

‘A dead sheet covered with meaningless words?’

PLACE NAMES AND THE CULTURAL COLONIZATION OF TAURANGA



IN 1927, Johannes Andersen examined the map of Banks Peninsula. ‘[A]fter the names of a district have been studied’, he wrote, ‘the map is no longer a dead sheet covered with meaningless words, but men and women start to life, [and] the whole district teems with energetic beings’.¹ Clearly, for Andersen, the map was not a static artefact, but a dynamic and living text that spoke of historical characters with activity and life. The map was for him the record of lived experience: it was a spatial as well as an historical record. The map also democratized history. Andersen was captivated by the ‘Maoris, whalers, explorers, bushmen, settlers — all of whom have helped to make the country what it is, and whose history is therefore worthy of some record.’² This essay applies Andersen’s idea of the map as ‘living history’ with specific reference to the street and suburb names of the city of Tauranga in the western Bay of Plenty. It asks the following questions: Who or what do the street names commemorate? What Maori names have been retained or erased by the settler society? And why have these names been kept or discarded? The essay does not attempt to rewrite the history of Tauranga or the history of its place names, but it does offer some thoughts on alternative ways of seeing and reading these names.

Collectively, place names — street names, suburb names and the names of geographical sites — reveal much about the history of a place and the people who have lived there. While others have delineated the histories of place names at both national and regional levels, there is a need to examine these names as something more than just momentary semantic expressions.³ It is not enough to treat place names simply as names, as labels on the land or marks on the map — for they are, first and foremost, human impressions on the land. Throughout this essay, therefore, there is an emphasis on seeing the land as a palimpsest, comprising a series of cultural landscapes laid over one another, forming a kind of linguistic montage. It assumes that the land may be read as a text, where the names inscribed on it are considered as artefacts, remnants and ruins of past peoples, places and occasions.

This essay also proposes that it is possible to read place naming as part of the ongoing ‘cultural colonization’ of Aotearoa New Zealand. Cultural colonization refers to the systematic authentication of ideas and cultural constructs as normal or neutral through various linguistic, textual and discursive structures. As Peter Gibbons has suggested, in Aotearoa New Zealand, cultural colonization, as

expressed in published (especially non-fiction) texts, has rendered the European presence as normative, and correspondingly, the Maori as marginal.⁴ My intention in this essay is not simply to recite the history and meanings of Maori and European place, street and suburban names in Tauranga, though this will be touched on briefly. Rather, my purpose is twofold. First I wish to interrogate the 'textual colonization' of and by place names by looking at the texts and discursive sites that have given (and continue to give) these names legitimacy. Second, I offer some comment on these names and their relevance to, and relationship with, the postcolonial present. The essay has been written with a keen awareness of the 'politics of naming' — an acknowledgement of the power of place names, real and rhetorical, and their frequently contested status in the present — and a desire not to reinscribe or endorse those same politics. In short, the essay does not wish to be a further colonizing site: it seeks to work against this impulse and present the place and street names of Tauranga in a new light.

First, what is the local historical context against which place naming in Tauranga should be read? Tauranga has had a particularly complex history of conflict, co-operation and cultural interaction. There are many histories of the place, and many perspectives on these histories, but they can be broadly described in terms of Maori and European stories of invasion and settlement.⁵ According to Maori tradition, the lands around Tauranga harbour, or Te Awanui, have always been an area of dense Maori settlement. The temperate climate, the abundance of kai moana (seafood), and the fertile coastal lowlands were conducive to long-term habitation. Since the arrival of the first waka more than seven centuries ago, the area has been occupied continuously by a succession of Maori peoples. But this was not an idyllic existence. Tauranga's bountiful natural resources led to feuds between the resident tribes. By the time the first Europeans landed on the harbour shores the area was dominated by Ngaiterangi and Ngati Ranginui iwi. Over time, these two rival groups formed close alliances through marriage and mutual co-operation. During the nineteenth century they combined to defend Tauranga from several waves of invaders: from Ngapuhi raids in the 1820s and conflict with Arawa and Waikato in the 1830s, through to the occupation by the Imperial forces in the 1860s. During the half-century following the arrival of Christian missionaries in the 1830s, Tauranga Maori were increasingly drawn into contact with Europeans, sometimes peacefully, sometimes not.⁶ Ultimately this contact led to land loss — largely through the raupatu or land confiscations — and accompanying social and economic deprivation.

Although there was little European settlement in the Tauranga district prior to the 1860s, the confiscation legislation encouraged military settlers to take up blocks of confiscated land. However, many military settlers soon left, defeated by inaccessible or poor-quality land and threatened by Maori reprisals in the wake of the raupatu. Nonetheless they left their mark on the street names of the future city. Other immigrants, especially Irish, were attracted by the 'special settlements' that were planned in the 1870s–1880s, most notably at Katikati and Te Puke under the direction of the colonist and emigration agent, George Vesey Stewart. When Tauranga was declared a borough in 1882, Stewart was

elected its first mayor.⁷ Tauranga has gradually included outlying suburban areas into its jurisdiction and finally became a city in 1963. In latter years, the city and its environs have grown rapidly, new residents being drawn to Tauranga by the same factors that attracted the first Maori settlers: its favourable climate, natural landscape and prosperity.

The street names applied in Tauranga by town planners, government officials, the local council and, more recently, by subdividers and developers, largely reflect its European history (see Figure 1).⁸ These street names can be categorized

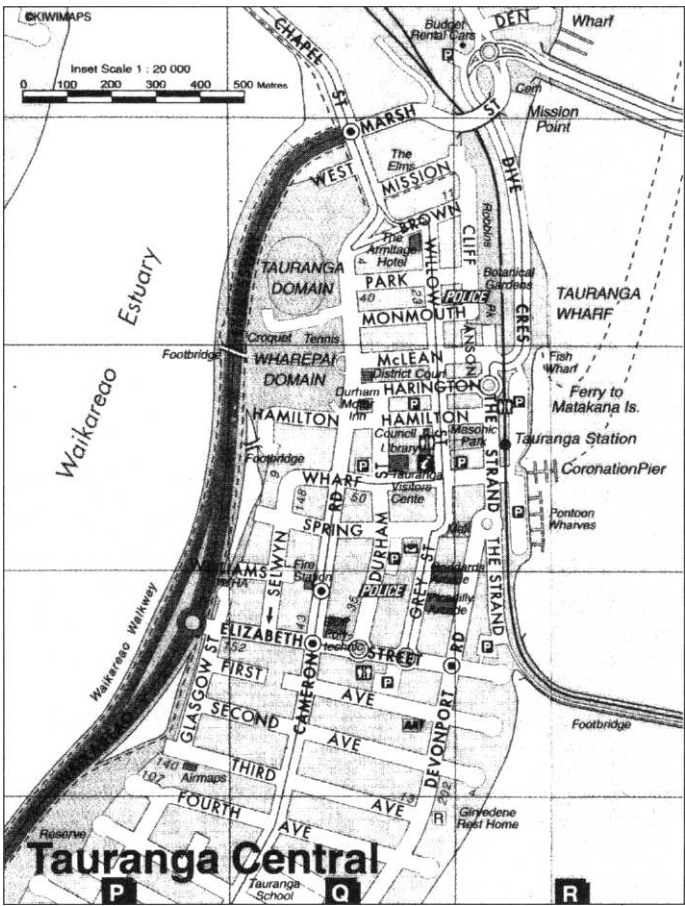


Figure 1: ‘Tauranga Central’, insert from ‘Tauranga Mt Maunganui Bay of Plenty District Street Map and 10 Provincial Bay of Plenty Towns . . .’. Kiwi Minimap, 2001, Product No.27. New Zealand Minimaps Ltd., PO Box 2472, Christchurch.

as descriptive, commemorative and designative. Descriptive names usually include a literal description of the street or its physical surroundings. For instance, Church Street and Hospital Street were named for their close proximity to St

George’s Church at Gate Pa and Tauranga hospital respectively.⁹ Other names include a clear reference to their origins. Lemon Grove was named for the lemon orchard planted there in the 1930s; Mission Street was named for The Elms, the mission station established by the Church Missionary Society at Te Papa (the settlement of Tauranga) in 1834–1835; and Monmouth Street for the Monmouth Redoubt, a military fortification erected there during the wars of the 1860s (see Figure 2).¹⁰ Other descriptive names are a little more cryptic. Spring Street in

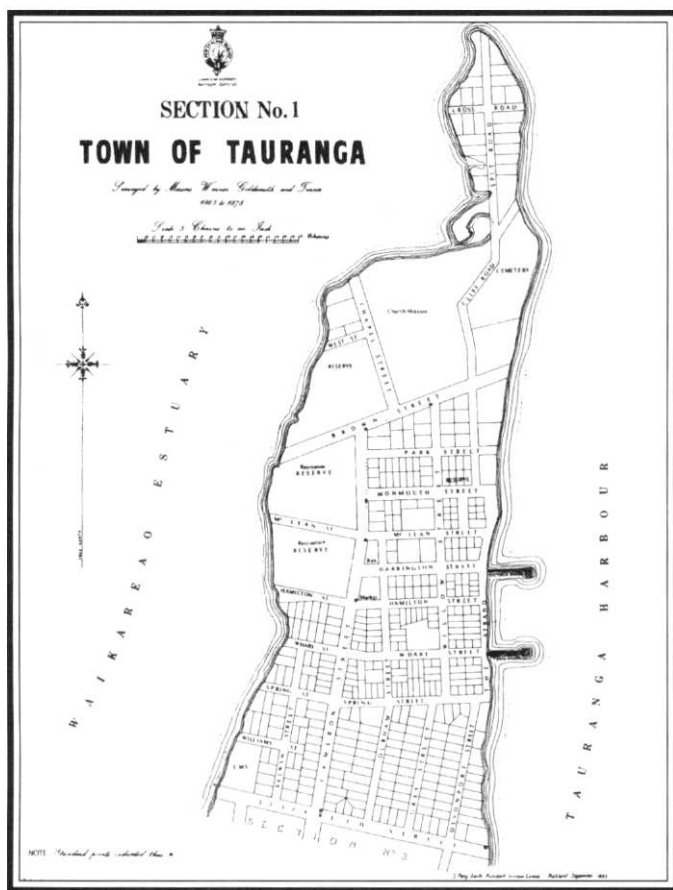


Figure 2: ‘Town of Tauranga Section No.1’, showing the ‘civil town area’ (September 1883), Tauranga Public Library.

downtown Tauranga was originally named for the water spring, complete with pump and water-trough, once situated there.¹¹ Turret Road near the Hairini estuary recalled the turret, a ‘tower-like structure of heart totara’ which carried telegraph wires across the estuary.¹² Willow Street was named for the willow trees planted along the boundaries of Hamilton and Willow Streets.¹³ The names of Beach Road, Cliff Road, Harbour Drive and Wharf Street refer to physical

features and are self-explanatory. The Avenues, perhaps the most striking characteristic of Tauranga's grid plan, are also descriptive. These streets, numbering First to Twenty-Third Avenue, are laid out in a neat parallel fashion from the centre of town in a southward direction (see Figure 3).¹⁴

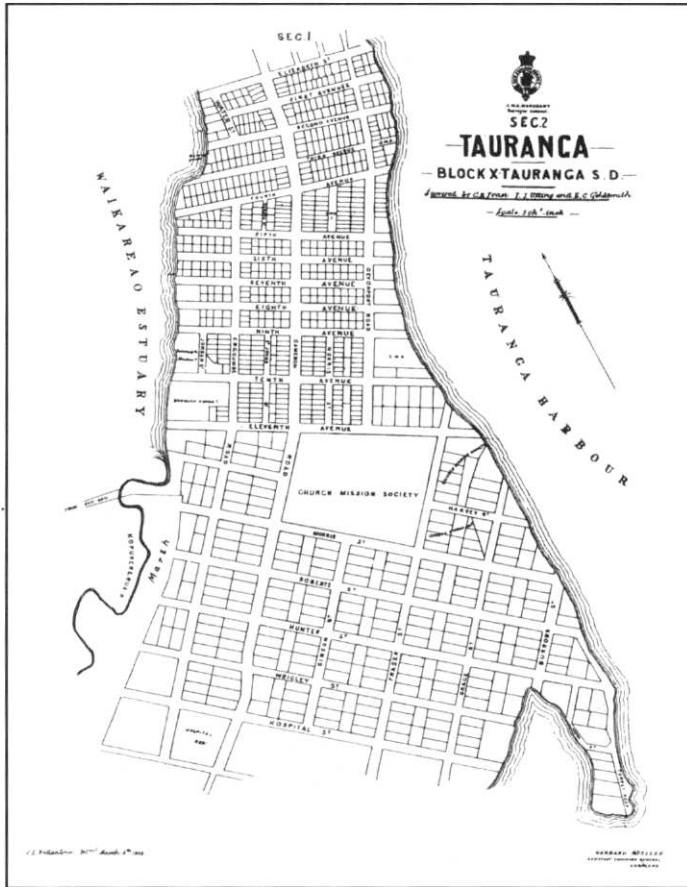


Figure 3: 'Tauranga, Section 2', showing the 'military settlement area' (March 1902), Tauranga Public Library.

Commemorative street names are also prominent in Tauranga. These are names that recall an historical event or entity or a well-known and recognizable place. European, and especially British places are well represented. Birmingham, Chester and Coventry Streets were, for example, named for the English cathedrals of those names.¹⁵ Dysart Road was named after the town in Fife, Scotland.¹⁶ The street names frequently include military allusions: Devonport Road was named for the English naval base, while Dunkirk Street remembered the famous troop evacuation in May 1940.¹⁷ Durham Street honoured the 68th Durham Light Infantry stationed in Tauranga in the 1860s.¹⁸ Significant places in New Zealand

are also honoured: for example, Egmont Street was named after the New Zealand mountain of that name. The origin of other names is less obvious. Paine Street, for instance, is said to have been named after the philosopher Thomas Paine, and Bureta Road after a village and river of that name in Fiji.¹⁹ However, the vast majority of commemorative names are devoted to the names of ships that played a decisive role in the settlement of Tauranga or in foreign theatres of war. These include Achilles Crescent, Ajax Place, Esk Street, Miranda Street, Harrier Street, Pandora Street, Pamir Place and Victory Street.²⁰ Endeavour Avenue and Resolution Road were named after two of Cook's best-known ships.

But by far the majority of street names in Tauranga are designations that memorialize individuals, especially its prominent male citizens. These names can broadly be divided into nineteenth- and twentieth-century derivations. Cameron Road, Grey Street, and Harington Street, for instance, remember nineteenth-century public figures: General Duncan Cameron, Governor George Grey and Colonel Philip Harington.²¹ Faulkner, Chadwick and Edgcumbe Roads remember early settler families.²² First names, as well as surnames, are used — for example, Elizabeth and Clivedene Streets — though as with surnames, most are masculine.²³ These names celebrate local, national and international personalities. They are too numerous to recount here in detail, but in general, as well as recalling the names of early settler families, colonial politicians and military figures, they honour members of the British Royal family, local landowners and even land developers and their families.²⁴

Despite the apparent haphazard nature of their distribution, there is logic to this pattern of street names. The Tauranga Council (and its predecessor the Tauranga Borough Council) adopted 12 themes in naming the streets of Tauranga. These were as follows: 1. New Zealand provinces; 2. biblical names; 3. New Zealand birds; 4. New Zealand trees; 5. flowers; 6. boys' first names; 7. girls' first names; 8. famous holiday resorts (suitable for Welcome Bay); 9. well-known English places (suitable for the Cambridge Road area); 10. British Royal names (suitable for the Bellevue area); 11. Maori names (suitable for the Maungatapu peninsula); and 12. Scottish names (considered suitable for the Greerton South area).²⁵ The Council added a further qualification that Maori names, when these were selected, had to be names that were 'easily pronounced'.²⁶ This system of nomenclature had further guidelines. The Poike area was to include the names of gems and precious stones; the Welcome Bay area names of ships with New Zealand associations; the suburb of Ohauti was to have streets named after New Zealand mountains; the Matua peninsula was to include the names of New Zealand birds; and the Cambridge Road area was to display the names of English cathedrals.²⁷ It is not known who devised this system or when it was first applied.²⁸ However, a number of points about this pattern of naming deserve comment. First, there are the obvious allusions to other places, especially England and Scotland. These names reflect the origins of the first European settlers, harking back to places beyond New Zealand shores. Moreover, these names are used in a deliberately historical sense: as if the language of naming could impart something of another time and place. The use of biblical names tends to reinforce this awareness of (and beckoning towards)

history. However, while there is an obvious homage to Europe, there is also an effort to indigenize the local landscape: to domesticate it by adopting the names of New Zealand birds, trees and flowers. Such an invocation of things 'native' may be read as a form of cultural appropriation: especially where white settlers have adopted indigenous symbols, signs and motifs in order to create a distinctive 'New Zealand' culture. But perhaps the most striking feature of this naming system is the marginalization of Maori names — and the exemption given to those names that could easily roll off the tongue. The dismissal of local Maori names, and their consequent banishment to the margins of the city map, is perhaps the clearest expression of 'cultural colonization' in Tauranga.

When read in the context of this system of nomenclature, the relative absence of Maori street names in Tauranga is perhaps not surprising.²⁹ While Maori names have been retained in the names of several city suburbs (for instance, Matua, Otumoetai, Ohauti, Maungatapu and Hairini), they are overwhelmed by names of European derivation (including Bellevue, Brookfield, Judea, Greerton, Parkvale, Welcome Bay). Further, the presence of Maori names at the suburban level is now being eclipsed by new subdivisions with names such as 'Huntington Estate', 'Belvedere', 'Sterling Gate', 'Northridge Estate', 'Ocean Heights' and 'Riverstone Park'. In general, however, Maori street names can also be read as descriptive, commemorative and designative. Some are plainly descriptive, although their exact derivation is not always clear. Maungawhare Place, for instance, derives from the name of an early settler homestead.³⁰ Te Atatu and Waimapu Streets could be said to be literally descriptive.³¹ Some names are commemorative. Matua Road carries the name of the Matuaiwi pa, at one time a heavily populated part of the Matua peninsula, located at what is now the northern end of Matua Road. Pah Street is named for the site of the Otumoetai pa, another dense site of pre-European Maori settlement, while Tainui Street is named for the Tainui waka. Again, many of the Maori street names memorialize important individuals. Tupaea Place and Ngatai Road are named after Hori Tupaea and Hori Ngatai, prominent Ngaiterangi chiefs.³² Taipari Street is named for the chief Taipari of Maungatapu, and Winiata Street for Dr Maharia Winiata.³³ Manuwai Drive, however, was chosen by developers.³⁴ Other Maori street names have entirely disappeared. Ranginui Street, for instance, named in 1941, was renamed Briarley Street in 1979.³⁵ Moreover, it seems that most of these Maori names were given by Pakeha settlers, not by Maori themselves. Place names that have been overwritten by or subsumed beneath other names might therefore be considered as 'lost places' — places that have literally been written off the map.³⁶

While many traditional Maori place names in Tauranga have not been incorporated into its urban street names, they still exist in its cultural landscape. It is possible to read Maori place names in and around the city of Tauranga in terms of seven separate categories. The first group refers to high points or prominent features, such as Onetaweta, Waiaka, Riri-iti and Te Maro.³⁷ This group of strategic points constitutes the majority of traditional Maori place names in Tauranga. Second, there are places of low land and swamp, such as Okehuroa, Okahukura and Waipapa.³⁸ Third are the names of streams and fords, such as

Whakapaewaka and Tataramoā.³⁹ Some names refer specifically to beaches in the harbour, such as Aropuke, Hawaiki and Kiri-mokomoko.⁴⁰ Specific parts of the harbour are named too: for example, Awanui and Pohue.⁴¹ The islands of the harbour, Motu-o-pae and Motuo-puhi are also named.⁴² Lastly, certain pa sites are remembered, including Matuaiwi, Te Rengarenga, Otumoetai and Otamataha.⁴³ Other names have mythological and historical associations. As Evelyn Stokes has noted, every peak and geographical feature was named individually and every feature of the landscape was named and known intimately by a people who enjoyed a close spiritual relationship with their land.⁴⁴

How then, are we to interpret these names? First, we might consider the textual colonization *of* and *by* place names. This process operates on two levels: the national and the local. At the national level, the documentation of place names, of both Maori and Pakeha derivation, is diverse and wide-ranging. Place names exist in popular books addressed ostensibly to the tourist market, street directories, the efforts of local historical societies, and scholarly publications. While some of these texts can be considered as colonizing sites, in that they simply rewrite and so replicate the history of European place and street names, and to some degree the politics of that history, this latter group, the scholarly texts, deserves further attention.

Published scholarly texts on Maori place names fall into two categories that do not respect neat chronological boundaries. First are those texts that might be called 'preservationist' history: texts that record, list and then catalogue as many Maori place names as possible. It could be said that these texts are colonizing sites, in that they codify and textualize Maori names within a particular discursive context. By and large, these are historical texts. This effort had much in common with the 'great ethnographic push' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries — the attempts by the Polynesianists Stephenson Percy Smith, Elsdon Best and Edward Tregear, among others, to 'rescue' the image and the history of 'the Maori as he was'. Johannes Andersen, a noted bibliophile and scholar of Maori, carried over his enthusiasm for things Maori to his study of place names. His particular interest was in elucidating the meanings of Maori place names and so in a sense, writing them back into historical narratives. Andersen's examination of Maori place names operated at both regional and national levels, as seen in his *Place Names of Banks Peninsula* (1927) and *Maori Place-Names* (1942).⁴⁵ Andersen was particularly interested in the frequency of Maori place names. He observed in 1927 how Maori names had 'sprayed the entire surface of the land from seashore to mountain-top'.⁴⁶ Andersen offered three explanations on why many Maori place names 'preponderate'. He suggested that 'the Maori were first here and gave the first names'; that 'the names are phonetically spelt and so are easily pronounced'; and 'it is easier to adopt a name than invent a new one, especially when the one adopted is euphonious, descriptive, and historic'.⁴⁷

Others have also noted the frequency of Maori place names on the national map. Herries Beattie wrote in 1945 that 'a visitor to New Zealand, or a resident of another land studying our maps, would, if of an observant mind, note the

preponderance of Maori names in the North Island and of European nomenclature in the South Island.’⁴⁸ A.W. Reed’s work on New Zealand place names extends these ‘preservationist’ characteristics. Part of his life’s work was the compilation of lists of New Zealand place names. Reed too had a particular interest in ‘rescuing’ forgotten or little-known Maori place names. He also observed that many Maori place names had either been lost or transformed beyond recognition. ‘Some [Maori] names’, he lamented, ‘have suffered alteration or distortion; some are modern names; [and] some are too easily translated, giving false and ludicrous conclusions; and some are quite untranslatable.’⁴⁹

The second group of published texts on Maori place names might be termed ‘postcolonial’ and began in earnest with *Nga Tohu Pumahara: The Survey Pegs of the Past* (1990), a publication commissioned by the New Zealand Geographic Board.⁵⁰ This publication, though slight, argues that Maori place names need to be understood in terms of their tribal and historical contexts. This book deliberately marginalizes Pakeha and European place names, arguing that while ‘Pakeha names mark individual places and individual memories of parcels of history’, Maori place names ‘can only be understood through their connection to other names and other places’.⁵¹ It argues for a strong sense of meaning *between* the Maori place names, as well as understanding the names themselves. However, while *Nga Tohu Pumahara* challenges the hegemony of European place names, it is curiously reliant on Andersen and Reed.⁵² Learning Media’s book, *Nga Reo o Te Whenua: The Voices of the Land* (1992), ostensibly aimed at schoolchildren, has a similar objective.⁵³ Both these latter texts point out that ‘place’ has different meanings within different cultural contexts. This point is further emphasized by the New Zealand Geographic Board in its *He Korero Pūrākau mo ngā Taunahanahatanga a ngā Tūpuna: Place Names of the Ancestors, a Maori Oral History Atlas* (1990) and more recently, in the *Bateman New Zealand Historical Atlas* (1997).⁵⁴

This ‘textual colonization’ exists at the local level too. Here it is possible to read street names as particular discursive constructs. Street names of European and British derivation are among the most enduring legacies of colonization: their presence, persistence and dominance is a constant reminder of the British colonial occupation. But place names and street names do not exist in a vacuum: they circulate within and are given meaning by a variety of different media. Names are constantly articulated, validated and reified through these sites. Street names exist in a variety of different forms: on street signs, district plans and maps (survey maps, official maps, tourist maps and even on-line and virtual maps).⁵⁵ They also appear in business and personal residential addresses, informing both private and public identities.⁵⁶

Street names also appear in local histories. In Tauranga these texts include the centennial history of Tauranga;⁵⁷ the history of Tauranga county;⁵⁸ A.C. Bellamy’s edited collection of documents and articles, *Tauranga 1882–1982: The Centennial of Gazetting Tauranga as a Borough* (1982); the researches of the Tauranga Historical Society;⁵⁹ numerous newspaper articles;⁶⁰ and occasional publicity and promotional material.⁶¹ Local interest in the history of Tauranga’s place and street names has always been fairly strong. For instance, the Tauranga

Historical Society, established in July 1951, included in its objectives its aim to 'investigate and establish the proper meanings or origins of local place names and to ensure the correct geographical spelling thereof'.⁶² While these records are valuable in that they record the meanings and origins of place names, street names and suburban names in Tauranga, they cannot be divorced from the larger discursive structures within which they exist. In other words, the power of the names themselves — and explanations of why they were applied and who the names celebrate — is reinscribed through constant citation and publication.

But texts *about* street names invariably lead back to the names themselves: they are the primary texts. The various maps of Tauranga — the street maps and the cultural maps — when laid over each other, create a collage of Maori and European names. With this amalgam of Maori and European names, Tauranga is not unlike many other cities and towns in Aotearoa New Zealand.⁶³ Indeed, it could be said to be representative of the larger map of Aotearoa New Zealand, where the mixture of Maori and European place names is testimony to a shared colonial past. It is also revealing to map the hierarchy of the distribution of Maori and European names. It has been shown, for instance, that there is a greater frequency of European names in more prominent (larger) geographical features, and a greater concentration of Maori names in less significant (smaller) geographical features.⁶⁴ Allowing room for some regional variation, the modern map of New Zealand also reflects the distribution of the pre-European Maori population. It is worth noting, too, how the English language map-idiom has also corrupted many Maori place names.⁶⁵ As Andersen has observed, Pakeha have 'given many Maori names without due regard to their appropriateness or to their meaning, so that they must be regarded not as Maori but hybrids with alien meanings and too often alien pronunciation'.⁶⁶

It is important to stress, however, that the Maori names of Tauranga are not merely appellations on streets: their definition of 'place' is much broader than that. The term 'place' is a cultural construct. Place is space that has been given meaning, usually within particular cultural, social and historical contexts: in other words, place is space onto which meaning is ascribed.⁶⁷ Peter Read has argued that 'the ways in which humans demarcate their space are bound by the rules and customs of the cultures of which they form a part — the way in which they actually and symbolically create landscape within the cultural community probably reflects other organizing principles of that society and its world view'.⁶⁸ The way we view nature too, is culturally informed and affected. A mountain may not be a mountain until we recognize it as 'a mountain'. Similarly, a river is not 'a river', and a lake is not 'a lake' until we register them as discrete geographical entities.⁶⁹ 'Streets' are also cultural products, in that they only make sense when seen as part of a map, or plan. Streets — like their parent genre, the map — as well as imposing a sense of order and a certain degree of uniformity, convert space (the unknown) into place (the known).

The naming of places — in this case, street names — might then be said to operate on three discrete levels. First, to name a place is to identify it. A place once identified is then known, and becomes familiar and recognizable. Second,

to name a place is to own it in a metaphorical, if not a literal, sense. The ownership and origin of the name becomes inextricably connected with the identity of the namer. Third, naming a place codifies and categorizes space. A street name, for instance, takes its place on a map, within a catalogue of other (often closely related) names. These three modes or strategies of naming contribute to what might be termed a 'taxonomy of knowing': a way of seeing, ordering and recording the world in order to possess it. And all cultures, to some degree, acknowledge, or can at least identify with, ideas of place and placelessness.⁷⁰ For Maori, place names memorialize, celebrate and respect revered individuals, ancestors and particular events. Not just settlements or patches of habitation are named, but boundaries of land blocks and sites of spiritual and strategic significance. For the European invaders too, the naming of places involved writing over and writing about the land: naming was a clear indicator of their attempts at 'possession', however contested this might be. '*Names of places, too, should be changed*', Edward Gibbon Wakefield advised in 1849, '[for] they make part of the moral atmosphere of a country'.⁷¹ Naming, for all groups of settlers, is an assertion of literal acquisition: in fixing names to places a new society domesticates and linguistically colonizes the land. Place names that celebrate the British settler presence were perhaps the most convenient way of making the settlers feel at home in the colony. The early European settlers, like the society and cultures from which they were drawn, recognized the power of naming: their inscription of Old World place names on the 'new land' helped construct the colony and make it immediately accessible.

The recognition that place naming and colonization go hand in hand has prompted scholars to further explore the politics of naming, referred to earlier in this essay. Paul Carter, for instance, sees place names as part of the larger linguistic effort of colonization. The landscape of Australia, he argues, was created by the naming and mapping of the land by explorers, surveyors and settlers: he suggests that the 'historical space of the white settlers emerged through the medium of language'. 'Naming words', Carter maintains, 'were forms of spatial punctuation, transforming space into an object of knowledge, something that could be explored and read'.⁷² Place naming is, therefore, implicated in the processes of colonization through language and its own vital role in the colonial project. Place names and the naming of places have also been seen as highly gendered, as Kate Darian-Smith, Liz Gunner and Sarah Nuttall have demonstrated.⁷³

One aspect of street naming in Tauranga that merits further comment is the reapplication of Maori names (by the white settlers), and in particular, the selection of 'euphonious' or pleasant-sounding names. Paul Carter has suggested that if it is assumed that indigenous names are more euphonious, more poetic, or 'truer to the spirit of the country' than introduced European names, then these indigenous names cease to have meaning as words and simply become 'a record of environmental sounds'.⁷⁴ Preserved out of context, the indigenous name is, Carter argues, located not within its original historical and cultural contexts, but within the rhetorical ambit of a white (colonizing) geo-historical discourse. In white renaming, an indigenous name becomes no more than 'a

stuffed bird in a museum case', stripped of its original rhetorical and historical value.⁷⁵ Euphonious names, Carter contends, do not repossess the past — except as the land of the exotic.⁷⁶ In Australia, where streets, suburbs and whole cities have been renamed with indigenous names, this might be read as an exercise in cultural appropriation. This interpretation could also apply to Tauranga, since European and British names outnumber Maori names (for both suburbs and streets). What is more, while the Maori names that do exist are 'easy to pronounce', they are preserved out of context: there is no visible or obvious geographic or historic narrative into which they might 'fit'. They are indeed like 'stuffed birds in a museum case'.

The reapplication of selected Maori names in Tauranga may also be seen as attempts at settler indigenization. It would be fair to say that white settlers in Aotearoa New Zealand have, virtually ever since they arrived here, felt free to appropriate Maori signs, symbols and motifs in the construction of their own cultural and national identities. Place names were not immune to this process: indeed, in some ways, they were the most obvious cultural artefacts to uplift, transform and redesignate. Maori names, it was felt, could supply the settler landscape with a sense of history and a strong sense of place. This is evident in the naming of streets in Tauranga, especially in the policy of adopting the names of native birds, trees and flowers. The adoption and adaptation of these names was (and is) an assertion of Pakeha or 'white indigeneity'. It is now recognized that indigenous, or first nations peoples do not have a monopoly on claiming spiritual and emotional attachments to places and to the land. Non-indigenous peoples and the descendants of white settlers have in recent years maintained that they too enjoy relationships with the land that transcend the purely material or temporal. Michael King has suggested that this is the case for Pakeha in Aotearoa New Zealand.⁷⁷ Ken Gelder and Jane Jacobs have also argued how the descendants of white settlers in Australia have come to see the land and the natural environment as possessing special 'sacred' qualities: they suggest that non-Aboriginal Australians, as well as Aboriginal Australians, have an emotional affinity with place.⁷⁸ Such claims (and the efforts at place naming that accompanies these claims) can be read as attempts at domesticating and indigenizing the land: making the foreign environment seem familiar and seeing themselves as being *of* the land.

However, the postcolonial politics of naming is not always this clear cut and it is not accurate to simply dismiss all efforts at indigenous renaming as further expressions of colonization. It has been argued that even genuine attempts by non-indigenous groups to reintroduce indigenous street names are problematic: the integrity of the name is compromised because the namer, and not the named, retains linguistic, and therefore, political authority. In short, the street names are still applied within a Western colonialist framework.⁷⁹ For the descendants of white settlers in societies like Australia and New Zealand, the ambiguities of indigenous renaming are particularly acute. Tony Birch has pointed to the dilemma faced by white Australians who are sympathetic to the Koori cause, having to decide which Koori names should be 'restored', conscious that they are still inscribing these names within a settler-determined conceptual

framework.⁸⁰ This also holds true for those Pakeha who are concerned with giving priority to indigenous Maori, rather than introduced settler, place names. This is not to deny indigenous agency in modern renaming efforts. Perhaps devising systems of naming that are sensitive to, and accurately reflect, the histories of both indigenous and settler communities is the best way to avoid the pitfalls of the politics of naming outlined here.

On 4 September 2001 the *Bay of Plenty Times* reported a request by Te Ranginui o Ngai Tamarawaho to have the Waikareao Expressway, a major traffic bypass in the city, renamed 'Takitimu Drive'. The name of the great Takitimu waka, they argued, is more appropriate, as 'Waikareao' is the name of the estuary bounding the road, and literally means 'sparkling waters'. Mayor Noel Pope was said to be in favour of the name change, stating that the application of this ancestral name would be 'extremely relevant in terms of the historical settlement of this area'.⁸¹ If the proposal is accepted by the Tauranga District Council, the name change could be effective from late 2001. Since language is inherently political — because words and texts are closely allied with power — then it follows that place and street names, as semantic and historical expressions, are also politicized and contestable. This contest between present and past is also evident in the modern Treaty claims process. As many claims currently before the Waitangi Tribunal attest, the naming and renaming of places are not issues that can be simply consigned to history.⁸² The renaming of streets and other places is a debate threaded through current discourses about land rights, cultural identity and reconciliation. It is also possible that the modern interest in and awareness of place and street names signals a postcolonial coming-to-terms with the complexities of the colonial past and its memories. 'The past', as Chris Healy has observed, 'has appeared as a marker of loss (a golden age that is no more), or as a point of derisory comparison (history has passed us by), or as a trace of unease (what was history?). History has been remembered as part of the problem and part of the solution'.⁸³ However, there are real and practical impediments to renaming. It is one thing to theorize, but quite another to implement change. The challenge of renaming the modern map is that communities, both Maori and Pakeha, have vested interests in it and in place and street names — and that, on the whole, the postcolonial concerns outlined above are either not visible or not important to town planners, land developers and contemporary 'boosters'. Maps (like place names) take on a life of their own: for those of us who use them regularly, and who rely on them, they are essentially practical utilities, used to navigate ways around, within and through our cultural and physical landscapes. 'Names', as Andersen has suggested, 'are like personalities: we live with them, we grow up with them, and so we like to know something about them, be that something romantic, tragic, comic, historic, or merely commonplace'.⁸⁴

While the modern map of Tauranga can indeed be considered as 'living history', it is not the democratic story Johannes Andersen envisaged some 70 years ago. On the whole, Tauranga's city streets and suburbs memorialize its Great Men, its 'founding fathers', and their 'historically significant' deeds. The

first Maori settlers of the area, as well as white women settlers, are all but forgotten on the modern street map. But Andersen was right — at least on one point. We cannot afford to see a map and its constituent place and street names as 'a dead sheet covered with meaningless words', no more than we can treat it simply as static, frozen in time and space. As this study has shown, an analysis of place and street names can be read as colonization writ small. Place names signify the legacy or hangover of colonization in the present. But while these names are reminders of past colonizers' efforts, they also speak of contested and negotiated histories. Street and place names are powerful cultural artefacts, where an individual, a place or an event is recalled each time the name is written or uttered. Their presence may be fleeting and evanescent but it is *still there*. Place names are, therefore, monikers of history and markers of specific moments, as well as being colonizing sites/sights in their own right.

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NOTES

1 Johannes C. Andersen, *Place-Names of Banks Peninsula: A Topographical History*, Wellington, 1927, p.10. All quotations are cited as they appear in the original text.

2 *ibid.*

3 National surveys include Johannes C. Andersen, *Place Names in New Zealand: Rules of Nomenclature and List of Names Approved, or Changed, or Expunged*, [compiled by direction of the Honorary Geographic Board of New Zealand], Wellington, [n.d.]; A.W. Reed, *Place Names of New Zealand*, Wellington, 1975; A.W. Reed, *Supplement to Place Names of New Zealand, with Further Notes on Maori Names of North Auckland* by G.G. Hooker, Wellington, 1979; New Zealand Geographic Board, *He Korero Pūrākau mo ngā Taunahanahatanga a ngā Tūpuna: Place Names of the Ancestors*, *A Maori Oral History Atlas*, Wellington, 1990; and *Maori Place Names: Their Origins and Meanings*, Reed, Auckland, 1992. Local or regional studies include Andersen's *Place-Names of Banks Peninsula*; F.L. Irvine-Smith, *The Streets of My City: Wellington*, Wellington, 1948; Athol L. Kirk, *Street Names of Wanganui*, Wanganui, 1978; William G. Chapman and Katherine M. Wood, *Karori Streets, 1841–1991*, [Karori Historical Society], Wellington, 1991.

4 See Gibbons's discussion of the 'literature of invasion' and the 'literature of colonisation', in Peter Gibbons, 'Non-fiction', in T. Sturm, ed., *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1998, pp.31–118, esp. pp.38–69.

5 W.H. Gifford and H. Bradney, *A Centennial History of Tauranga*, Dunedin, 1940; Evelyn Stokes, *A History of Tauranga County*, Palmerston North, 1980; A.C. Bellamy, ed., *Tauranga 1882–1982*, Tauranga, 1982; John Aramete Wairehu Steedman, *Known Genealogies and History of the Maori Families of Tauranga and Surrounding Districts Nga Ohaaki o nga Whanau o Tauranga Moana*, Tauranga, 1984; *The Journals of A.N. Brown: CMS Missionary Tauranga, Covering the Years 1840 to 1842*, [The Elms Trust], Tauranga, 1990; Evelyn Stokes, ed., *Te Raupatu o Tauranga Moana. Vol. 2, Documents Relating to Tribal History, Confiscation and Reallocation of Tauranga Lands*, [University of Waikato], Hamilton, 1993.

6 Stokes, *History of Tauranga County*, pp.43–72.

7 Tauranga was proclaimed a borough under 'The Municipal Corporations Act 1876', *New Zealand Gazette*, 23 February 1882.

8 Only two names recall the early surveyors in the Tauranga district: Warner Road at Oropi for H.N. Warner, and Turner Road at Apata for A.C. Turner.

9 Hospital Street was renamed Seventeenth Avenue in 1956, see J.E.F. Rorke, 'Street Names', in Bellamy, pp.58, 61. On the history of street names in Tauranga, see also H.J. Vickery, 'Origin of Street Names', *Bay of Plenty Times* (BOPT), 29 October 1935; [Naming of Otumoetai, Pokapu Place and Millers Road], BOPT, 19 December 1947, p.3; 'Notes on Street Names', *Journal of the Tauranga Historical Society* (JTHS), 1, 1955, pp.4–5; 'Notes on Tauranga Street Names', JTHS, 3, 1955, pp.15–16; 'Tauranga Street Names', JTHS, 8, 1957, p.24; C. Kingsley-Smith, 'History in Street Names', and 'Historic Tauranga', Tourism and Publicity Booklet, [1960s], A136, Box 3, Tauranga Public Library (TPL).

10 Rorke, in Bellamy, pp.56–66.

11 The Springwell Brewery was located on the corner of Spring and Willow Streets, *ibid.*, p.64.

12 *ibid.*, p.65. 'Notes on Street Names', JTHS, 1, 1955, p.5.

13 BOPT, 28 July 1882.

14 The naming of First to Eleventh Avenue was suggested by J.H. McCaw, Secretary to the Town Board and later Town Clerk, see Rorke, in Bellamy, p.56.

15 *ibid.*, pp.56–66.

16 Named by the Tollemache family over whose land Dysart Road was cut: the family is related to the Earl of Dysart, *ibid.*

17 Rorke notes that this road was originally divided into several sections — Devonport Road, Devonport Street, Devonport Land, and Simson Street — but in 1913 the composite name, 'Devonport Road' replaced these names. Dunkirk Street was named in 1950, *ibid.*

18 *ibid.*, p.59.

19 Supposedly named by George Bell, a local businessman in the early twentieth century, for his favourite philosopher, Thomas Paine, *ibid.*, pp.63, 57.

20 The HMS *Achilles* and the HMS *Ajax* played a role in the Battle of the River Plate; HMS *Esk*, HMS *Miranda*, and HMS *Harrier* transported troops to the Battle of Gate Pa; the HMS *Pandora* completed the first comprehensive survey of the Tauranga harbour in 1852; and the *Pamir* was a German ship captured during the Second World War, later becoming a cargo ship, *ibid.*, pp.56–66.

21 General Duncan Cameron was commander of the colonial and Imperial forces at Gate Pa; George Grey was Governor at the time; and Colonel Philip Harington commanded the First Regiment of the Waikato Militia.

22 John Lees Faulkner was an early trader in Tauranga, arriving there in the 1830s. The settler John Alfred Chadwick lived in Tauranga until the 1880s; and Edgcumbe is named for Mr E.M. Edgcumbe, the first proprietor of the *Bay of Plenty Times*. See [the naming of St John, Edgcumbe, Jordan and Morris Streets by A.C. Turner], BOPT, 12 September 1878.

23 Rorke writes that Elizabeth Street was named for Mrs Elizabeth Tunks, wife of Captain Thomas Tunks, a retired Imperial Army Officer, see Rorke, in Bellamy, p.59. It has also been suggested that Elizabeth Street was named for Queen Elizabeth, see C. Kingsley-Smith, 'History in Street Names', p.20. 'Clivedene Street' was named for the son of a prominent resident, Mr C.P. Tilbury; and 'Maxine Street' was named after his daughter, see Rorke, in Bellamy, pp.56–66.

24 In recent years developers have attempted to exert some influence on street naming. The most obvious example of this occurred in June 1995 when a developer made an unsuccessful attempt to name a street after his granddaughter, see 'Relative Rejection', BOPT, 14 June 1995. See also 'Sandfly Hovers in List of Street Names', BOPT, 22 August 1990; BOPT, 4 June 1992, p.1; 'City Street Names Under Scrutiny', BOPT, 4 September 1995.

25 Rorke, in Bellamy, p.66.

26 *ibid.* See also an article on local place naming policy in the *Te Puke Times* (TPT), 7 July 1990.

27 Rorke, in Bellamy, pp.56–66.

28 For instance, a Council minute book from 1968 only records the decision to name suburbs in Tauranga: it does not contain the minutes of the preceding discussion, see Tauranga Council Minute book 71, 1968, p.159, Tauranga District Council offices, Tauranga.

29 On the modern street map of Tauranga and Mt Maunganui, approximately 15% of the street names are Maori.

30 A name given by a Mr Johnstone, see Rorke, in Bellamy, p.62.

31 *Te Atatu* is thought to mean, 'rising sun on the hill', and was named by a Mrs Kelly, granddaughter of one of the original owners of the land, Mr Nepia. Waimapu Street is thought to be named after the Waimapu Estuary, *ibid.*, p.64.

32 Hori Tupaea was of the Te Whanau-a-Tauwaho hapu of Ngaiterangi, a leader, mission teacher and assessor in the Native Land Court, see, Steven Oliver and Alister Matheson, 'Hori Tupaea (?–1881)', in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (DNZB), Vol. One, 1769–1869, Wellington, 1990, pp.556–7. Hori Ngatai was of the Ngati He hapu of Ngaiterangi, a renowned farmer, fighter and orator, see Steven Oliver, 'Hori Ngatai (?–1912)', in DNZB, Vol. One, pp.311–12.

33 Maharia Winiata (1912–1960) was a respected Maori educationalist and leader.

34 Rorke, in Bellamy, p.62.

35 The reason given was that it should not be confused with Ranginui Road in Welcome Bay.

36 Peter Read, *Returning to Nothing: The Meaning of Lost Places*, Cambridge, 1996.

37 The high land bounded by Fourteenth and Sixteenth Avenues looking over the Waikareao Estuary; the part of Otumoetai Road where Grange Road turns north; the hill at the east end of Eleventh Avenue; and a point bounded by Fraser and Pitt Streets, see Adams, 'Maori Place Names — Tauranga', in Bellamy, pp.18–19. See also E.L. Adams, 'Maori Place Names — Tauranga', JTHS, 23, 1965, p.29.

38 The swamp between Glasgow Street and the Waikareao estuary; the flat land between Harington and Spring Streets, which is now the central business district of Tauranga; and the swampy area north of Waihi Road near the junction of Waihi and Cambridge Roads, see Adams, in Bellamy, pp.18–19.

39 The ford from Elizabeth Street to Judea and Otumoetai; and the channel of the Waikareao estuary.

40 On the south side of the Waikareao railway bridge; the beach between Fifth and Eleventh Avenues, and the beach below the east end of Fourteenth Avenue, see Adams, in Bellamy, pp.18–19.

41 Awanui is the original name for the Tauranga harbour, and Pohue is the Waikareao foreshore near the west end of Eleventh Avenue.

42 Known locally as 'Peach Island' and 'Rat Island' respectively.

43 Te Rengarenga is on Grace Road, near Fourteenth Avenue; Otumoetai pa on the foreshore west of Otumoetai Road; and Otamataha at the site of the mission cemetery, see Adams, in Bellamy, pp.18–19.

44 Stokes, *History of Tauranga County*, pp.18–20.

45 Johannes C. Andersen, *Maori Place-Names also Personal Names and Names of Colours, Weapons, and Natural Objects*, Wellington, 1942, and Andersen, *Place-Names of Banks Peninsula*.

46 Andersen, *Place-Names of Banks Peninsula*, p.7.

47 Andersen, *Maori Place-Names*, p.v.

48 Herries Beattie, *Maori Place Names of Canterbury*, Dunedin, 1945, p.5.

49 A.W. Reed, *A Dictionary of Maori Place Names*, Auckland, 1961, p.5.

50 Te Aue Davis, Tipene O'Regan and John Wilson, *Nga Tohu Pumahara: The Survey Pegs of the Past*, Wellington, 1990.

51 *ibid.*, p.5.

52 *ibid.*, p.6.

53 Learning Media, *Nga Reo o Te Whenua: The Voices of the Land, What Place Names Tell Us About Our Past*, Wellington, 1992.

54 See further New Zealand Geographic Board, *He Korero Pūrākau mo ngā Taunahanahatanga a ngā Tūpuna*; and Malcolm McKinnon, ed., *Bateman New Zealand Historical Atlas: Ko Papatūmuku e Takoto Nei*, Auckland, 1997, see esp. plate 33.

55 See for example, The New Zealand Geographic Place Names Database, <http://www.linzi.govt.nz/databases/geographic/geoname.html>.

56 On local place names, see S. Percy Smith, *The Peopling of the North* [Polynesian Society], Wellington, 1897; T.W. Downes, *Old Whanganui*, Hawera, 1915; J. Herries Beattie, *Maori Place-names of Otago*, Dunedin, 1944; J. Cowan, *Maori Place Names of the Thermal Regions and their Meanings*; Rotorua, [1945]; J. Herries Beattie, *Maori Place-names of Canterbury*; G.L. Adkin, *Horowhenua, Its Maori Place-names and their Topographical and Historical Background*, Wellington, 1948; G.G.M. Mitchell, *Maori Place Names of Buller County*, Wellington, 1948; W.J. Elvy, *Kaikoura Coast Maori History, Traditions and Place-names*, Christchurch, 1949; B. Morgan, *Historic Maori Place Names from the Waipa River to Mokau*, Auckland, 1976; and D. Stafford, *Maori Place Names of the Thermal Regions and their Meanings*, Auckland, 1999.

57 Gifford and Bradney, *A Centennial History of Tauranga*.

58 Stokes, *History of Tauranga County*.

59 These include pieces such as 'Notes on Street Names', JTHS, 1, 1955, pp.4–5; 'Notes on Tauranga Street Names', JTHS, 3, 1955, pp.15–16; 'Tauranga Street Names', JTHS, 8, 1957, p.24.

60 See for example, H.J. Vickery, 'Origin of Street Names', BOPT, 29 October 1935; [Naming of Otumoetai, Pokapu Place and Millers Road], BOPT, 19 December 1947, p.3.

61 For example, see C. Kingsley-Smith, 'History in Street Names', and 'Historic Tauranga', Tourism and Publicity Booklet, [1960s], A136, Box 3, TPL.

62 JTHS, 1, 1955, p.5.

63 See, for example, maps of the cities of Wellington and New Plymouth, whose street names celebrate (Pakeha) founding figures.

64 Hong-Key Yoon, *Maori Mind, Maori Land: Essays on the Cultural Geography of the Maori People from an Outsider's Perspective*, Berne, Switzerland, 1986, p.113.

65 For example, the names Waikaremoana, Rotoiti, and Rotorua, which all include a reference to a lake, have been represented on official maps as *Lake* Waikaremoana, *Lake* Rotoiti and *Lake* Rotorua: although in the latter example, Lake Rotorua is used to distinguish it from the city of the same name on the lakeside.

66 Andersen, *Maori Place-Names*, p.vi.

67 Michel Foucault, 'Space, Knowledge and Power', in Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader*, New York, 1984, p.252.

68 Read, *Returning to Nothing*, p.2. On meanings of 'place' and 'space', see further John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place*, Cambridge, 1972; Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, London, 1976; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, Minneapolis, Minn., 1977; Robert D. Sack, *Conceptions of Space in Social Thought: A Geographic Perspective*, London, 1980; Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space*

in *Critical Social Theory*, London, 1989; Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, Oxford and Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991; Erica Carter, James Donald and Judith Squires, eds, *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*, London, 1993; and Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1995; Barbara Ching and Gerald W. Creed, eds, *Knowing your Place: Rural Identity and Cultural Hierarchy*, New York, 1997.

69 Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History*, London, 1987, p.154.

70 Patrick O'Farrell, 'Defining Place and Home: Are the Irish Prisoners of Place?', in David Fitzpatrick, ed., *Home and Away: Immigrants in Colonial Australia*, Canberra, 1992, pp.13–14. The literature on place name studies is extensive. See esp. Mary Kawena Pukui, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini, *Place Names of Hawaii*, Honolulu, 1974; A.W. Reed, *Place Names of Australia*, Terrey Hills, New South Wales, 1979; A.L.F. Rivet and Colin Smith, *The Place-names of Roman Britain*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1979; John Field, *Place-names of Great Britain and Ireland*, New Jersey, 1980; Margaret Gelling, *Place-names in the Landscape*, London, 1984.

71 Edward Gibbon Wakefield, 'A View of the Art of Colonization, with Present Reference to the British Empire', in *Letters Between a Statesman and a Colonist*, London, 1849, p.118.

72 Carter, *Road to Botany Bay*, p.67.

73 Kate Darian-Smith, Liz Gunner and Sarah Nuttall, eds, *Text, Theory, Space: Land, Literature and History in South Africa and Australia*, New York and London, 1996, esp. pp.1–20.

74 Paul Carter, 'Travelling Blind: A Sound Geography', *Meanjin*, 51, 2, 1992, p.440.

75 *ibid.*, p.428.

76 *ibid.*, p.439.

77 Michael King, *Being Pakeha Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native*, Auckland, 1999, p.234. See also Augie Fleras and Paul Spoonley, *Recalling Aotearoa: Indigenous Politics and Ethnic Relations in New Zealand*, Oxford, 1999, esp. chs 2–3.

78 Ken Gelder and Jane Jacobs, *Uncanny Australia: Sacredness and Identity in a Postcolonial Nation*, Melbourne, 1998. Peter Read has explored these issues further in his *Belonging: Australians, Place and Aboriginal Ownership*, Cambridge, 2000.

79 In the United States, the Board on Geographic Names has long considered American Indian names to be a valuable part of the nation's cultural history. In 1990 the Board adopted a policy that promoted names of American Indian, Inuit and Polynesian derivation. The Board accepts names that are 'linguistically appropriate to the area', especially those that describe the local terrain, relate to its history or commemorate local folklore.

80 Tony Birch, '"Nothing has Changed": The Making and Unmaking of Koori Culture', *Meanjin*, 51, 2, 1992, pp.229–46. See also Tony Birch, '"A Land so Inviting and Still Without Inhabitants": Erasing Koori Culture From (Post-) Colonial Landscapes', in Darian-Smith, Gunner and Nuttall, eds, *Text, Theory, Space*, pp.173–88, esp. p.177.

81 'Take a trip on Takitimu Drive?', BOPT, 4 September 2001, p.3. Te Ranginui o Ngai Tamarawaho have also suggested that the Takitimu waka, which currently does not have a permanent home, be housed at one end of 'Takitimu Drive'.

82 Although the Tauranga Moana District claimants (WAI215) have not laid a specific claim to the renaming of Tauranga, this has been a concern raised by other claimants, see for example the Taranaki Claims (WAI143).

83 Chris Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism: History as Social Memory*, Cambridge, 1997, p.6.

84 Andersen, *Maori Place-Names*, p.v.