

A ‘Useful’ Approach to Māori History



‘Applying scholarly standards to Māori tradition and history … is, at root, the only weapon we have with which to defend the integrity of the Māori memory.’

Tipene O’Regan¹

THROUGHOUT THE 1980S AND 1990S, THE PUBLIC FACE of a resurgent Ngāi Tahu people, Tipene O’Regan, widely communicated his interconnected thoughts on the Māori past, present and future of Te Wai Pounamu. This occurred most visibly in media interviews and public talks, typically laced with memorable one-liners and his inimitable gusto. However, Sir Tipene is a scholar before he is a politician. His views were therefore contemporaneously expressed in academic forums. In most instances, though, the nature of his ideas and the way he expressed them were shaped by his chairmanship of the former Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board and its entanglements with the Waitangi Tribunal and Treaty settlement processes. He thus noted in early 1991 that he was preoccupied with politically laden historical issues, as opposed to an earlier time when he simply luxuriated ‘in an apolitical sector or backwater of history’.²

Three pieces of Tipene’s writing from this era stand out for me. The first was a short but supportive letter to a cousin’s grandson in Bluff in 1994. In it he congratulated this bookish but somewhat practical 13-year-old boy on a recent school project that focused on an important aspect of southern mahika kai: he mahi pōhā. After offering some further information on the topic, Tipene concluded his letter by urging this earnest child to continue his study of Kāi Tahu tradition and history. I hope he feels that his call has to some extent been heeded, as illustrated by the present essay and the field of employment that its author finds himself in. The other two documents were encountered not in my letterbox, but in the University of Otago’s Central Library while I was an undergraduate student. The first of these was a reworked version of a talk that outlined the origins and formation of Ngāi Tahu Whānui.³ Tipene had originally delivered this at the opening hearing of the Waitangi Tribunal’s investigations into the Ngāi Tahu Claim, at Kaiapoi in 1987. Having grown up in a tribal bubble centred on Bluff, whose outer regions stretched little further than our family’s Tītī Island to the south, Waitūtū to the west, and Moeraki to the north-east, I found that ‘A Kāi Tahu History’ sketched out the major genealogical and economic connections between locales that were familiar to me and distant exotic places like Māwhera and Oaro. That Tipene could do

all of this in less than five pages, and yet span an arc running from Polynesian settlement down to the 1980s, continues to impress me. Best of all, though, his Mum was from Bluff. This paper illustrates Michael Reilly's assertion that 'any past is knowable, provided the topic is approached with the appropriate respect and the requisite linguistic skills and cultural insights'⁴ and likewise bears out his warning that any knowledge of the past 'is always interested'. Tipene himself acknowledged this in a later overview of the origins and territory of Ngāi Tahu Whānui, describing it as a 'political statement', albeit one 'drafted with care' that 'rests ultimately on evidence'.⁵ This was in the text of his that has had the greatest impact upon me, and that by a large margin: the J.C. Beaglehole Memorial Lecture that Tipene delivered at the meeting of the New Zealand Historical Association in Christchurch, in May 1991.

His talk, which was soon after reworked and published in the *New Zealand Journal of History* as 'Old Myths and New Politics: Some Contemporary Uses of Traditional History',⁶ advanced positions and posed questions concerning the organization and deployment of the Māori past which remain highly pertinent. Accordingly, the article was updated and republished in 2001 in *The Shaping of History – Essays from the New Zealand Journal of History*.⁷ Thirteen years later, it has been updated and republished as an e-book as part of Bridget Williams Books' digital publishing strategy.⁸ I drew on 'Old Myths and New Politics' during my Honours year and returned to it in my doctoral study. A recent revisit reminds me why. Not only is it an important work in the post-World War Two era of Māori scholarship, it continues to reward subsequent readings. In my view, 'Old Myths and New Politics' sits alongside the likes of 'Leadership: Inherited and Achieved' by Api Mahuika, the renowned scholar-statesman of Ngāti Porou.⁹

As for Tipene himself, I generally encountered him holding court at the rear entrance to our whare-kai on Te Rau Aroha Marae where he emitted mirth and pipe smoke in equal measure. We two refugees from Bluff later met in academic settings where it transpired that we shared at least one scholarly pet hate: 'refugees from reality', as he once termed them – people 'who hide in the binary alternative positions ... which has made ordinary people very cynical about academia'.¹⁰ He was accordingly supportive of my doctoral project that explored the increasingly heterogeneous nature of Māori knowledge since the early nineteenth century.

Three main concerns led me to develop a methodological approach for my doctoral research, an outline of which is the main focus of this essay. The first was my desire for an approach to the Māori past that thinks up from

experience and pairs this with sustained archival research as opposed to the application of abstract theories and idealized models. The second thing I wanted to do, which has increasingly become a cornerstone of my research agenda, is to think about language and epistemology from a position that factors in practice and materiality and takes them seriously. One of the advantages of doing this is that it forces historians of the Māori past to engage with a much wider range of historiographies and scholarship. As well we should. While at the dawn of the nineteenth century almost all Māori kin-groups were apart from the British empire, within a few decades all of them were a part of it, albeit unevenly. Accordingly, we should look more fully and frequently to the likes of the new imperial history as we continue to unpack the post-1800 Māori past. This leads directly towards my third concern: the limits of mātauranga-a-iwi and marae-focused approaches to the Māori past that risk constraining its range and texture and underplay daily interactions that shape lived experience. In short, the approach I adopted in my PhD blended familial and local history, and a strong sense of British imperial history, within a specifically Kāi Tahu analytical framework.

I began my PhD journey in 2005 following that year's tītī harvest, which I took part in as usual on our family's small island in Foveaux Strait. This activity, better known as 'muttonbirding', did not simply shape my PhD, but was in fact its main focus. This was for two reasons. First, because I was raised in this practice and continue to participate in it, I was able to ask some concrete questions about mātauranga Māori – a phrase used in recent decades to refer to traditional Māori knowledge and beliefs.¹¹ The second reason for my focus on muttonbirding was the rich body of archival material, both public and private, relating to it. This enabled me to explore a budding interest in colonial knowledge-making, especially the development and deployment of 'science' in British colonial contexts and how this both borrowed from and reshaped indigenous knowledge traditions.

At its core my PhD had one key question: is muttonbirding, as it currently exists, a concrete expression of mātauranga Māori or not? This line of inquiry led to an attendant question in the early stages of my project, which was: is there or has there ever been such a thing as 'Māori science'? For example, can the vast body of knowledge about tītī and the Tītī Islands, almost all of it the product of generations of careful observation and deductive reasoning, be legitimately or helpfully thought of as 'scientific'? However, after a fairly thorough reading of relevant literature, I abandoned this particular line of inquiry. This was because arguments both for and against something called Māori science, or more broadly, indigenous science, are committed to

ahistorical essentialism: a view of the past in which cultures are fixed and bounded – forever, at best, stuck at an interface. As a committed historicist this does not appeal to me.¹²

Notwithstanding, my project drew on and benefited considerably from scholarship in the history of science, notably the work of Peter Dear, outlined below. This resulted in my focusing on epistemological *understandings* and instrumental *uses* of natural resources in southern New Zealand by Kāi Tahu before and since European settlement. Put differently, my dissertation examined southern Māori beliefs about, and practices within, the natural world of southern New Zealand. In so doing, I was attentive to both changes and continuities in these beliefs and practices. This shaped my underlying thesis that there are some durable lifeways that provide a key component of southern Māori tradition, which, since about the mid-nineteenth century, have constituted a fundamental element of Kāi Tahu modernity.

In reconstructing this distinctive form of modernity I found kaupapa Māori theory methodology to be far too limiting. Indeed, Nēpia Mahuika notes that kaupapa Māori ‘is not the only approach being used by Māori and iwi scholars, many of whom do not subscribe to it’.¹³ Reference to it would therefore have been simply performative, which I suspect it actually is for a number of scholars who research Māori knowledge or work with Māori communities. I have certainly observed it being used this way more than once. In any event, if an engagement with kaupapa Māori generates insightful research into mātauranga Māori, and in ways that are relevant to Māori communities, I strongly contend that its absence does not prevent these things. I am no ‘Munzian’ but I agree with his assessment that the methodology of so-called decolonized research ‘is not very different from the methodology any sensible, trained observer would employ’.¹⁴ With respect to my PhD, the salient fact as I saw it was that I was a muttonbirder researching muttonbirding. This meant that any act or omission on my part that might unreasonably cause negative consequences for the community I am a part of would in turn produce negative consequences for me that would be real and enduring. I was conscious of this without kaupapa Māori. In any event, my particular situation did not, as Michael King predicted, reduce my academic rigour.¹⁵ It simply ensured that I was especially and consistently self-reflexive.

As foreshadowed above, my main criticism of kaupapa Māori theory rests on my deep suspicion of the way that it posits a fixed Māori mind ‘standing stoically at the center of history’, which ‘may be treated cruelly or ignored in one era’, but which survives through time, to borrow a formulation from the ethnohistorian Fredrick E. Hoxie.¹⁶ An anecdote generated independently of my doctoral research, but directly related to it, illustrates my point. In his

recent biography, the pioneering helicopter pilot Bill Black relays highlights from his 28 consecutive seasons of assisting muttonbirders and muttonbirding around Rakiura. At one point he refers to a death that occurred on Putauhinu Island, one of the most isolated of the approximately three dozen Tītī Islands: ‘a big bump of an island, about 400ft high’.¹⁷ Bill flew a policeman down to the island, who inspected the tūpāpaku (the deceased’s body) and consulted with the whānau pani (the bereaved family). They informed him that they would not consent to their patriarch being placed in a body bag, and instead wrapped him in a blanket. However, this ‘well built’ man was not the only new cargo to be taken aboard. Three other adults, two children and ‘a whole lot of muttonbirds’ were also to be transported to the mainland. Bill explains:

I lifted the back of the seats up, put all the pails of muttonbirds in there and the kids sat on them ... then we had the two other adults ... and the deceased man lying crossways with his feet right up behind my seat. I had my seat and then we had two adults in the front. The side lockers were filled with pails and the rear lockers had sacks of fresh birds ... I called the airport and gave them my intentions and summoned the hearse for our arrival. I landed in a place where it was quietest and people couldn’t see what was going on ... There to meet us was this beautiful big hearse; it was all black and shiny ... and a guy gets out in a suit and a bloody tie ... Anyway, we got [the deceased] out of the helicopter and laid him in the centre of the hearse ... still face up. These other people ... proceeded to take all the muttonbirds out of the tins and lay them all around the deceased and the fresh birds were up near the windows ... Then the three adults and two kids climbed in where they could ... I bet the driver of the hearse wondered what the hell he’d struck.¹⁸

Many Māori would similarly wonder what the hell was going on. Bill’s recollection is surely is the polar opposite of the ‘contagion of tapu’.¹⁹

This anecdote does not involve my family and does not reflect what we would do faced with the same difficult situation. Although te reo Māori has not been the primary language of communication within most southern Kāi Tahu families for about a century, some foundational Māori values have continued to persist. A lived understanding of tapu and respect for it, and a basic awareness that food is noa, are such things. The phrase ‘tables are for glasses not for arses’ commonly rings out in the south. My sense, therefore, is that very few other muttonbirders would sit on buckets of birds, let alone pack them around a tūpāpaku. Some might therefore argue that the family referred to are simply culturally incompetent: ‘Pākehā with a whakapapa’, to borrow an insult.²⁰ I would resist such an interpretation, though, which is premised on there being *a Māori way*: typically taken from ‘a splendid pre-1769 isolation’.²¹ My strong view is that southern New Zealand – even before sustained European contact – compels scholars of the Māori past to adopt a more complicated and regionally calibrated view of Māori culture. This

marginal environment with a low population density has especially driven a 'needs must' culture. If specifically Māori gender conventions are as rigid in the rest of New Zealand as is typically assumed, southern New Zealand at least is a place where men both learn and teach raranga,²² and women take part in whakairo.²³ It is therefore possible to read Bill Black's recollection as something other than the long-term upshot of interracial marriage and European acculturation. It is arguably consistent with 1840s Ruapuke Island, where the relatively large home of Tuahawaiki, by then a pre-eminent Kāi Tahu chief, was recorded to have been filled with family and friends, who slept in every room, including 'on the flat ground in the kitchen' with '[r]oasted potatoes ... lying all around close to them'.²⁴

My other main criticism of kaupapa Māori theory is best expressed by A.J. Hopkins' observation of the two major ironies in the postmodernist attack on European racism and cultural domination: first, that this has produced a totalizing project of its own, and second, that its critiques of Euro-centred studies of other societies is itself based almost entirely on Western authorities.²⁵ A survey of kaupapa Māori literature bears this out. These reservations do not mark me out as an outlier in the field of Māori history. Nēpia has noted, for example, that iwi scholars, as he terms them, frequently move beyond a kaupapa Māori model 'that homogenizes Māori identity, experiences and mātauranga' and instead 'centre their research in their own tribal paradigms'.²⁶ I agree with him, and my PhD illustrates, that this allows us 'to not only tell our own stories but to place our world at the centre of historical scholarship'.²⁷ That said, my conception of the Kāi Tahu world is not limited to our 'own tribal boundaries', as his is of Ngāti Porou. If any iwi are self-enclosed islands of humanity,²⁸ then ours in the south most definitely is not. Accordingly, while I endorse Danny Keenan's notion of speaking from one's own paepae,²⁹ and typically do this myself, I note that there are many other legitimate vantages from which Māori – and non-Māori too – can construct and communicate windows into the Māori past.³⁰

In an earlier essay that examined an instance of southern New Zealand's colonial knowledge order co-opting and recasting an aspect of pre-existing Kāi Tahu knowledge, I referred to an important summary of shifting academic meanings of the term 'culture' over the last half-century.³¹ This has exciting implications for scholars of Māori history and knowledge. William H. Sewell Jr. has outlined contested definitions of culture within anthropology and history that he broadly describes as 'culture as system' versus 'culture as practice'. He points out that system and practice are not alternatives to one another, though, but are instead complementary concepts that presuppose one another. In his words, they 'constitute an indissoluble duality or dialectic'.

Like Marshall Sahlins, Sewell argues that while cultural practice puts a cultural system to work and therefore gives effect to it, it does not always do so mechanically in stereotyped situations. New and unforeseen situations inevitably arise which invite or even demand novel responses.³² Cultural practice, in Sewell's view, therefore simultaneously puts cultural systems at 'risk' – of transformation. This in turn can give rise to a 'new coherence', which is itself then likewise put at risk.³³

This means that any culture, at any point in time, although real, coherent, and even durable, is nonetheless porous, dynamic and unstable, and thus 'thin'. Sewell offers several grounds for his 'thin culture' approach, one of them being that cultures are weakly bounded. Rejecting social science's 'once virtually unquestioned model of societies as clearly bounded entities undergoing endogenous development', he argues that 'anything we might term as a "society" or a "nation" will contain, or fail to contain, a multitude of overlapping and interpenetrating cultural systems, most of them either subsocietal or trans-societal or both'.³⁴ Sewell's approach meshes with scholarship on south Asia that critiques those who think it is possible 'to refer to a pure, unalloyed indigenous system with values untouched by other elements'.³⁵ Both inform my approach to Māori history in the southern South Island. In short, as with Hoxie, I am unconvinced by the arguments of 'romantic polemicists': people for whom 'history is the interaction of fixed cultural spheres'.³⁶

Coming back to this question of whether or not contemporary muttonbirding is a concrete expression of mātauranga Māori, which my PhD grappled with, some existing scholarship on mātauranga Māori suggests that it is. Other, related scholarship suggests that it is not. Some commentators, for instance – perhaps the majority – cast mātauranga Māori in narrow terms by focusing on epistemology and therefore the foundational framework of whakapapa. Whakapapa, as Te Maire Tau puts it, enabled Māori to understand order and chaos, and place order upon space and time. In the pre-European Māori world all things – from flora and fauna to the weather, emotions, and humankind – were arranged into genealogical groups.³⁷ Seabirds, including tītī, were included in these typologies. Given that southern Kāi Tahu muttonbirders have not maintained a view of tītī as having a whakapapa for well over a century, it could therefore be argued that the knowledge we hold of these birds, whatever it is, is not mātauranga Māori.

In 'Old Myths and New Politics', Tipene O'Regan argues that the 'skeletal framework of whakapapa' is required to authenticate Māori historical tradition. He then argues that tradition which 'cannot be supported

by whakapapa, which cannot be cross-referenced to other whakapapa, is tradition that has to be regarded as suspect'.³⁸ I quite agree. He also spells out the analytical utility that whakapapa has: it 'has an order and a consistency in its internal rules which give it a very considerable capacity to be cross-referenced with other similar evidence'.³⁹ In stressing the necessity and utility of whakapapa as the main organizing principle of the Māori past, Tipene does two other things that I likewise support. First, he describes whakapapa simply as a form of 'intellectual management'. In other words, it does not require 'deep spiritual insights of the guru' but is instead open to all who take the time to correctly learn and use it.⁴⁰ Secondly, Tipene is open to the application of western scholarly standards and new scientific techniques to Māori tradition and history. More than that, he believes them to be 'the only weapon we have with which to defend the integrity of the Māori memory' from charlatans, Māori or otherwise.⁴¹ I endorse this pursuit and defence of empirical truth and note that much of Tipene's approach echoes one laid out by Te Rangi Hīroa in 1926.⁴²

Other Māori scholars of the Māori past advocate quite different approaches, however. Nēpia Mahuika, for example, as intimated above, seeks to root and project Ngāti Poroutanga entirely within its own physical and mental boundaries, its mātauranga-a-iwi: 'kōrero tuku iho, whakapapa, our own tikanga and reo'.⁴³ Despite being an academically trained and university-based historian, he considers – as he reveals in a essay written for an internationally read journal – that western-framed research, Pākehā researchers and written historical accounts are intrusions: things to be resisted.⁴⁴ Among other things, it is difficult to reconcile this position with his disappointment that New Zealand scholars remain 'distanced from a Māori and iwi interpretation of history'.⁴⁵ Regardless, in asserting that Ngāti Poroutanga is 'shaped from within', Nēpia argues that 'intrusive and corrosive ... colonial discourses and ideologies' have been largely resisted and repelled.⁴⁶ This seems to run directly counter to Tipene's view of post-1792 Kāi Tahu as global citizens.⁴⁷ I pondered these things one day over lunch in the so-called Edinburgh of the South while eating a Japanese dish prepared by a Korean family who were selling Cadbury chocolate to fundraise for a Christian mission in Cambodia. I fortunately managed to clear my head by the time I cooked titi later that week, which was used for pizza topping along with Southland-made sheep's-milk feta cheese.

In his Beaglehole Lecture, Tipene focused on whakapapa entirely as it pertains to recording and ordering *human* relationships. Fellow Ngāi Tahu scholar Te Maire Tau later took a much more thorough view of it and illustrated its foundational nature and utter pervasiveness in pre-European Māori life: an entire world framed by genealogy. Te Maire then adopted a Popperian

position and argued that nineteenth-century Kāi Tahu found themselves in possession of an ‘explanatory theory’ based on ‘false knowledge’, rather than the true or certain knowledge characteristic of colonizing Europeans.⁴⁸ Representing whakapapa in this way enabled Te Maire to advance the argument that mātauranga Māori ‘collapsed’. He further argues that this collapse was not so much because colonial policy undermined it, but rather because whakapapa could not adapt to or explain novel phenomena brought about by European contact, including Europeans themselves. In his view, the driver of its collapse was in turn the thing that replaced it: western secular modernity. Te Maire therefore asserted that attempts to revive mātauranga Māori as the basis of contemporary Māori life are misplaced at best.⁴⁹

As part of this line of thinking, Te Maire argues, in a value-laden and teleological way, that Māori uptake of Christianity in the nineteenth century was a ‘sidelong shift’ from one belief system to another, as opposed to a ‘progressive move forward’. If we complicate our definition of mātauranga Māori though, which I advocate, ‘collapse’ becomes far too strong a word. In addition, western modernity as Kāi Tahu encountered it was not overwhelmingly secular.⁵⁰ Referring to Peter Van der Veer, John Stenhouse asserts that historians who depict a modern, secular, rational West encountering a premodern, exotically religious Rest misunderstand both sides of imperial encounters.⁵¹ Indeed, recent scholars of British imperialism have shown, in Stenhouse’s words, that religion ‘shaped and coloured imperial ideology and practice throughout the modern period’.⁵² From southern Africa to south India and the southern South Island, Christianity infused colonial thought and action at all levels.⁵³ That which Richard Drayton terms the ‘economics of Eden’ and the ideology of improvement were fundamental to the making of the British empire.⁵⁴

A critical engagement with Christianity was moreover ‘fundamental to the emergence of a distinctly Māori version of modernity in the nineteenth century’.⁵⁵ Whether or not the transformative power of Christianity in nineteenth-century Māori history is the unfashionable subject that Lyndsay Head and Lachy Paterson suggest, I wholeheartedly agree that it drove big changes in nineteenth-century Māori lives and therefore ought to be treated more seriously.⁵⁶ In so doing, we would be approaching our tūpuna more seriously and respectfully too. Much of my doctoral research focused on the Ruapuke Mission and its inaugurator, the Rev. J.F.H. Wohlers, of the North German Mission Society. Wohlers, the first foreign resident missionary in Foveaux Strait, shared, in his words, the ‘feelings and sorrows’ of southern Māori from 1844 until his death in 1885.⁵⁷ His substantial records reveal a lot about his character and intellect, which were both impressive, but also the

people he lived and worked amongst – including some of my own tipuna. However, the hermeneutical key that fully illuminated Wohlers' thoughts and actions for me was Sujit Sivasundaram's research into Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth-century Pacific. This exposed their key beliefs about man, nature and God and the way these shaped most aspects of their everyday lives.⁵⁸ As well as illuminating the remarkable consistency in these values and practices right across the Pacific world, Sivasundaram's work shows how these missionaries were connected to one another by various kinds of traffic. This bears out Kerry Howe's assertion that Māori history can and should transcend Treaty of Waitangi-based frameworks and fully engage with a wider body of Pacific scholarship.⁵⁹ Alice Te Punga Somerville has recently made similar calls within her own disciplinary space.⁶⁰

Despite the concerns I have highlighted with 'Ghosts on the Plains', I consider this article to be a wonderful example of Māori history because of its historicist sensibility. This comes through despite Te Maire's assertion that it is inappropriate to historicize the pre-European Māori past – a past never meant to constitute 'history'.⁶¹ However, I think that the case for this position rests on weaker ground when we focus on Māori personalities and events from the nineteenth century and beyond. In any event, I think that a historicist approach is not inconsistent with whakapapa-centred history. My own research has shown that chronology and genealogy are not mutually exclusive, but that each can illuminate the other. One of the most interesting things about 'Ghosts on the Plains' is the way in which Te Maire thoughtfully explores change in Māori mentalities. Moreover, unlike most other scholars of the Māori past, he did not bemoan this as matter of course, nor attribute it to 'the Crown'.⁶²

However, the analytical approach that Te Maire adopted in this article has two drawbacks. The first is that like so many commentators, both indigenous and non-indigenous, Te Maire viewed the interaction between indigenous knowledge and western knowledge as the interface of two rigid entities. To paraphrase David Rich Lewis, Te Maire suggests a 'zero-sum equation, a "cultural replacement"' programme.⁶³ In so doing, Te Maire contended that Kāi Tahu did not assimilate enough secular modernity to generate new forms of knowledge from within. So while he is different from most indigenous scholars in not resenting the encroachment of the modern, he nonetheless remained committed to a binary view of things.

Secondly, Te Maire said nothing about practice. While all epistemology is knowledge, not all knowledge is epistemological. In other words, interracial marriage, mission Christianity, English language-based schooling and State education meant that my great-great-grandparents were probably not taught

or did not at least truly believe that tītī, rimurapa, totara and harakeke each had a whakapapa as their near forebears had been and did. However, they still used all of these resources in a particular way, as we, their descendants, continue to do in the present day. What then, do we call the body of knowledge underlying the *persisting* tradition? Perhaps with such scenarios in mind, Charles Royal has attempted to complicate the notion of mātauranga Māori. He thus suggests that it can be understood as referring to both knowledge framed by Māori epistemology *and* knowledge of multiple origins held by Māori people.⁶⁴ The main inference of the latter is that such knowledge need not be exclusively Māori in *origin*. In the fullness of time I think that this rumination might be one of Charles's most important scholarly contributions.

Unlike Te Maire's epistemological preoccupation and his collapse thesis of mātauranga Māori that he developed in 2003, Tipene has tended to focus on enduring practices. He therefore generally conceives mātauranga Māori as something that can evolve, adapt and grow. In terms of muttonbirding, he asked if wearing wet-weather clothing, using diesel generators, communicating by way of radio, engaging helicopters to transport processed tītī back to the mainland, stuffing the birds with exotic vegetables unknown to our pre-European tipuna and roasting them in an electric oven is untraditional or un-Māori? His answer was an emphatic no. In his opinion, in doing all of these things we are being 'extraordinarily Māori' because in his opinion 'the defining characteristic of Polynesian and Māori culture historically is [the] capacity for dynamic adaptation'. In his view, 'you couldn't be more Māori, more in line with the behaviour of your tupuna. To do all that and slip away to Blanket Bay with an electric blanket on, that's absolutely in keeping with this extraordinary capacity for adaptation and evolution.'⁶⁵

The point Tipene makes is that the activity and purpose of muttonbirding is a traditional one. However, the process is in a state of constant evolution. As he puts it: 'when a tradition or a culture or a custom is not in that process of evolution, it's dead. Is it un-Māori to have a simple dedication to flat white coffee – no it is not!'⁶⁶ Tipene's approach supports the view that tradition is neither an exercise in passive perpetuation nor straight-out invention but instead an act of continual recreation. 'Cultural authenticity', as the Canadian historian Paige Raibmon powerfully asserts, is 'not the same thing as cultural purity'.⁶⁷

Although Tipene's approach is compelling, its own limit is that in highlighting aspects of Māori practice that have continued relevance and currency, we can lose sight of substantial changes in belief, which Te Maire rightly drew attention to. The challenge as I saw it in my PhD was to develop a model of Māori history which incorporated the virtue and guarded against the excesses of each interpretive approach: in short, a framework that made

provision for the coexistence of change and continuity in Māori knowledge. This is only possible if we first deny the presumed disjuncture between tradition and modernity. Pacific historian Margaret Jolly has offered one way of doing this. In what I term her creolized tradition thesis, she points out that 'Pacific peoples are more accepting of both indigenous and exogenous elements as constituting *their* culture'. In her words: 'It is often Western commentators [and, I might add, university-educated indigenous scholars] who are more compelled to rigidly compartmentalise indigenous and exogenous, precolonial and colonial, because they retain an exoticised and dehistoricised view of Pacific cultures. It is they that seem continually unable to deal with the conjunction and transformation of indigenous and exogenous elements in the creolised cultures that now exist throughout the Pacific.'⁶⁸ Acculturation can be defined as the assimilation of new ideas into an existing cognitive framework, and I think this is part of what Jolly suggests now exists throughout the Pacific. Such a definition describes southern Kāi Tahu in the first decades of the nineteenth century, when potatoes, pigs, whaleboats and muskets were incorporated into traditional social structures and put to distinctly Māori ends. In the case of whaleboats, these quickly replaced waka as the preferred means of travelling to and from the Tītī Islands and transporting preserved tītī. This supports Sahlin's assertion that the first commercial impulse of indigenous people is not to become just like Europeans, but to become more like themselves.⁶⁹ However, the idea of novel things being innocuously incorporated into an existing epistemological order does not describe the situation of southern Kāi Tahu in the last decades of the nineteenth century. I therefore agree with Te Maire that the Kāi Tahu intellectual framework – and that of Māori generally – underwent significant changes.

However, as I have made clear, I disagree with the idea that mātauranga Māori, imagined in a narrow and essentialist way, simply collapsed in the face of Western modernity that replaced it. Like Paige Raibmon's analysis of Kwakw̱a̱kwa̱k in late nineteenth-century British Columbia, my position is that much about the lives of late nineteenth-century Kāi Tahu would have been familiar to previous generations, while at the same time other conditions would have seemed strange and unfamiliar.⁷⁰ As I said above, my view is that scholars need to adopt an approach that caters for the coexistence of change and continuity in the post-European Māori past. My view is that this can be done by turning around the aforementioned definition of acculturation and asking if *old* ideas can be assimilated into a *new*, that is to say modern, cognitive framework? In further refuting the presumed disjuncture between tradition and modernity, we can look to Kavita Philip's study of resource use in colonial south India and her idea of 'mixed modernity'.

The essence of mixed modernity is that colonial modernities were amalgams of different types of European knowledge traditions and practices, and to a lesser extent, indigenous ones incoming Europeans encountered. As Philip says:

Systems of knowledge and practice that are often represented as ‘pre-modern’, or as antithetical to science, were in fact not overcome, replaced or superseded by a ‘scientific modernity’. On the contrary, earlier forms of knowing and doing entered into a complex, mutually constitutive relation with newer, more ‘modern’ forms. Thus, for example, religious thinking and missionary practice in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were not simply vestiges of an earlier, pre-scientific world-view: rather, religiously inflected moralising rhetoric, proselytising activity, the scientific justification of civilisational hierarchies and technological production sustained each other in a matrix of interdependency.⁷¹

One of Philip’s related points is that the postcolonial subject has inherited more aspects of colonial scientific selfhood than he or she has rejected. ‘That in itself does not constitute a paradox’, she writes, ‘for it would be surprising if we found no historical continuities in institutions and psyches.’⁷² Philip nonetheless believes that critical re-evaluations are required of every aspect of the ‘global networks of economy and fantasy’ that India has been plugged into over the last 300 years. But, she argues, ‘we cannot simply transcend them by short-circuiting the contradictory dialectic of which our own imaginations are a part’.⁷³ I think that this positioning statement is also relevant to New Zealand, where structuralist and ‘cultural continuity’ approaches to Māori history⁷⁴ impede the recognition of exogenous elements that have long been integral to all whānau. As Giselle Byrnes argues, Māori agency was Māori action influenced by values and practices of European as well as Māori origin.⁷⁵ In Paul Monin’s words, ‘[s]ustained contact inevitably changed Maori culture and thereby Maori behaviour’.⁷⁶

I extended Philip’s approach by marrying it with the idea of multiple modernities advanced by Shmuel Eisenstadt, whose central thrust is that modernization and Westernization are not identical.⁷⁷ He accordingly argues that Western patterns of modernity are not the only authentic modernities. For Eisenstadt, the common core of modernity is a distinct shift in the conception of human agency, the development of an intensive reflexivity, and structural differentiation across a wide range of institutions. This has occurred, albeit unevenly, across all Māori families and communities. Māori literacy and the textualization of Māori culture are a powerful illustration of this.⁷⁸ However – and this is a key aspect of Eisenstadt’s approach – the institutional and ideological patterns of modern Māori are greatly influenced by our specific (i.e. premodern) cultural premises, traditions and historical experiences.

It was easy enough in a qualitative sense to agree with Philip and Eisenstadt's views, but my PhD presented me with the operational question of how I could represent them in my research. My response drew from the work of economic historian Joel Mokyr, and to a lesser extent the historian of science Peter Dear, who I referred to earlier. Though concerned with the epistemic roots of the Industrial Revolution, Mokyr's theory of 'useful knowledge' enabled me to organize my analysis of my family and other southern Kāi Tahu families in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Mokyr defines useful knowledge as knowledge about nature and its technological manipulation for human material gain. He sees this as consisting of two types of knowledge: knowledge 'what', propositional knowledge, or *episteme*, which might approximate te kauae runga in Māori terms; and knowledge 'how', prescriptive knowledge, or *techne*, which is akin to te kauae raro.⁷⁹ Dear employs a similar approach in his historicized account of the ideology and development of science. He thus shows how science, something born in mid-nineteenth-century Europe, was the result of merging two hitherto distinct knowledge enterprises: natural philosophy and instrumentality.⁸⁰

The benefit of Mokyr and Dear's approaches is that they effectively separate mental thoughts from physical actions whilst recognizing and teasing out their interdependence. By doing this too I was able to take into account the widening and transformation of the Kāi Tahu epistemological base – Te Maire's key point – whilst making provision for the persistence of pre-European instrumental uses of nature – Tipene's key point.

Analysing muttonbirding through insights provided by economic history, the history of science, religious history and the new imperial history inevitably says something about me personally and about the historiographical strengths of the institution that has shaped me. But it also says a lot about the time – that is, the political climate – of Kāi Tahu. Our iwi negotiators settled our major historical treaty claims over 15 years ago. The Waitangi Tribunal reports on which the negotiations took place were issued a quarter of a century ago. Given that the 'terrain of dominant discourse is the only plausible arena of struggle'⁸¹ to substantially enlarge political and economic rights, our tribal scholars at that time – like those of many Māori kin groups still – were forced to deploy a sort of 'strategic essentialism'.⁸² That is not the case for me. I am therefore in the privileged position of being able to think about Māori history in different ways: ways that recognize while colonialism was indeed a project of domination, it was nevertheless an 'intensely collaborative, if not harmonious, project'.⁸³

The eclectic choice of scholarship I drew on for my PhD also, I think, reflects the shape of the harvest and the place where it was (and continues to

be) conducted. Muttonbirding has evolved considerably precisely because usage and control of the Tītī Islands have remained almost exclusively in Māori hands. This, ironically, highlights that they are by no means bounded places. In my view, the harvest's vitality is revealed not by unchanging practices but instead by the incorporation and repurposing of artefacts and ideas from distant places and contexts. Paraffin wax, for example, a by-product of oil refining, has now been used by most muttonbirders for about half a century to remove the fine down from birds once they have been plucked. At this point, I draw attention to Dipesh Chakrabarty's caution against simply equating people caught up in the global industrial order with them being 'modern', despite its egalitarian allure.⁸⁴ By this reasoning, Kāi Tahu muttonbirders who were noted for having portable radios on their Tītī Islands in 1946 ought not to be considered modern, at least not on that basis alone.⁸⁵ Modernity, Chakrabarty argues, 'is not very useful if it is treated merely as a synonym for institutional or infrastructural change over time – that is to say, for modernization'.⁸⁶ He instead suggests that it is a style of consciousness.

To what extent then did these muttonbirders possess 'a degree of reflective, judgemental thinking' about the modern processes they were clearly caught up in?⁸⁷ To what extent were they *truly* modern? And how can this be demonstrated? Chakrabarty acknowledges the extreme difficulties for historians in answering these questions. He nonetheless maintains that Eisenstadt's concept of multiple modernities, and by extension my use of it, reflects a presentist sentiment. Even so, if we come back to the muttonbirders from 1946, I think it is significant that as they loaded their catch onto waiting boats at the season's end, this work 'was interspersed with questions' due to their radio having broken: 'how were the peace talks progressing?', they asked. Many Māori participated in both the European and Pacific theatres of World War Two and if this reference to negotiations following its conclusion cannot be read as evidence of Kāi Tahu modernity, I will simply note that it cannot be read as evidence of their premodernity.

A key agent of modernity in the south was the Rev. Wohlers, referred to earlier. When he landed at Ruapuke Island in 1844 he wrote to his superiors in North Germany informing them that '[t]he New Zealand boy from the "Rauhen Hause ... has landed safely and healthy at his parents" at the Neck' (on Rakiura). He shed more light on this in 1873 when he explained that some forty years prior a Bremen whaling ship had visited Foveaux Strait, whose captain 'felt for the heathen natives, and strongly advised the then newly-formed North German Mission Society [NGMS] to send missionaries to the

south of New Zealand'. This captain 'brought home with him a little native boy from Stewarts Island, who was taken to a mission meeting, and in a touching address, shown as a specimen of the New Zealand heathen and cannibals'. Wohlers continued: 'some women began to cry, and the boy cried, and much sympathy was felt for the New Zealanders'.⁸⁸ This boy, who was christened at Hamburg, was John Lee, the eldest son of Sarah Timu and John Lee, a former Bass Strait sealer turned sawyer who left the Bay of Islands for Rakiura in the 1820s.⁸⁹ Wohlers thus asserted that this boy's journey to Germany, facilitated by an overlap of commercial whaling and evangelicalism, led to the NGMS sending 'the first missionaries to the southern Island of New Zealand', and thus Wohlers to Ruapuke.

Wohlers, who baptized my great-great-grandfather William Isaac Haberfield ('Pōua') and who earlier presided over the marriage of Poua's parents, was not by any means the only German to settle in Foveaux Strait. By the 1860s there were several German and German-speaking families in the port of Bluff, for example. Michael Bassett thus describes this port town at that time as 'the only part of the [Southland] region with a slightly cosmopolitan atmosphere'.⁹⁰ My Kāi Tahu great-grandmother, Mouru Haberfield, married into one of these families, the Metzgers, in the early 1930s. It is more accurate, however, to describe my great-grandfather, Granddad Nick ('The Fox'), as having married into the Haberfield family. He moved to the small railway siding settlement Greenhills, at the top of Bluff Harbour, where her family lived. This is close to Omaui, an important Kāi Tahu kaik with which our family has maintained strong connections. In being woven into this Māori household, Granddad Nick learned how to harvest and preserve a range of mahika kai, most notably titī. All of this was made easier, I assume, by him being a butcher – not just in name but by trade. He was later a wharfie, an occupation that overlapped with his earlier one: in the 1940s Granddad Nick would often prepare meat for the Indian men who crewed City Line ships: 'ones with turbans', as his son, my grandfather Tiny, puts it.⁹¹ This was usually mutton but would sometimes be goat, which the crew preferred. This entailed some of the crew visiting killing sheds that overlooked the top of Bluff Harbour, where 'they would be chanting and chinging and taking wee nicks at an animal's neck instead of just cutting its throat', which Granddad Nick preferred.⁹² These crewmen would then watch while Granddad 'dressed' the carcasses that were later delivered to their ship berthed at the Bluff Wharf.

I think this all supports Tony Ballantyne's assertion that bicultural history writing, the 'conscious prioritisation of Māori-Pākehā relations', obscures the reality that New Zealand has long been a society that 'contains a complex

and hybridised mix of racial, ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities'.⁹³ Germans and turbans, like Dominican-born wharfies who cooked 'macaroni the Italian way',⁹⁴ do not feature in Māori history. But they were part of life for southern Kāi Tahu people and families who lived and worked in Bluff. This complexity persists. The gardener on our marae, for instance, 'Bamboo' – a retired seaman and wharfie and respected Bluff elder – is from Burma. His conical kha mauk can be seen bobbing around behind our somewhat similarly shaped and distinctive whare-tipuna as he tends to an impressive vegetable garden that feeds locals and manuhiri alike. While many histories remain to be written of Māori in unexpected places,⁹⁵ we also need to pay attention to unexpected non-Māori in Māori places.⁹⁶

As a young child, my grandfather Tiny often helped Granddad Nick with his butchering by bringing penned sheep up the race ready to be killed, pith killing cattle-beasts, and cleaning pelts. For this he would receive a half-crown. He saved this money to buy rabbit traps. He later sold the resultant rabbit skins to traders in Invercargill, who on-sold them to London coat-makers. With these earnings Tiny bought his first clinker dinghy, which he used for employment and enjoyment in the upper reaches of Bluff Harbour. This took place at about the same time that our family, including my grandfather, observed a Japanese raider, lost in fog, nearly come ashore on our family's Tītī Island one season. This vessel was later spotted near Bluff and various parts of Rakiura. The house that our family lived in on the Tītī Island at this time had been built in 1886 and stood for over a century. It was built by John Kerle Haberfield, my grandfather Tiny's great-grandfather, a 'half-caste' who was born at Moeraki in 1845. One of my enduring memories of this structure is its jack-studs, which John Kerle had marked with Roman numerals where they met the building's top-plate. These marks embody some of the fundamental changes that took place in his world compared with the more traditional world of his grandfather, Te Pahi, who appears in ethnographic records and who drowned in Foveaux Strait at the conclusion of muttonbirding in 1823.

Although this house was replaced in the early 1990s, several of its artefacts remain and we still use them. One such thing is a wooden rolling pin made out of a cut-down dinghy oar constructed from American ash. Another house on our Tītī Island, which Tiny built in the late 1960s, also has hallmarks of our maritime lifestyle. Its door, for instance, came off the wheelhouse of a fishing trawler. Other features speak to this lifestyle and related aspects of our home base, Bluff. A number of towels in our bathroom, for instance, bear the stamp of their 'donors': 'the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand' and 'Ocean Beach Freezing Company Limited'. These things are

part and parcel of a regional littoral culture. However, such artefacts, like New Zealand's maritime histories more generally, are barely examined by its professional historians. New Zealand's colonial history, as the maritime historian Frances Steel notes, tends to 'dry out' as the nineteenth century progresses.⁹⁷ Explorations of the post-1850 Māori past are not exempt from the land bias that has produced this situation.

Accordingly, while we continue to identify with waka confederations, our frameworks and foci are primarily about being tāngata *whenua*.⁹⁸ A narrative arc persists in Māori history that has land, predominantly land loss, at its heart. Historical narratives of the colonial encounter thus focus on the impact of the New Zealand Wars (also known as the Land Wars) and the workings of the Native Land Court. An important milestone of the so-called Māori Renaissance, meanwhile, was the 1975 Land March. In other words, colonialism is equated with the acquisition and control of land alone. This terrestrial bias means that interracial contestation over marine spaces and species is largely overlooked. This has at least three unfortunate consequences.

First, it means that we fail to capture important instances of Māori agency and the continuation of Māori lifeways in marine settings. Second, it has contributed to the way in which explorations of colonialism in New Zealand have been formed surprisingly independently of empire and economics, especially global economics. As Peter Gibbons has noted, decades before New Zealand became a formal British colony – as ever since – ports were key locations for exchange. Ports connected New Zealand's people and products with the world economic system.⁹⁹ A focus on ports, therefore, gives us a way of doing Māori history from a world history perspective. They can show us how our tipuna were incorporated into an expanding capitalist world economic system and thus, as Paul Monin suggests, the ways in which this, as well as colonial governments, impacted upon them, both negatively and positively.¹⁰⁰

Finally, this land focus has meant that the assumed utility of bicultural history writing has persisted for longer than it otherwise might have. Complex and hybridized mixes of racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious communities are especially evident in port settings, as I have gestured towards. Ports are also places where Māori have congregated. Coming back to Bluff, for instance, it was described in *Te Ao Hou* in 1956 as an 'Outpost of Maoritanga'.¹⁰¹ Indeed, in 2006, 43% of the town's residents self-identified as Māori. This compares with 15% of all New Zealanders and 11.8% of Southland residents.¹⁰² In 2014, 100 out of 139 pupils at Bluff School were enrolled as Māori, 29 as Pākehā and 10 as Pasifika.¹⁰³ It is clear then that this port, my home town, has an

interesting composition and is therefore a valuable analytical site from which to pursue further questions about the nature of Māori modernity. For instance, Paul Monin argues that ‘Maori economic behaviour was neither completely subsistence and marginalised nor completely commercial and integrated’ and has called for the ‘nuances of that intermediate position … to be further explored at the local level’.¹⁰⁴ I am further interested to learn whether this Māori aggregation in Bluff, by both Kāi Tahu and northern mātāwaka groups, was part of an attempt to avoid or find a place within the economy. Either way, what were its immediate and longer-term consequences? What, in other words, has been the nature of being Māori in Bluff? I am currently undertaking a three-year study investigating these and related questions.¹⁰⁵

In summary, although my PhD focused on the Foveaux Strait region and the practice of muttonbirding in particular, which is something of a special case, and my current research on Bluff might yet likewise reflect a set of local characteristics more than broader ones, I think that my approach has relevance north of the Greenhills Bridge. I am curious to know what would happen if scholarship from the likes of Eisenstadt and Mokyr were transferred to other Māori places, configurations, practices and trajectories: each of them particular and localized but all of them modern and dynamic. The approach that I have outlined here, which I am still developing, seeks to further open up the importance of economics, technology and mobility (including migration), and as such, I believe, offers crucial windows on Māori historical experience.

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NOTES

This essay draws from the introductory section of my doctoral dissertation: see Michael J. Stevens, 'Muttonbirds and Modernity in Murihiku: Continuity and Change in Kāi Tahu Knowledge', PhD thesis, University of Otago, 2010, pp.1–29. Earlier drafts of the current iteration were aired at the 2010 annual meeting of Te Pouhere Kōrero, held at the University of Canterbury, and the 2011 biennial meeting of the New Zealand Historical Association, held at Waikato University. It is a much improved essay as a result and I thank my audiences for their thoughtful feedback. I am also grateful to my former supervisors, now colleagues, Tony Ballantyne and John Stenhouse, for recent rereadings and advice. Finally, I appreciate the encouraging feedback and helpful suggestions offered by three anonymous reviewers. Aku mihi nui ki a koutou.

- 1 Tipene O'Regan, 'Old Myths and New Politics: Some Contemporary Uses of Traditional History', in *The Shaping of History: Essays from the New Zealand Journal of History*, Wellington, 2001, p.34.
- 2 O'Regan, 'Old Myths' [2001], p.24.
- 3 Tipene O'Regan, 'A Kai Tahu History', *Te Karanga*, 6, 1 (1990), pp.7–12.
- 4 Michael P.J. Reilly, 'Entangled in Māori History: A Report on Experience', *The Contemporary Pacific*, 8, 2 (1996), p.395.
- 5 O'Regan, 'Old Myths' [2001], pp.16, 19.
- 6 Tipene O'Regan, 'Old Myths and New Politics: Some Contemporary Uses of Traditional History', *New Zealand Journal of History* (NZJH), 26, 1 (1992), pp.5–27.
- 7 O'Regan, 'Old Myths' [2001], pp.15–37.
- 8 Tipene O'Regan, *New Myths and Old Politics: The Waitangi Tribunal and the Challenge of Tradition*, Wellington, 2014, pp.1–31.
- 9 Api Mahuika, 'Leadership: Inherited and Achieved', in Michael King, ed., *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Maoritanga*, Auckland, 1992, pp.42–63.
- 10 Tipene O'Regan, interview with the author, Christchurch, 12 September 2007.
- 11 Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal describes Mātauranga Māori as 'a body or a continuum of knowledge with Polynesian origins, which survives to the present day albeit in fragmentary form', but cautions against assuming that 'mātauranga Māori has always been translated to mean knowledge created and maintained by an ethnic people called Māori'. See Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, 'Politics and Knowledge: Kaupapa Māori and mātauranga Māori', *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 47, 2 (2012), p.33–34.
- 12 See Joy Hendry, *Science and Sustainability: Learning from Indigenous Wisdom*, New York, 2014, pp.49–53, especially p.50.
- 13 Nēpia Mahuika, "'Closing the Gaps': From Postcolonialism to Kaupapa Māori and Beyond", NZJH, 45, 1 (2011), p.21.
- 14 Peter Munz, 'Open and Closed Research' review of Linda Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, *New Zealand Books*, 9, 5 (1999), p.6.
- 15 Michael King, 'New Zealand Oral History: Some Cultural and Methodological Considerations', NZJH, 12, 2 (1978), p.114.
- 16 Frederick E. Hoxie, 'Ethnohistory for a Tribal World', *Ethnohistory*, 44, 4 (1997), p.602.
- 17 Merv Halliday, *I Did It My Way: Bill Black*, Te Anau, 2013, p.126.
- 18 Halliday, pp.126–27.
- 19 F. Allan Hanson and Louise Hanson, *Counterpoint in Maori Culture*, London, 1983, pp.52–61, especially pp.54–55.
- 20 Sir Tipene O'Regan, quoted in Paul Diamond, *A Fire in Your Belly: Māori Leaders*

Speak, Wellington, 2003, p.25.

21 Quoted in Danny Keenan, ‘Predicting the Past: Some Directions in Recent Māori Historiography’, *Te Pouhere Korero*, 1, 1 (1999), p.28.

22 Michael J. Stevens, ‘An Intimate knowledge of “Maori and Mutton-Bird”: Big Nana’s story’, *Journal of New Zealand Studies* (JNZS), 14 (2013), p.116.

23 Ian Christensen, *Cliff Whiting: He Toi Nuku, He Toi Rangi*, Palmerston North, 2013, photo at p.159 and comment at p.164.

24 J. F. H. Wohlers, *Memories of the Life of J.F.H. Wohlers, Missionary at Ruapuke, New Zealand: an Autobiography*, Dunedin, 1895, p.103. I concede that this might be explained by Māori viewing potatoes as noa, in stark contrast with kūmara, which were tapu. Even so, sleeping in a space where food is cooked, and with cooked food itself, departs from normative practice.

25 A.J. Hopkins, ‘Back to the Future: From National History to Imperial History’, *Past and Present*, 164, 1 (1999), p.200.

26 Mahuika, ‘Closing the Gaps’, p.21.

27 Mahuika, ‘Closing the Gaps’, p.21.

28 After Barry Morris, ‘Borderwork in Indigenous South-Eastern Australia’, *Oceania*, 82, 1 (March 2012), p.16.

29 Danny Keenan, ‘Bound to the Land: Māori Retention and Assertion of Land and Identity’, in Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking, eds, *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*, Melbourne, 2002, p.247.

30 For a recent thoughtful discussion in the wider context of indigenous histories, see Miranda Johnson, ‘Writing Indigenous Histories Now’, *Australian Historical Studies*, 45, 3 (2014), pp.317–30.

31 Michael J. Stevens, ““What’s in a Name?”: Murihiku, Colonial Knowledge-Making, and “Thin-Culture””, *Journal of the Polynesian Society* (JPS), 120, 4 (2011), pp.333–47.

32 As a variation on this theme, Ian C. Campbell argues that cultural encounters do not simply enable the performance of extant cultural practices – from either natives or newcomers – but instead require new forms. Thus his idea of cultures of contact. I.C. Campbell, ‘The Culture of Culture Contact: Refractions from Polynesia’, *Journal of World History*, 14, 1 (2003), pp.63–86.

33 William H. Sewell Jr, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*, Chicago, 2005, pp.152–74.

34 Sewell.

35 Eugene F. Irschick, *Dialogue and History: Constructing South India, 1795–1895*, Berkeley, 1994, p.6.

36 Hoxie, p.602.

37 One of the most eloquent descriptions of whakapapa comes from Te Maire Tau. He depicts it as a ‘mental structure that allowed Ngāi Tahu to understand and interact with their landscape ... which started with the atua and reached down to the people of the land’. He explains that whakapapa enabled Māori to understand order and chaos, and place order upon space and time: ‘it is the binding agent between opposites and connects the living with the dead, atua with humankind, and the intangible with the tangible’. In short, ‘the earth ... and sky ... were understood as the original parents of humankind, with ... other elements of the natural world connected by a web of kinship’. Te Maire Tau, ‘Ngāi Tahu and the Canterbury Landscape – A Broad Context’, in John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall, eds, *Southern Capital – Christchurch: Towards a City Biography 1850–2000*, Christchurch, 2000, p.41.

38 O’Regan, ‘Old Myths’ [2001], p.34.

39 O’Regan, ‘Old Myths’ [2001], pp.34–35.

40 O’Regan, ‘Old Myths’ [2001], p.34.

41 O’Regan, ‘Old Myths’ [2001].

- 42 Te Rangi Hiroa (P.H. Buck), 'The Value of Tradition in Polynesian Research', JPS, 35, 139 (1926), pp.181–203.
- 43 Mahuika, 'Closing the Gaps', pp.21, 23, 26–27.
- 44 Mahuika, 'Closing the Gaps', pp.21–22.
- 45 Mahuika, 'Closing the Gaps', p.16.
- 46 Mahuika, 'Closing the Gaps', pp.25, 21.
- 47 Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney, 'Asia in Murihiku: Towards a Transnational History of a Colonial Culture,' in Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney, eds, *Disputed Histories: Imagining New Zealand's Past*, Dunedin, 2006, p.92.
- 48 Te Maire Tau, 'The Death of Knowledge: Ghosts on the Plains', NZJH, 35, 2 (2001), pp.131, 136, 140.
- 49 Tau has criticized those who believe that 'Maori groups can operate within a modern society by retaining "traditional" structures ... that operate by way of long held customs ... underpinned by an indigenous knowledge system that has lasted over a thousand years and which will see us through [sic] over the next millennia'. In his view, '[m]ost fascists hold similar beliefs'. Te Maire Tau, 'Te Papa 2002: Post Treaty Directions', paper presented at the Inaugural Māori Legal Forum, Wellington, 9–10 October, 2002.
- 50 See Peter L. Berger, 'Religion and the West', *The National Interest*, 80 (2005), pp.112–19; John Stenhouse, 'God's Own Silence: Secular Nationalism, Christianity and the Writing of New Zealand History', NZJH, 38, 1 (2004), pp.52–71.
- 51 Stenhouse, p.56.
- 52 Stenhouse, p.56.
- 53 See Elizabeth Elbourne, *Blood Ground: Colonialism, Missions, and the Contest for Christianity in the Cape Colony and Britain, 1799–1853*, Montreal, 2002; Kavita Philip, *Civilising Natures: Race, Resources and Modernity in Colonial South India*, New Delhi, 2003; Tony Ballantyne, 'Genesis 1:28 and the Languages of Colonial Improvement', *Victorian Review*, 37, 2 (2011), pp.9–12.
- 54 Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the 'Improvement' of the World*, London, 2000.
- 55 Tony Ballantyne, 'Christianity, Colonialism and Cross-Cultural Communication', in John Stenhouse, ed., *Christianity, Modernity and Culture*, Adelaide, 2005, pp.25–26.
- 56 Lyndsay Head, 'Wiremu Tamihana and the Mana of Christianity', in John Stenhouse, ed., *Christianity, Modernity and Culture*, Adelaide, 2005, p.58; Lachy Paterson, 'Reweti Kohere's Model Village', NZJH, 41, 1 (2007), pp.28, 39.
- 57 J.F.H. Wohlers, 'On the Dying Out of the Natives of New Zealand', *Evangelist* (1 August 1870), pp.232–33.
- 58 Sujit Sivasundaram, *Nature and the Godly Empire: Science and Evangelical Mission in the Pacific, 1795–1850*, Cambridge, 2005.
- 59 Kerry Howe, 'Two Worlds?', NZJH, 37, 1 (2003), p.51.
- 60 Alice Te Punga Somerville, *Once Were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania*, Minneapolis, 2012, pp.xv–xxx.
- 61 Te Maire Tau, 'Matauranga Maori as Epistemology', in Andrew Sharp and Paul McHugh, eds, *Histories, Power and Loss: Uses of the Past – A New Zealand Commentary*, Wellington, 2001, p.73.
- 62 Te Maire freely admits that colonial policies undermined Māori belief and political systems; however, he describes this as merely part of the 'mopping-up operations' after the substantial acquisition of the original and primary focus of the imperial eye: land and sovereignty. Tau, 'Ghosts on the Plains', p.144.
- 63 David Rich Lewis, 'Reservation Leadership and the Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy: William Wash and the Northern Utes, 1865–1928', *Ethnohistory*, 38, 2 (1991),

p.141.

- 64 Charles Royal, 'Mātauranga Māori and Museum Practice: A Discussion', Report prepared for Te Papa National Services – Te Paerangi, 2004, pp.19–22.
- 65 Tipene O'Regan, interview with the author, Christchurch, 12 September 2007.
- 66 Tipene O'Regan, interview with the author, Christchurch, 12 September 2007.
- 67 Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast*, Durham, NC, 2005, p.64.
- 68 Margaret Jolly, 'Spectres of Inauthenticity', in David L. Hanlon and Geoffrey Miles White, eds, *Voyaging through the Contemporary Pacific*, Lanham, 2000, pp.278–9.
- 69 Quoted in John Gascoigne, 'The Expanding Historiography of British Imperialism', *Historical Journal*, 49, 2 (2006), p.588.
- 70 Raibmon, p.17.
- 71 Philip, p.277.
- 72 Philip, p.11.
- 73 Philip.
- 74 Ballantyne, 'Christianity, Colonialism and Cross-Cultural Communication', pp.29–30.
- 75 Quoted in Paul Monin, 'Maori Economies and Colonial Capitalism', in Giselle Byrnes, ed., *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, Melbourne, 2009, p.139.
- 76 Quoted in Monin.
- 77 S.N. Eisenstadt, 'Multiple Modernities', *Daedalus*, 129, 1 (2000), p.3.
- 78 See Michael J. Stevens, 'Kāi Tahu Writing and Cross-Cultural Communication', *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, 28, 2 (2010), pp.130–57.
- 79 Joel Mokyr, *The Gifts of Athena: Historical Origins of the Knowledge Economy*, Princeton, 2002, pp.2–4. Kauae runga, the 'upper jaw', refers to celestial knowledge, whereas kauae raro, 'the lower jaw', refers to terrestrial or earthly knowledge. The metaphor of the jaw almost certainly references the fact that Māori knowledge of either sort was traditionally disseminated orally.
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- 81 James Scott, quoted in Raibmon, p.10
- 82 Sangeeta Ray, *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: In Other Words*, Oxford, 2009, p.110.
- 83 Irschick, p.11.
- 84 Dipesh Charkrabarty, 'The Muddle of Modernity', *American Historical Review*, 116, 3 (2011), pp.665–6.
- 85 'To the Mutton-bird Islands --- and back again', newspaper cutting, unknown publisher, 8 June 1946, original copy in author's possession (a gift from the late Robyn Bradshaw).
- 86 Charkrabarty, pp.674–5.
- 87 Charkrabarty, p.669.
- 88 Wohlers, 'The German Mission Station at Ruapuke, Foveaux Straits', *The Evangelist or Presbyterian Herald of Otago*, 5 (1 October 1873), p.302.
- 89 John. O.C. Ross, *William Stewart: Sealing Captain, Trader and Speculator*, Canberra, 1987, p.135.
- 90 Michael Bassett, *Sir Joseph Ward: A Political Biography*, Auckland, 1993, p.7.
- 91 My grandfather thinks that there was some kind of agreement whereby City Line ships had to carry a certain number of Indian crew members, but that men who took up this offer were limited to a three-year rotation. This arrangement continued well into the 1960s, by which time Tiny was a wharfie. Through this, Tiny became good friends with an Indian 'chippie' – a ship's carpenter – 'who was a very good tradesman, and had handmade all his tools; he could knock

anything up'. This individual later returned as a cook, seemingly under a different name, to get around the three-year rule referred to.

92 While Tiny's memory of turbans suggests that these men were Sikhs, the method of ritualistic slow killing that he seems to recall – kutha – is anathema to them. Sikhs instead use *jhatka* – a single blow resulting in instant death.

93 Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past*, Wellington, 2012, pp.55, 50.

94 Michael J. Stevens, ““The ocean is our only highway and means of communication”: Maritime Culture in Colonial Southern New Zealand”, JNZS, 12 (2011), p.163.

95 After Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, Lawrence, KS, 2004.

96 Hoxie offers a similar sentiment where he argues that ethnohistorical narratives should be puzzling: they must “explore and account for (or even seek out) behavior that our theories can neither predict nor easily explain”. Hoxie, p.607.

97 Frances Steel, ‘Uncharted Waters? Cultures of Sea Transport and Mobility in New Zealand Colonial History’, JNZS, 12 (2011), pp.137–8.

98 Atholl Anderson, Judith Binney and Aroha Harris, *Tangata Whenua: An Illustrated History*, Wellington, 2014.

99 Peter Gibbons, ‘The Far Side of the Search for Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History’, NZJH, 37, 1 (2003), pp.40–41.

100 Monin, pp.140, 146.

101 Toby Rikihana, ‘An Outpost of Maoritanga’, *Te Ao Hou: The New World*, 15 (July 1956), pp.10–11.

102 Stevens, ‘Maritime Culture’, p.165.

103 See www.educationcounts.govt.nz/find-school/population/year?school=2120&district=75®ion=15

104 Monin, p.145.

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