

When Racism Stepped Ashore: Antecedents of Anti-Maori Discourse in Aotearoa¹

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Anne Salmond (1991), in examining the voyages of Tasman, Cook, de Surville and du Fresne, draws attention to aspects of contemporaneous European theorising about "the other". She highlights two key strands of representation of unknown peoples, within the cultures from which these explorers set sail:

One was the image of the bestial savage, sometimes gigantic and physically monstrous as well as brutally cruel, which derived from mediaeval bestiaries and theories about demons. The other was the 'savage' as the innocent, happy child of nature, free of the corruptions of 'civilised' society, the Utopian inheritor of the biblical Garden of Eden." (p.95)

This double gaze was central to the worldview with which Europeans approached first interactions with Maori.

The idea that Pakeha came to this country with a specific view of Maori as 'other' is central to Angela Ballara's (1986) study of racial prejudice in the colonial context. She suggests that European immigrants arriving in this country in the mid-nineteenth century, came with a "set of ideas formed in Britain or other parts of her colonial dominions" (p10) about "the natives".

James Belich (1986) in his major reappraisal of the land wars of the 1860s and 70s, examines the ways in which Pakeha in that era accounted for the confrontations. He concludes that a "dominant interpretation", deeply rooted in ideas about British racial superiority, governed and shaped the Pakeha understanding of causes and outcomes. Despite the numerous reverses and weaknesses of the imperial campaigns and even a few skeptical reports at the time, the very detail of what happened in particular engagements was tailored toward a story of inevitable and unproblematic Pakeha victory over Maori.

Malcolm Nicholson (1987) reports on the material effects of Pakeha representations of Maori in the late nineteenth century. The research examines the relationships between different colonial discourses and the initiatives in Maori health which flowed from them. Images of Maori including "the noble savage", "the ignoble savage" and

"the romantic savage" have justified and supported different and often contradictory practices, sometimes concurrently.

For each of these scholars, there is a focus on the complex patterns of ideas, as expressed in the language and texts of the day, which provided the framework for the interpretation of what happened between Maori and Pakeha, and the justifications for particular courses of action. Belich and Ballara draw attention to the force of ideology in this working out of human affairs. Both Salmond and Nicholson provide much detail of the ideological formations which are engaged in the contests for power which mark the arrival and establishment of Pakeha in this country. I have been studying the contemporary language and ideas of Pakeha New Zealanders about Maori, and the role of these phenomena in the construction and interpretation of our social reality. Both Salmond's and Nicholson's insights seem to me to bear striking resemblance to a pattern central to the talk of Pakeha in the late twentieth century, in which apparently contradictory positive and negative characteristics are widely attributed to Maori.

In the present paper my interest is to examine a "dominant interpretation" at work in a historical context and in the contemporary setting to look at the similarities of the resources Pakeha marshal in talking about Maori. My primary focus is on texts that were available to those involved in the first waves of large scale colonial migration to this country and especially on one book published by the New Zealand Company in 1839. Will such materials carry precursors of ideas, phrases, images and usages which pervade our contemporary constructions of Maori/Pakeha relations? Will the insights of such study be of significance to the ongoing tension in the interaction of the two groups?

I construe this as a study of a crucial aspect of my own culture and its role in the processes of colonisation and subjugation of the Maori world. To examine the historical production of dominance through language, from within the dominating culture, is to be better able to understand the familiar expressions of those power relations in the contemporary setting.

I address these questions using a discursive approach which has arisen within social psychology. Some theoretical explanation of this way of working lays a foundation for the analyses which follow.

Theorising Discourse in Social Relations

In the last decade much critical thinking in the social sciences has bent toward studying the discursive role of language in the construction and maintenance of coercive social relations (van Dijk, 1993). The theorising and practices of discursive research as developed by a number of European social scientists (eg Billig et al, 1988; van Dijk, 1984; Essed, 1988; Parker, 1992; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell and Potter, 1992; Wodak, 1989) have highlighted the ways in which language and power interact to reproduce the social order. While encompassing broadly divergent views and interests, these workers generally call for the suspension of the positivist assumption that language is a neutral medium for the transmission of information. Rather, language shapes and is shaped by the uses to which it is put, so that the explication of the way talk or text functions to produce particular meanings is vital to the understanding of social relations at all levels from the interpersonal to the mass political.

These theorists highlight the role of power in discourse which is obvious enough in the speech of members of various elite groups (van Dijk, 1993) especially at moments of crisis. However speakers in "mundane" (Billig, 1995) or "everyday" (Essed, 1988) situations who can position their arguments as natural, normal or commonsense are far more likely to be heard and accepted (that is succeed in communicating) than those who are perceived as marginal to a particular culture.

Conceptions of the interactive relationship of language and power have long been central in sociological studies in the area of race relations (Miles, 1982; Miles, 1989; Spoonley, 1988) and recently the theorising has moved to acknowledge a psychological dimension as well. In relation to studies of nationalism and identity, Bell and McLennan (1995) make the point that ideology is better regarded as "procedures and resources for making sense of our worlds" (p2) than as "false consciousness" and that as such it has "an important (culturally variable?) *psychological dynamic*" (p2. Emphasis and query in original).

Within social psychology Billig et al (1988) have developed ideas which bear on these psychological aspects of ideology. They refer to the framework by which people interpret their particular everyday experiences and relate them to the common knowledge of other members of their society, as "lived ideology". This interpretative framework both resources (through a pool of arguments, anecdotes, imagery and common rhetorical forms) and constrains (through the limited range of such resources) the interpretations that will be acceptable as natural or commonsensical in a given setting. Ideology in this sense is profoundly normative and via a diverse array of formal and informal social institutions and interactions, represents a potent force for resisting change and maintaining the status quo.

Billig et al (1988) also advance the view that lived

ideology is flexible (in their words "thoughtful" and thus psychological) and able to be adapted to particular circumstances. Thus speakers can, within the bounds of commonsense, shape the resources into arguments or positions which meet the interpretative needs of their situations. In part this reflects the often dilemmatic nature of ideology in which apparently self-contradictory sets of statements co-exist as common explanatory possibilities for a given situation. Billig et al (1988) use the example of the sayings, "too many cooks spoil the broth" and the counterposed "many hands make light work", both of which can be applied to situations of people working together, to illustrate this feature.

Wetherell and Potter (1992) also from a social psychology base, argue that discourse entails "quintessentially psychological" activities - explanation, identification, justification, rationalisation, categorisation, blaming, attribution - by which individuals and groups make sense of their social world. To achieve this goal, discourse must be adaptable and able to manage disparate and often contradictory observations and subject positions in ways that preserve a public and private sense of coherence. Potter and Wetherell (1987) declare discourse to be of central importance to social psychology and call for its investigation as a topic in its own right.

These are the major influences on my own position in regard to the role of the discursive in making the social order material. I think of discourse as the practical, particularised application, through language especially, of the shared ideological resources of communities, in the work of interpreting everyday experience. I take a discourse analytic approach in which my attention is alerted to the forms and functions of language at all levels, from linguistic detail to the semantic and rhetorical (what Fairclough (1992) has called the intra and intertextual dimensions of text) in an effort to account for the ways in which a text constructs and communicates particular meanings. Analysis often takes the form of multiple detailed readings of texts to highlight the commonalities and the variation deployed in taking a position. It is a deconstructive approach which balances its subjective stance with a need to produce accounts of accounts which explicate their data in systematic, interesting and challenging ways. The reflexivity (Ashmore, 1990) entailed in this process encourages me to acknowledge and work from my own personal and political perspectives and to make these and my analyses as accessible as possible.

Wetherell and Potter (1992) suggest that one of the dimensions of satisfactory analysis of any text is insider knowledge of the culture and context in which the text arises and optimally, a reflexively enhanced sense of what is entailed in cultural membership. Such "heightened ethnographic insight" facilitates the interrogation of the assumptions and practices upon which society is based.

For diverse reasons, these qualities are unavailable or at least attenuated for researchers wishing to examine historical data and many of the pitfalls that attend analysis of data across cultural boundaries apply. My response to the pitfalls of historical texts is to emphasise the historical and political contingency of my readings, selections and analyses of the data. I try to counter-balance this subjectivity

by exposing my working process and by presenting relatively large tracts of text so that the reader can then better assess my construction and reconstruction of the historical material. Also my commentary briefly locates the texts I have used as data within a much broader literature which includes both the preceding writings by Pakeha about Maori and aspects of intellectual traditions from which they spring.

The New Zealand Company Texts

My analyses are part of a survey of published historical writings about Maori by Pakeha, from the time of first contact in 1642, up to the beginning of organised colonisation in 1840 (see note 2). While this is not a vast literature, I have chosen a specific focus - a text produced by the New Zealand Company in 1839 - because of its likely influence on a large number of potential colonists and because of the way it relies on much of the published material which predates it.

The New Zealand Company arose in England as a vehicle for capitalist speculation on Maori land in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Interest in New Zealand had grown steadily since the publication of populist accounts of Cook's voyages (e.g., Anon, 1771; Hawkesworth, 1773) which seemed to have sparked at least one (abortive) attempt at humanitarian transfer of livestock, goods, and technology (Dalrymple, 1784).

In 1827, the then New Zealand Association, caught the imagination of the entrepreneurial and charismatic E.G. Wakefield and became the object of much of his political theorising about the ills of society and his proposed solutions for such problems (Miller, 1958). A decade of political and commercial intrigue culminated in the Company's colonisation of New Zealand in early 1840, despite the opposition of the British government (Burns, 1989).

In pursuit of its twin goals of investment capital and potential immigrants to the colony, the Company produced a wealth of promotional materials such as pamphlets, prospectuses, magazine articles, newspaper reports and advertisements (cf Burns, 1989), including two books. The first book briefly sketches the major arguments canvassed in the second and I make a brief examination of a passage from it before focussing on the second as my main source of data.

The first book is *The British Colonisation of New Zealand* written by Wakefield (1837) who was by this stage the prime mover in the New Zealand Company, in collaboration with an enthusiastic supporter John Ward, a school teacher and inspector of prisons. The purpose of this book is primarily to make the political case for the "systematic colonisation" (see note 3) of New Zealand by the British. Aside from the lauding of the physical resources of New Zealand, the main argument was that anarchic colonisation by Europeans was already under way.

Wakefield paid some considerable attention to the Maori in this work, albeit as a "variable" in the colonisation equation. In general terms his construction of Maori fits neatly with the dialectic noted above; the noble savage, at once bestial and innocent. This view is both imported from the European cultural background and transmitted by the

texts in which Wakefield sources his specific information on Maori.

Both of such sources - the general and the particular - are critically influenced by the texts of the earliest European visitors to this country. An excerpt from the journal of the illustrious Joseph Banks (Banks, 1962), the naturalist who represented the Royal Society on the Endeavour during Cook's first voyage, demonstrates a form common in the historical record of the Maori people made in the course of European exploration of Aotearoa (eg Beaglehole, 1968; Parkinson, 1972). Summarising what he had learned of the Maori Banks wrote:

The dispositions of both sexes seem very mild, gentle, and very affectionate toward each other, but implacable toward enemies, whom having killed they eat, probably from a principle of revenge. I believe they never give quarter or take prisoners. They seem inured to war ...

Such apparently contradictory images of Maori are at once products and reinforcers of pre-existing European formulations of non-Europeans, and likely precursors of a pattern reproduced in the New Zealand Company texts. Of particular interest for my analysis is Wakefield's assertion that the Maori were "superior natives" (see note 4) which opens up (or retains) the discursive possibility of presenting two apparently conflicting images, perhaps even in the dilemmatic form described by Billig et al (1988) referred to above. Thus Wakefield can on the one hand say "The New Zealanders are a thoroughly savage people" (p.28), who are warlike, thinly populated, exposed to famine, and "barbarously inhuman" to women; they massacre, enslave and cannibalise.

On the other hand, "It is equally certain however that these poor savages have a remarkable capacity for being civilised - a peculiar aptitude for being improved by intercourse with civilisation" (p.29). In this construction Wakefield notes that Maori had become Christians, been softened by their exposure to missionaries, striven to attain European advantages, practised useful arts and worked readily as labourers. Further they were excellent sailors and whalers, gathered and grew commodities for export, built ships, saved capital, valued property, operated as traders, and desired regular government (see note 5).

The Colonists Handbook

This double-ended construction of Maori is refined and greatly extended in the text which is the primary source of data for this paper, the New Zealand Company's second book, *Information Relative to New Zealand* (Ward, 1839). This volume is subtitled "Compiled for the use of Colonists" and amounts to a primer for Britons planning to emigrate to this country. It was written by Ward, now the New Zealand Company Secretary, who in spite of his intense engagement with the machinations of the Company, never came to New Zealand. To a greater extent than in the earlier book, the disposition of Maori is seen as a key factor in successful colonisation and Ward devotes a whole chapter to the "native inhabitants".

In doing this Ward relies heavily for authority upon

accounts of Maori provided by an array of European visitors to New Zealand. He cites fifteen published first-hand accounts and oral sources and various unpublished reports are also used. Aside from the logs and diaries of the European explorers, the written accounts span a period of sporadic European contact with Maori from about 1800 to 1840.

I have read all of the published sources that Ward used to develop his image of Maori and conclude that the now familiar duality is important in all of them. Echoing Nicholson (1987), this representation of Maori varies with some authors structuring their accounts around the dialectic (eg Craik, 1830; Earle, 1832; Polack, 1840) while others appear to be writing to pre-empt or disrupt it (eg Cruise, 1824; Savage, 1807) and others again (Yate, 1835) tell only of one side. Unfortunately space precludes a detailed analysis of such aspects of these texts here although a brief account of two such sources (Savage, 1807; Polack 1840) is given in McCreanor (1995). The first-hand accounts provide early articulations of an emergent discourse about Maori as a particularised example of ideology of the "other" (cf Sampson, 1993) and contribute specific interpretative strategies for talking about Maori which are adapted by Ward in the telling of the New Zealand Company story.

Ward opens his chapter on the Maori with a commentary on the size of the population and then offers a general introduction to the topic of their characteristics as a people:

Their colour varies from black to an olive tinge. They are both physically and intellectually superior to the New Hollanders; but although their capabilities of cultivation are great they are yet an essentially savage people. (p.62)

These first few sentences evoke and extend the flexible, two-edged discourse noted above. Beginning with colour, the key racial marker of the day, the notion of the "superior native" from Wakefield (1837) is here elaborated via a pre-existing ideology of racial hierarchy (Bolt, 1971; Lorimer, 1978) (see note 6). Thus the word "superior" (in the 1837 account also) is qualified by its juxtaposition with the word "savage", at once ranking Maori against other indigenous peoples and within a larger hierarchy which assumes their fundamental inferiority to Europeans.

In Ward's account Maori range, in terms of terms of colour, from black (the worst) to olive (marginally acceptable; like the Spanish?). The image Ward conveys would have been quite different had Maori been described simply as black (a distinction reserved for the unreconstructed savage) and thus the reported variation in colour discursively maintains the possibility of constructing and accounting for Maori in both positive and negative terms.

Ward's use of the primary classification system of skin colour is next enhanced by reference to other vital markers - physical and intellectual prowess - of the racial hierarchy. The second sentence is organised in a rhetorical format (akin to the disclaimer; see Hewitt and Stokes, 1975), in which the initial mildly positive statement is undercut by a second strongly negative phrase, in spite of which the speaker maintains an impression of even-handedness. This move

argues Maori superiority over the archetypal primitive, allowing a positive characteristic (skills in agricultural production) and then, after the pivotal "but", reclassifies Maori with the label "savage". The use of the word "yet" in the final sentence seems to have a dual function. It has the sense of "never-the-less" which locates Maori savagery as a current characteristic. It also has a future aspect in the possibility that Maori may evolve for the better, a useful idea for persuading the doubtful that the negative qualities of Maori need not be an obstacle to migration.

It is not the case that Ward is unaware of the apparently contradictory nature of his positioning of Maori, for early on in the chapter he writes:

We shall endeavour, briefly, in the first place, to describe some of his habits and character as a savage; and then to cite some facts which prove that his capacity, intelligence, and moral feelings are undoubtedly such, as afford the most promising hopes, both of his own civilisation, and of his future usefulness as a member of British Colonial Society. (p.61)

However in Ward's writing this process of the active construction of Maori, juggling disparate elements is not apparently seen as in any way problematic. Rather the discursive flexibility is exploited to the end of achieving the fairly difficult task of persuading people to pay for the chance to uproot themselves and cross the globe in search of a new life.

Lest there should be confusion arising from his two-sided presentation, Ward furnishes a brief summary to his introduction which reinforces the idea of the uncivilised nature of Maori.

... with the physical powers and passions of men, they have at present the intellect of children, and in moral principle are too often little above the level of brute creation. Such are the unhappy circumstances of a thoroughly savage nation. (p.62)

The use of the image of the child and of "brute creation" to convey the immature and undeveloped state of Maori simultaneously, signals a potential that may yet be coaxed from them. The implication is that under the guiding presence of English culture, the valuable characteristics will flower to lift the Maori to a higher plane. The use of the phrase "too often" hedges the conclusion that Maori are totally amoral and suggests that Maori do have some morality or perhaps that some Maori have developed this refinement. However despite these apparent concessions, Ward proceeds to elaborate the negative side of the Maori character, barraging the reader with an extraordinary welter of detail

They are dirty in their persons and sometimes overrun with vermin. They have scarcely known the meaning of arts, trades, industry or coin; they have no roads, beyond footpaths from place to place. Their liberty depends upon the protection each individual can give himself ... there is no system of law or government ... Their most conspicuous passion is war, and they kill and sometimes eat their vanquished enemies, scalping and exhibiting their heads as trophies. ... [they] thieve with little scruple. The

licentiousness of the women is subjected to no restraint until after marriage. Polygamy prevails. (p.62-63)

This section catalogues the woes that justify classing Maori as savage. As such it is well calculated to have Maori compare very unfavourably with the prevailing English view of their own superiority in so many of the areas mentioned.

That this commentary on Maori should be cast in this way makes good sense if its role is to establish for the colonist not only a justification for taking over the new land from a people who neither use it as god intended, nor are fit subjects to that god. For if it is possible to advance a sense that the colonists are somehow answering a call to higher duty, in shouldering the white man's burden and working to save heathen savages to humanity and civilisation, then the case for colonisation is greatly strengthened.

Having achieved these prerequisites, Ward moves to lighten the load by revisiting the other side of the dilemma. Here the positive aspects of Maori are used to enhance the overall attractiveness of the territory for colonisation:

Their character according to Captain Cook is distinguished by modesty from the other inhabitants of the south seas. They are as ardent in friendship and love as they are cruel in jealousy and revenge.

There is a natural politeness and grandeur in their deportment, a yearning after poetry, music and the fine arts, a wit and eloquence that remind us in reading all the accounts of them, and in conversing with those who have resided among them of the Greeks of Homer. Their language is rich and sonorous, abounding in metaphysical distinctions, and they uphold its purity most tenaciously ... They have an abundance of poetry of a lyrical kind, of which we have seen many specimens, in a metre which seems regulated by a regard for quantity as in Greek and Latin. They are passionately fond of music. ... They excel at carving ... They have given names to each [star], and divided them into constellations ... Baron Hugel, a distinguished botanist, who visited the island, affirms, as do the missionaries, that there is not, in the northern island at least, a single tree, vegetable, or even weed, a fish, or a bird for which the natives do not have a name; and those names are universally known. (p.66-67)

The passage opens with a restatement of the superior standing of Maori in the racial hierarchy and then expands upon their nobility. The "thoroughly savage nation" of a few pages earlier is now accorded many characteristics which might be proudly claimed by any civilised society. The allusions to the classical civilisations help to construct Maori society as an antipodean variant on the theme complete with its own arts and sciences. The qualifying phrase "in the Northern Island at least" appears to echo a hierarchical subdivision of Maori, evident in some of Ward's source texts, in a way which is tidily congruent with the broader racial theory and the local interpretations within which it is embedded (see note 7).

Ward then moves beyond the assertion of the potential of Maori for civilisation to reconstruct Maori as "superior" savages; they have actually made significant steps of advancement already thanks to contact with

Europeans.

They have exhibited a curiosity, ambition and powers of observation and imitation which render them admirable learners; they manifest, especially, discernment in their estimation of the value of things... They are well acquainted with the geography of their own country, and their curiosity to see distant lands is proved by the frequent instances in which natives have made voyages to England and elsewhere. The progress they make in learning to read their own language, together with the construction of their arms, and of their war mats, which are elegantly bordered, alone indicate a higher capacity for civilisation, than that of the helpless New Hollanders, or the generality of the islanders of the Pacific.

... nothing, it is said, meets with a more ready sale, at the missionaries' stations, than a cargo of soap and English blacking. The natives enter largely into commercial transactions in the sale of flax, timber, potatoes, and pork, with the ships which visit their coasts, and such is their credit, that some of them have been trusted with 1500 [pounds] worth of goods. (p.69-70)

The attributes laid out in this passage are now less the airy references to the potential of Maori or of their cultural attributes, than accounts of actual achievements in various fields. Pragmatic skills in literacy, travel, geography, indigenous technology, agriculture, resource exploitation and trade are acknowledged and underpinned by more arcane characteristics such as openmindedness, commercial sense, diplomacy and trustworthiness.

To summarise, this text provides the reader with linguistic and semantic resources to construct Maori in apparently contradictory but discursively useful ways as at once positive and negative - noble and savage - in nature. On one hand, Maori are located within a racial theory which values the European and discredits other races by degrees of difference from this standard. This ideology contributes to the fulsome justifications of colonialism of the day, by explaining and legitimating the domination and exploitation of Maori. On the other hand, Maori are located in the racial hierarchy above other groups and so represented in ways which emphasise their potential usefulness to European enterprise in Aotearoa. The focus on the good attributes enhances the contrast with the savage along a number of dimensions, such as honesty, cleanliness, morality, intelligence. In the context of colonising the country, this construction provides benchmarks which help to divide the Maori population between those who will fit in with Pakeha goals and standards and those who will not.

The detail afforded in the tracts of the texts examined, and undoubtedly available in other similar accounts, equip the reader with contingencies to cover diverse situations and experiences. Equally the point that the ideas and arguments can be summarised and very simply presented in overview means that the resources are accessible at a lay level of commonsense or the banal (Billig, 1995) and are so available to broad sectors of the population.

For the colonist, these views amount to a series of interpretative devices which might for example provide justifications for discriminating among Maori, rewarding

those who co-operate and rejecting or punishing those do not. Such a resource would have been very functional in the new colony where actual Pakeha survival, particularly in the first decades after 1840 was heavily dependant on the nurturance and protection of Maori (Belich, 1986). If Maori were completely savage, there would be no way of making sense of, and so benefitting from the support Maori offered, without compromising the belief in the racial superiority of Pakeha. But for the flexible dualism of the noble savage discourse, popular images of Maori would have needed careful management indeed for the heart of the colonial enterprise was the capitalist exploitation of Maori land. Nineteenth century colonialism rejected such tenderminded notions as the value or rights of indigenous people and encouraged its agents to remove all obstacles from the path of the accumulation of profit and power.

This analysis of Ward's account of the Maori people is resonant with the views of "the other" recorded by a number of scholars (see note 8). Sinclair (1977), examines the discourse of the "savage" in its broadest perspective and is able to follow the ideology back toward its roots in myth. He traces the infusing of the wild, the unknown, with powerful negative and positive attributes to the writing of the Roman writer Tacitus, who, in his admiration for the tribal Huns, first articulated the ideal of the noble savage. The ability to defy the Roman legions' attempted crossings of the Rhine, is lauded as the triumph of the simple virtues of the savage over the grasping decadence of the metropolis. The notion that "primitives" could be at once noble - brave, strong, unequivocal in defence of home and hearth - and savage - uncivilised, defiant and violent - is a striking exemplar of this discursive form.

Sampson (1993) argues that the notion of separation between self and other is a project rooted deep in the theological, philosophical, literary and political traditions of the West. In particular he claims that the discursive construction of a "serviceable other" is a necessary co-requisite to the establishment and maintenance of dominance through discourse (as distinct from physical domination). For Sampson, "serviceable" means both subservient or collaborating and acting as the contrasting condition upon which identity is forged; "a creature created by the dominant self to represent what it is not" (p.5).

My analysis of the present data suggests a more complex construction in which "the other" is both like and unlike. It also seems that part of the construction of the "serviceable other" is the construction of what might be termed a 'disposable other'. Maori are represented in a dilemmatic, contrasting way as - in the language of the day - at once noble and savage. The historical record is replete with accounts of the ways in which the colonial process has dispossessed, especially those Maori who fall outside the ranks of the subservient or the co-operative. In this respect the construction "savage" has ever been a source of Pakeha rationalisation and justification for such injustices.

Contexts

I want to reflect briefly on the likely impact of the New Zealand Company material which is at odds with the views of other interests such as the contemporaneous missionary

societies and the British civil servants responsible for New Zealand. For example the Church Missionary Society at this stage articulated quite different views of the Maori and the relationship between Maori and European (Adams, 1977; Orange, 1987) but these representations were targeted at elites such as the British government and the liberal intelligensia. Such ideologies were couched in the language of theology and academe, and stressed the need for independence for Maori and avoidance of their exploitation by Europeans. Given the exploitative and supremacist commonsense of the prospective colonist, these ideas would be of small discursive force at the frontier.

In contrast, the New Zealand Company text was written specifically for intending immigrants and investors. Ward comments in the preface to the second edition that it was required as a result of the "rapid sale of the first edition": and the book ran to four printings by the end of 1840 (Hocken, 1909). Aside from the authority that its sources lend it, *Information Relative to New Zealand* can be fairly regarded as a distillation (though clearly an interested one) of the received wisdom on the topic and quite representative at a general level of the ways in which Europeans from quite diverse perspectives - missionaries, traders, explorers, civil servants - viewed Maori. As such it probably comes close to being a prototypical source of the kinds of pre-fabricated ideology that Ballara (1986) has referred to, being both accessible and widely circulated, a deliberate manoeuvre in mass communication.

The majority of New Zealand Company immigrants were middle to lower middle-class British, frustrated entrepreneurs, business people and traders - literate, but not necessarily critically or widely read. Nevertheless, they were immersed in the culture which generated the theories of race and 'other' referred to above and therefore had prior knowledge of such ideological resources in interpreting and accounting for the Maori world. Colonists would have ample time, either before or on their three month voyage to the new country to absorb and discuss Ward's account of Maori.

Pakeha Discourse in the Contemporary Setting

The interest in the historical texts was sparked by the understanding emergent from my study of contemporary Pakeha discourse of Maori/Pakeha relations. To scrutinise the suggestion of strong similarities between the ideological resources of the different eras, I turn to a brief exposition of a relevant aspect of the contemporary data.

These insights are derived from a broad programme of research which began with a discourse analytic appraisal of a large body of written submissions from the general public to the Human Rights Commission of New Zealand (HRC), in 1979 in response to a perceived crisis in Maori/Pakeha relations. An adaptation of discourse analytic methods drawn from Potter and Wetherell (1987) and Billig et al (1988) (see Nairn & McCreanor, 1990) was used to describe the patterns of ideas, images and language use available in the data. Subsequent papers set out to examine a range of texts on the topic gathered in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in the light of the patterns from the 1979 data, and found that the former are commonly reproduced in various sources

including newspaper reportage (McCreanor, 1993a; McCreanor, 1994) magazine opinion columns (Nairn & McCreanor, 1991) and politicians speeches (McCreanor, 1993b).

Among a dozen or so patterns appearing very widely in the HRC data base, one which I have labelled "Good Maori/Bad Maori" (see Nairn & McCreanor, 1991 for a detailed account) acted as a catalyst to the historical focus developed in the first part of this paper. This description amounts to a collage of the ways in which writers divide Maori, often in the same section of text, into categories which are constructed negatively and positively. Maori who fit successfully or unobtrusively into Pakeha society are 'good', while those who protest, agitate or fail in Pakeha society are 'bad'. This is based on the analysis of numerous verbatim extracts from submissions and as such goes beyond what can be read in any particular rendition. Thus while the 'good/bad' terminology of my outline rarely appears, central aspects of the sense of it can be read from many of the submissions in the HRC database. The following excerpt illustrates some of the common characteristics.

Get rid of the stirrers and allow our wonderful Maoris to be themselves, dignified, courteous and with a great pride of race. Not the dirty, degraded, dishonest, lazy, dole bludgers that our stirrers are turning them into because they think they are being 'got at'. (PI 58)

In addition to the central device of dividing the Maori population as outlined above, this text illustrates several useful discursive dimensions that operate in the use of the resource. Agency in the process of the negative change in Maori belongs with 'stirrers', those Maori who agitate and foment tension among their people. This construction relies on an anti-historical image of the mass of Maori people as hapless or complacent parties to their own fate. It also builds an impression of gullibility reinforced by the notion that removing the troublemakers would restore Maori to their former quiescence.

Equally significant is the sense that racial problems are seen as present and future and implicitly compared to an idealised past. The activism which disrupts the former harmony is happening in the present. This stance evokes a 'standard story' (Fish, 1980) which sees Maori/Pakeha relations as the world's best model of race relations. The contrast is thus between then and now, between harmony and conflict, between good and bad.

Finally, despite the presentation of two constructions of Maori, there is a serious asymmetry in the semantic and political weight invested in these renditions. The positive terms are relatively minor virtues in the universe of high culture, either unfocused - "wonderful" - or somewhat overlapping and even ambiguous - "pride of race" is not necessarily a good thing. The images of dependency and social parasitism on the negative side are a focus for harsh criticism from Pakeha culture which so centrally values its work ethic. Coupled with the accusation of dirtiness, general degradation and an implicit gullibility, the effect is to contrast an imagined past when Maori were acceptable with a present in which Maori behaviour justifies their rejection by Pakeha. Beyond the reading of this extract, another important aspect

of the pattern is that the division of Maori into good and bad categories is rarely done in ways which tie identifiable people into one group or the other, thus protecting the discursive flexibility of the resource. Individuals or groups who at any point in time are seen as problematic can thus be moved between categories as required. This avoids the conclusion that large groups or significant individuals are on the one hand absolutely opposed to the status quo, or on the other are such inherently fine people that their contrary opinion should carry much weight. Along with the characteristic pitting of the Maori population against itself, these features make the resource a very powerful device in exerting normative pressure on Maori and Pakeha who question Pakeha dominance. I hear myself (and others) pose a question of the general form "If these Maori can make it, what is wrong with the ones who don't?" The answers I build from the Good Maori/Bad Maori pattern tend to blame Maori in difficulty for their own plight and direct attention away from the role of Pakeha individuals and institutions in enacting and maintaining the oppression of Maori.

This pattern has wide currency among Pakeha people and has been central to my analyses of an opinion column in a local current affairs magazine written by a prominent local business figure (Nairn & McCreanor, 1991) and a speech by the current Minister of Justice of the New Zealand Government (McCreanor, 1993b). The pattern is also clearly identifiable in other texts I have worked on and forms a crucial part of the resources for constructing justifications and explanations of the status quo of Maori/Pakeha relations that I encounter in everyday settings such as in the local school management committee, and in the university department where I work. Good Maori/Bad Maori as a resource, has much of the dilemmatic quality described by Billig et al (1988) as vital to the commonsense notions which mediate the maintenance of "lived ideologies" and the interpretation of everyday experience. It allows users to account for diverse and apparently contradictory situations and phenomena without having to account for contradictory ideologies or make major exceptions to the established discursive forms of argumentation on the topic.

Conclusions

I have examined some detail of particular discursive resources deployed by Pakeha speakers in the construction of Maori in two very different contexts. In form, content and general function there are considerable similarities between these resources. The dual construction, the characteristics of Maori designated positive and negative, and the possibility of dividing Maori against themselves to strengthen and justify the processes of colonisation and domination make up the common ground. These observations support a theoretical expectation that such patterns in Pakeha talk have a core of durability over considerable time frames.

There are also important differences between the two sets of ideas that I have been working with. To a considerable extent these are reflections of the radical differences in social context between the 1830s and 40s and the 1980s and 90s. Crucially the power has shifted from established Maori sovereignty to Pakeha domination and control, with all the

material, political, social and demographic change attendant upon this upheaval.

My reading of the historical accounts leaves me with the impression that the idea of the noble savage spanned a broader spectrum than the usage of the Good Maori/Bad Maori pattern, that the poles of the former represent more extreme judgements. Perhaps it was easier to view Maori with some kind of positivity when they were indisputably possessed of the soil, operating a economic and social order that served their needs and reproduced their realities. Perhaps also, incomprehensible aspects of the Maori behaviour and world that early Pakeha arrivals experienced were the more deserving of the mystifying epithet "savage".

In the contemporary workaday world, the decades of interaction and relationship leave a far more complex and heterogeneous character to Maori/Pakeha relations. Pakeha identity seems inextricably bound up with Maori yet they are often the butt of scapegoating and criticism. We may not know what to do about the problems we face in Maori/Pakeha relations, but those 'good' and 'bad' characteristics of Maori are now so much part of our cultural capital, as to be ready currency to any discussion of the issues.

In this paper, I am highlighting the value of approaches which move beyond the traditional theorising of social psychology. We can account for the continuities and the changes in discursive and ideological practice in terms of the evolution and flexibility of the discourse which is differentially expressed according to changes in the social climate, without recourse to the invention of coherent and fixed attitudes. Rather than seeing the position of individuals as frozen unless overturned, we can see speakers tailoring a highly flexible core of discursive resources to their needs against a backdrop of normative ideological pressures.

In this model the point that the commonsense notions of race amount to an ideology of European superiority, determines that the fledgling power relations entailed in the early contact will be those of European domination and oppression. As such the application of this ideology to Maori in Aotearoa marks a point at which racism stepped ashore. One hundred and fifty years of Pakeha involvement with Maori have seen first domination and then entrenchment of the ideology in ways that make the racism a contemporary material reality in this country.

Notes

1. Aotearoa is a Maori name for the country which appears to have arisen after European contact, but which is used in a political context to emphasise the indigenous status of the Maori people and language.
2. I note the profoundly "gendered" nature of these sources. Accounts from Pakeha women in this period are non-existent and none are included in Ward's book. My male readings of both contemporary and historical texts are also contributory in the sense that both are basically "gender neutral" and issue I plan to develop in collaboration with a woman colleague in the near future.
3. As outlined in Wakefield's (1967) *England and America* systematic colonisation turned upon the organised transplantation of stratified British society to new realms, allowing the entrepreneurial classes to find their potential using the land and resources of indigenous groups who would benefit by becoming a

brown proletariat of skilled labour.

4. Indeed such was the impression created by the Maori that the authors, in a section which examines the implications of the existence of Maori for the colonisation of New Zealand, advance the opinion that "...future generations of Europeans and natives may intermarry and become one people" (p29). This is the first usage that I have seen of the phrase reportedly used by Lieutenant Governor William Hobson at the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi at Tai Tokerau in 1840 (Orange, 1987). The 'One People' Pattern (McCreanor, 1993a) has long been a rallying cry of nationalism but at the hand of Pakeha invariably reproduces the historical injustices between Maori and Pakeha by assuming an overwhelmingly Pakeha national culture and identity. It is in widespread use in the contemporary setting and was one of the most common features of the HRC database.

5. Traces of this kind of flexibility can be read in the writings of European philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries. For example, Hume (1967) conceives of society as a state in which people exist in reciprocal hostility, capable of commonwealth only through contracting their loyalty and obedience to the supreme and absolute authority of the "leviathan". Locke (1949) espouses the idea that society is mediated by a law of nature (namely "reason") by which the people consent to commonwealth as the way of assuring their own health and well-being. Despite the fundamental differences between their positions, both writers acknowledge an essential human tension in the social forces that produce the public and the private good, order and anarchy, peace and war, in short the noble and the savage.

6. In such schemes, humanity is ordered from most to least advanced by means of a number of primarily physical markers, especially skin colour and physiognomy. The hierarchy so constructed, locates peoples on a scale, at the peak of which were the English above foreign European groups, followed by the barbaric and the primitive. In the diverse sources which Ward cites, (eg Cruise, 1820; Nicholas, 1817; Polack, 1840 Yate, 1835) writers particularise these general rankings to the south Pacific with the Australian Aborigine representing the nadir and the Maori placed at the zenith.

7. For example one of Ward's key sources, the trader Joel Polack who worked in the Kaipara and Hokianga districts in the early 1830s claimed that Maori consisted of two races - black and brown - respectively inferior and aristocratic, distinguishable on the basis of attainments, physique and demeanor. Polack's (1840) account claims the existence of "two distinct aboriginal races" (p6), one superior one inferior, within Maoridom, who are in their turn superior to Pacific peoples who are described as "as indolent a race of being as exist on the globe" (p6).

8. A study by Saum (1965) indicates that similar intellectual formulations existed in other colonial enterprises and were evident in the writings of thoughtful Europeans who were in direct contact indigenous peoples in various settings. Saum quotes Henry Boller, a fur trader in the mid-seventeenth century, for his assessment of North American Indian life.

I could "paint" ... you two pictures: The one would represent the bright side of Indian life, with its feathers, lances, gaily dressed and mounted "banners", fights, buffalo hunting etc. The other side the dark side showing the filth, vermin, poverty, nakedness, starvation, superstition, etc. Both would be equally true - neither exaggerated or distorted; both totally dissimilar.

Beyond the superficial observation that this text presents starkly contrasting views of an indigenous people, I note some stylistic features of this passage which are shared with some of the New Zealand Company material. Firstly it takes a similar form in pointing out two separable but interwoven images - the light and the dark. Further, this is done actively and reflexively as a representation. This is a problem in a world of concrete truths

and is contextualised by the counterintuitive claim that the divergent images are "equally true". Perhaps the apparent contradiction is acceptable in a general ideological context of "the other" where ordinary expectations of the order of things can be suspended in a context where stories about the savage belong in a 'strange but true' genre.

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