains of value and taste through the valorisation of a generic 'western lifestyle' the interventions of these industries are not necessarily monolithic or homogenising nor are consumption practices necessarily passive or predictable.

Cultural identities are produced through a network of apparatuses and daily practices which situate individuals within imaginary narratives and as a result they are socialised into forms of national or ethnic belonging. In national formations the 'language of the people' is reproduced through the media and cultural industries and inculcated through the schooling system.

As we have seen in the discussion of the new national museum in New Zealand, the state is able to make active interventions in reinterpreting and reinscribing the narrations of nation. Such explicit interventions, which delineate the boundaries of cultural identities through particular inclusions and exclusions, provide the structural mechanisms for defining 'national culture'. These institutional mechanisms produce the 'fictive identities' of nation by projecting individual existence into the the weft of a collective narrative which is continually contested and transformed by struggles for hegemony.

## Chapter 6

This thesis has examined the historical, economic and cultural context for the articulation and rearticulation of shifting constructions of 'race' and ethnicity which have legitimated the structural inequalities and exclusions of a colonial state formation installed in New Zealand during the latter half of the nineteenth century to facilitate favourable conditions for capitalist modes of production and extraction.

Previous chapters have shown that the way in which different groupings have been imagined and represented as 'raced' collectivities at particular historical conjunctures has been central to the process of nation-building in New Zealand and more latterly to the bicultural settlement which has 'indigenised' the dominant racialised configuration Maori/Pakeha to construct a new version of nation based on the rhetoric 'we are all settlers'.

As Chapter 2 analysed, New Zealand's 'crisis of identity' during the past twenty years has been bound up with a shift of economic focus away from the former ties of Empire towards the Pacific Rim. The resultant political, cultural and economic realignments have seen racialised identities in New Zealand 'remade' in the face of globalisation and deregulation.

The thesis has shown how 'whiteness' as a system of structured privilege, produced an identity that was dehistoricised, invisible and unexamined precisely because it came to be aligned with the idea of nation. White New Zealanders were represented as the New Zealanders and in the process their majority presence in the territory has been legitimated and naturalised.

European settlers who emigrated to New Zealand in the nineteenth century travelled to a place which had been constructed textually through an imperial archive which classified, measured and hierarchised the Empire, systematically valorising European political social and cultural practices as the universal of the 'civilising mission', over all others.

The colonial space was represented as the New Jerusalem; a place manifestly different and better than the place the settlers had left behind. National identity became condensed around settler relationships with the landscape in a future-oriented vision which was set against the perceived deprivations and alienations of industrialised Europe.

Aligned with the civilising discourses of modernity, 'whiteness' came to function as a normative, hegemonic and privileged cultural identity in New Zealand (coterminous with dominant notions of 'citizenship'), albeit stratified by divisions of class and gender.



Thus constructions of nation saw 'whiteness' harnessed to the idea of civilisation, democracy, progress and individualism in a fashion replicated in different ways in other geo-political contexts by those nations which came to comprise 'the West'.

The Treaty of Waitangi (1840) provided the legal means for the colonisers to legitimate their local objectives. As Chapter 3 has detailed, the Treaty enabled the colonisers to quickly expedite the material objectives of the 'civilising mission', namely the acquisition of Maori land which was obtained by imposing European notions of value and individual property rights on the land. Tribal forms of land ownership and management which did not 'add value' were rendered illegal; such territory was designated as 'waste land' and subsequently confiscated.

For the settler majority, the Treaty, the form of which was mistakenly represented in national histories as unique to New Zealand, has until recently, symbolised national unity and racial harmony, shoring up the myth that the settlers had participated in a benevolent colonisation process. Discourses of nation coalesced around the myth - 'We are one people' - a rallying cry which implied the assimilation of Maori had been successfully achieved. Such constructions glossed the legal status of the treaty, which was only recently acknowledged, and the colonial objectives it had been drawn up to achieve.

The acquisition of cheap land was the foundation for white settler prosperity. The thesis has shown that privileges of 'whiteness' accrued to the settler majority through an uneven distribution of economic, political, social and cultural power which saw the social organisation and complex cultural practices of the Maori systematically denigrated and marginalised as the totalising structures of the national formation were put in place. Of course, the 'land-grab' was the most significant but in other arenas modernity was imposed through the technologies of 'governmentality'. For example, the installation of English as the official language of nation determined the cultural values and standards of the colonial education system (defining public forms of tastes and value); this in turn impacted on the hierarchies structuring the labour market and the social formation by effectively marginalising those for whom Maori was a first language.

At the same time the ambivalence which has historically characterised the relationship between the settler majority and the Maori began to show itself from the 1890's when 'Maori' iconography began to appear in public versions of nationhood. Maoriness provided the means to represent distinctiveness for a nation which lacked the 'cultural capital' of the 'historic nations' of the 'West'.

The extent to which the appropriations of Maori land had been naturalised in discourses of nation,

can be gleaned from the way in which associations between Maori and the land could at the same time provide reference points for the colonial culture which sought to represent its uniqueness by distancing itself in discourses of nation from its dependency on Britain.

Stamps, currency and souvenirs were embellished with Maori scrolls while a repertoire of distinctive imagery based on 'traditional' Maoriness were used in tourist literature and later in commercial iconography. Importantly this repertoire was later available for reappropriation by Maori asserting contemporary claims to indigeneity and sovereignty.

The thesis has traced the 'traffic' between Maoridom and settler culture in order to show that Maori were never mere victims of colonialism - that the relationship was more dialogic than monologic. The renegotiation of the Treaty of Waitangi came out of a long, historic struggle against the imposition of Eurocentric cultural, political and social institutions which, through mechanisms of regulation and control, sought at first to assimilate the indigenous people as 'almost-modern' subjects within the liberal democratic state.

Stripped of their land and disadvantaged by the capitalist division of labour imposed in the colony, Maori have always resisted colonial domination and as a result, were subjected to the most coercive and repressive technologies of state

power - the legal apparatus and civil war during the latter part of the nineteenth century. More recently, as Chapter 3 has shown, counter-hegemonic challenges for Maori sovereignty have been incorporated, for the moment at least, through the inclusionary mechanisms of the 'bicultural settlement'.

Identity claims have been crucial for Maori tribal groups making claims for reparations to the Waitangi Tribunal. Rulings handed down by the Tribunal have re-assessed colonial appropriations in terms of the spiritual values Maori are deemed to have attached to the land. These contemporary reinterpretations of the terms of the treaty have insisted that for Maori, land was a source of identity that went beyond the limited relationship enshrined in European law which recognised Maori rights only in relation to 'cultivated' land. Access to political and economic power has been largely restricted to those who have successfully 'integrated' and to those groupings who aligned themselves most strongly to a cultural identity based on constructions of 'tradition', in particular, as having specific allegiances to tribe.

This channelling of identity has placed severe limitations on the nature of the claims which, in order to be viable, have had to be subsumed within an identity rubric which has essentialised Maoriness and in the process excluded those claimants who have attempted to go beyond the frame in order to politicise Treaty issues through a

broader critique of colonialism and its relationship to capitalism.

Thus while the 'primitivist' idealisations have had strategic political value, playing an empowering role in the recognition of Maori rights and reparations; the 'truth claims' which police the boundaries of Maoriness not only affirm indigenous spirituality in relation to the land and nature, they also marginalise those elements deemed 'inauthentic'.

The emphasis on 'authenticity' is of course as 'invented' as any other version of identity. Pan-tribal Maori identities only emerged in the early nineteenth century and provided a collective means to counter colonial power. The cultural practices attributed to these forms of identification have drawn on colonialist representations of a primitivism 'textualised' by European anthropologists and missionaries during the early colonial period. To this extent, the thesis has shown that 'Maoriness' is as much an invention of modernity as 'whiteness'.

Thus the recent bicultural settlement in New Zealand, based on the recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi's legal framing of 'two peoples one nation', can be seen to have provided a compromise staging-post in the on-going post-colonial struggle.

In the global arena the nation state appears to have settled accounts with Maori and this has

improved the country's stability rating in the international markets. The reassessment of the Treaty of Waitangi signals a break with New Zealand's imperial past - sending a positive signal to the country's new trading partners on the Pacific Rim. At the same time, with the national economy moving from its colonial dependency on agricultural production towards deregulated, service-based clusters, new versions of nation, based on biculturalism's valorisation of tradition and authenticity, have provided a means to 'brand' the nation - the 'purity' of physical landscape and the indigenous people now provide the 'unique selling point' for the place in the global tourist market.

Simultaneously, the racial hierarchies through which the hegemonically privileged category 'white' were produced, have been subjected to a 'renovation'. The Maori challenge to both the legality and the morality of white settlement has resulted in attempts to construct 'post-settler' narratives which incorporate Maoriness without significantly diminishing white entitlements. This has seen 'whiteness' effect a partial indigenisation by taking on some of the newly-valorised attributes of 'Maoriness' in order to rework notions of entitlement through spiritual claims to the land. This is a move which produces a 'pakeha' identity uncontaminated by Europe whilst perpetuating the long-standing national amnesia which erases connections between the material conditions underpinning white privilege and the history of colonialism. Instead, in a

move of disaffiliation, where Pakeha become the victims of modernity, the disavowal of colonialism is linked to a contemporary inversion which positions Europe as New Zealand's Other as the nation is 're-branded' for its role in the new globalised era of 'corporate multi-culturalism'.

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