

bicultural issues

. . . from the NSCBI

The Society's National Standing Committee on Bicultural Issues prepares a regular column for the Bulletin. In it the Committee seeks to inform readers about particular bicultural issues, explaining their implications for the activities of psychologists and for the practices and policies of the Society.

How does the Treaty of Waitangi (1840) relate to a science that developed after 1890 ?

The title of this column comes from the graffiti board at the Waikato Conference. In thinking about the question it is important to recognise that it tangles up two sets of issues.

First there are the relationships between Maori, as tangata whenua, and subsequent settlers - the issues raised by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and our colonial history. Then there are the cultural foundations of psychological science, whether developed from 1890 or earlier, and the appropriateness of its understandings of human behaviour in a different cultural context. As these are both important we will certainly return to both in later columns, but here we are seeking to provide a base from which we can address the former.

So we will identify the key terms of te tiriti - the text in Maori that bears all but 38 of about 530 signatures - pointing to other sources for those who

want more detail. We will sketch current NSCBI understanding of what these terms mean for the New Zealand Psychological Society and for practitioners of psychology in this country.

We will assume that most readers know how the treaty came into being - its relationship to Hobson's instructions, the debate at Waitangi, and the drive to obtain signatures from other rangatira around the country. If you don't, we recommend you read either Yensen, Hague & McCreannor (1989) Honouring the Treaty, or Orange (1987) The Treaty of Waitangi. Like other recent authoritative writing both these books look to the 1835 Declaration of Independence - He Wakaputanga o Te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī - for an understanding of the treaty.

When King William and the Colonial Office acknowledged that Nu Tirenī was an independent nation, by accepting the Declaration, they also

accepted that Maori held the sovereignty. This acknowledgement constrained Hobson and his masters in the Colonial Office, who instructed him to obtain "the free and intelligent consent of the natives, ...to the imposition of British rule." Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the treaty drawn up to fulfil this requirement, that Hobson offered to and had signed by the Maori at Waitangi and elsewhere, is very clear. Victoria is to have "Kawanatanga", the Rangatira (and their people) are to retain "te tino Rangatiratanga".

This is a treaty about the relationships between peoples. To understand the way Maori and those who were to come under the Crown authority were to relate it is necessary to appreciate what Kawanatanga and Ranga-tiratanga probably meant for those who signed the Treaty.

In some recent publications Rangatiratanga has been literally translated as chieftainship or authority. In the Declaration it meant independence or self-determination - that is what the rangatira of the Confederation declared and King William ac-

cepted. In Te Tiriti o Waitangi the Queen guarantees to the rangatira and hapu of New Zealand "te tino rangatiratanga" over their lands and all that they value ("taonga katoa"). In return the Rangatira cede to the Queen "te Kawanatanga katoa o o ratou wenua" (over their lands).

Kawana, the missionary transliteration of governor, was used in the 1835 Declaration where it has clear and limited meaning. The second article of the Declaration locates the sovereignty of New Zealand in the assembly/congress of the rangatira. And it states that, apart from the assembly no one has the right to make laws or exercise any function of government. Kawanatanga, "me te tahi Kawanatanga hoki" is used for the latter.

In the Preamble of te tiriti Queen Victoria speaks of securing the rangatiratanga of the rangatira and of wishing to protect all who live here from evils that arise from having to live in the absence of laws by setting in place a mechanism for providing Kawanatanga. Clearly kawatananga does not mean sovereignty but the right to make laws and perform other functions of government necessary for the peace of the society. At this point there is some ambiguity. Was kawana-tanga to be exercised over the settlers only or over Maori and settlers? Many Maori argue very strongly that it was the former as they believe that their tipuna who

A glossary for readers unfamiliar with Maori terms used.

tangata whenua

- the people who are the land

tipuna - forebears

tamariki - children

Kohanga Reo

- (preschool) language nest

mokopuna - grandchildren

kaupapa

- body of knowledge, agenda

signed "would not have given up kawanatanga over themselves". There is certainly agreement that kawanatanga was ceded so that the Crown could control its own people. It was expected to exercise its functions of government in ways consistent with the "tino rangatiratanga" guarantee given to Maori.

Talk about the treaty, both historical and recent, has overwhelmingly represented it as being for Maori only. This is slowly changing as it is increasingly recognised that the treaty provides the framework within which two groups of people - Maori, and those who come under the Crown auspices - can share a country. It is the basis of the right of non-Maori to be here and for this reason non-Maori have a vested interest in ensuring that Te Tiriti is honoured even if many have not previously recognised this.

Psychology, as a social practice, contributes to the functions of government and psychologists have to work out how that contribution can be made in ways consistent with tino rangatiratanga.

Historically the settlers rapidly set aside the Treaty guarantees and constructed their nation, their history and culture, their economy, their systems of law and education apart from or in opposition to the Maori. We live and practice within this colonial construction. Most Maori experience psychology within various systems of government shaped by the colonial period: education, justice, welfare, and health.

As established by the settlers the New Zealand systems offered Maori people the choice of fitting in - doing it This Way - or missing out. Psychol-

ogy as a discipline may have been a relatively late arrival but has, and often still does, contribute to "imagining the community" (Anderson, 1991) in ways that are inimical to Maori. This is particularly clear where psychological theories and practices have given authority to a culture-free understanding of the individualised person, a model of personhood that underlies many victim blaming explanations. Within that framework Maori have been defined, assessed and researched and the outcomes have typically contributed to the maintenance of the non-Maori imagining of the community.

New Zealand psychologists have the opportunity, in conjunction with the NZPsS and in partnership with Maori, to make significant contributions to changed imaginings of both the community and the discipline.

There have been many changes seen, for example in education, over recent years through Maori efforts to assert their authority on behalf of their (highly) valued tamariki and mokopuna. In programmes such as kohanga reo Maori have underlined their desire that their children should have access to learning but not at the expense of their Maoriness or their sense of self. Glynn, Rogers, Teddy and Atvars (1994) provide an instructive example of how psychologists can play a significant part in such programmes.

University departments, some at least, have begun to include kaupapa Maori psychology in their teaching and professional courses typically provide at least some training on working with Maori clients. There is a move

that is gathering strength to undertake research with rather than on Maori. The piecemeal nature of the responses is a reminder that psychology, whether considered as a science, a discipline or a body of practices, is not the coherent entity implied by the phrase "psychological science".

Throughout the lengthy process by which the NZPsS established the NSCBI the Treaty has been the measure of both the processes and the changes required. The challenge is to work for and practice a Kawantanga that is honourable, that recognises its limits and cooperates with those exercising Rangatiratanga.

There are strong challenges to the Pakeha within the NSCBI to measure up in this respect. The starting point is to establish appropriate working partnerships with Maori and Maori psychologists. Cultural Justice and Ethics (1994), the proceedings of the symposium at the 1993 Conference, describes some of the changes that are occurring or needed in teaching, research and practice. Various contributors also present the reasons why the particular changes are needed.

Hui '95 (Maori and Psychology), held in early February, established that there are Maori who are willing to work with psychology and psychologists. They will be an important source of guidance for us (in the Society) as we work through changes in the governance of our society and review of the Code of Ethics for New Zealand Psychologists.

Over recent years many psychologists have been pushed by changes in the system or institution of which they are, or were, a part. Some

of the graffiti on the board at the Waikato conference suggested that they feel pushed by the relatively recent emergence of the Treaty as an issue for psychologists. The same board, together with comments made to the researchers show there are a great many who are struggling with how to make appropriate changes.

It is the NSCBI view that Te Tiriti must be our guide in this. It lays out the relationship between those of us who are Maori and those of us who are not Maori but have become part of this nation under the auspices of the Crown.

In a large measure the answer to the question asked on the graffiti board is that the people of this country, including us psychologists, are working out the nature of the relationship. In this process the historical option of ignoring Te Tiriti and sidelining Maori is no longer acceptable.

References

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