PAKEHA POETICS

A Socio-Historical Study of Pakeha Landscape Mythology

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology at the University of Canterbury.
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He who binds to himself a joy  
Does the winged life destroy;  
He who kisses the joy as it flies  
Lives in eternity’s sun rise.  
- William Blake\(^1\)

New Zealand’s fertile plains were the last that Europeans found before the Earth’s supply revealed itself as finite. Our relationship with them has been completely unsustainable ... [We] have exploited these islands’ richest ecosystems with all the violence that modern science and technology could summon ... [We] must live with the rest of nature or die with the rest of nature.  
- Geoff Park\(^2\)

What happens is either meaningless to me, or else it is mythology.  
- James K. Baxter\(^3\)

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\(^3\) "Notes on the Education of a New Zealand Poet" in *The Man on the Horse* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1967), 122.
CONTENTS

Acknowledgements
Abstract
Preamble
Introduction

Chapter One – Culture and Critical Theory
Myth and the Dialectic of Critique
Key Definitions
Methodology
Interpreting Texts: Hermeneutics
Critical Theory
Postcriticism, Poetics and Dialectics
Myth in Modernity

Chapter Two - 100% Pure Synthetic Opiates
Mass Culture as Mundane Therapy
The 100% Pure New Zealand Brand
The Frankfurt School, Mass Culture and the Culture Industry
(Post)Colonialism
Biculturalism and Pakeha Identity Unease
Compulsory Nationalism
Get Rid of Landscape?

Chapter Three - The Antipodean Arcadian Myth
Low Culture and Sentimental Colonial Beliefs
Culturalism and Cynical Versus Sentimental Belief
Low Culture and Anti-Colonialism
European Beliefs in New Zealand as an Antipodean Arcadia
Clinging to Place
Conservationism and Local Authentication of Landscape Myths
Anti-Intellectual Counter-Culture
The Internal Exiles: Embracing Isolation, Embracing Low Culture

Chapter Four - Embracing Belief in the Critique of Myth
The Frankfurt School and the Avant-Garde
Negative Dialectics and A Secular Sacred
High Culture and Intersubjective Rationality
The Critical Development of Pakeha High Culture

Chapter Five - The Wasteland
The Cultural Nationalist Anti-Myth
Cultural Nationalism and Modernist Critique
The Anti-Myth
Realism and Moving Away From Colonial Sentimentalism
Counter Critiques of the Anti-Myth
Regional Real
Man Alone and the South Island Myth 96
Romanticism and Anti-Intellectualism 97
Isolation in Nature and Critical Ruralism 100
Isolation, Identity Unease and Globalisation 105

Chapter Six – Alchemy
Forging the Sacred from The Wilderness
Part One: Memories of Place 108
Melancholy and Nostalgia 109
Sentimental Antimodernism 110
Cynical Antimodernism 111
Critical Antimodernism 114
Part Two: Prophesies of Place 116
Post-Dualism and Wilderness 117
The Land as Sacred 123
A Critical Rural Idyll 127
Dialectical Critique 130
Landscape as Democratic High Culture or Elitist? 134

Chapter Seven - Postmodernism and High Culture 136
Deconstruction and Cynicism 138

Chapter Eight - Atheistic Belief
An Infinite Negation 144
Modernity, Death of God Theology and High Culture 145
Reconstruction? 148

Conclusion 150
Bibliography 152
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ABSTRACT

Many Pakeha beliefs are embodied in the value and meanings they have ascribed to the New Zealand landscape. These mythologies of physical space have functioned to help Pakeha construct a collective identity and to make sense of their place in the world. Painting the landscape in the cultural imagination in a number of diverse ways, from Arcadia to harsh wasteland, has functioned to help justify and explain the place of Pakeha in Maori homeland: imagining New Zealand as home meant that these myths fostered a feeling of belonging. Consequently, cultural criticism has revealed the hypocritical, sentimental and destructive nature of such myths, particularly with regards to the ongoing legacy of colonialism. However, the deconstruction of myth cannot provide a foundation for future cultural criticism to engage with. The cynicism fostered by demolishing collective mythologies requires a new form of critique. This means that a return to sincere belief is called for in the post-secular moment: a form of atheistic belief in the most radically creative aspects of Pakeha landscape mythology is thus crucial to the critique of its most totalitarian and destructive ones.
PREAMBLE

Mythology is a powerful social phenomenon. This is because, as a system of extended symbolism, myth functions not only to carry, but to explain and justify cultural meanings in a manner that begets belief. The power of mythic belief thus means that it is often deployed in a political manner; highlighting the importance of democratic and rational cultural criticism, in order to check and balance this power. As such, the relationship between belief and reason can be understood as dialectical: the use of reason in a reflexive and critical manner enables cultural meanings and beliefs to be continuously transformed to suit the needs of society in the present and future. This process of transformative critique is the goal of critical theory. However, the dialectical process of critique has effectively been rendered defunct in the era of late modernity, with cultural criticism being appropriated in advance, under a cynical late capitalist ideology. This ideological situation made me question the role of cultural criticism in New Zealand today, particularly with regards to my personal interest in environmental sustainability. Therefore, I will

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6 For more information on the political function of myth, particularly with regards to ideology, see: Lincoln, Theorizing Myth. For an additional discussion of nationalistic mythology see: Ellwood, Myth.
7 Dialectical is defined as “Relating to the logical discussion of ideas or opinions... [and is] concerned with or acting through opposing forces”. I am particularly inspired by the Hegelian use of the term, as “the process of thought by which apparent contradictions (which he termed thesis and antithesis) are seen to be part of a higher truth (synthesis)”, as this idea underlies the Marxist inspired critical theory adopted herein, particularly with regards to Marx’s theory of historical materialism, as discussed in Chapter One. Angus Stevenson and Christine A. Lindberg, eds., New Oxford American Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 2154, [online], www.oxfordreference.com. [All references from this online dictionary were accessed and checked as at August 7, 2014].
8 S. Seidman, Contesting Knowledge: Social Theory Today (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). This process (and its ties to Marxism) will be discussed further in the Methodology section of Chapter One.
9 Late modernity is defined as the current epoch, concurrent with late capitalism, which is used to describe the most recent stage of capitalism, particularly the post-World War II developments in the capitalist mode of production. Ian Buchanan, A Dictionary of Critical Theory (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
engage with this question by applying recent developments in critical theory, in order to contemplate what relevance prophecies and memories of place might hold in the critique of Pakeha landscape mythology.

INTRODUCTION
The trajectory of critical theory, from the early work of the Frankfurt School to a current engagement with Christian theology, has emphasised how a specific form of critical belief is crucial for the rational critique of modern culture to be effective. This theoretical development emerged through the work of critical theorists who were concerned with the way progress toward reasonable collective goals is often perversely affected in modern societies. For example, the maintenance of biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources has been identified as crucial to the survival of the human race, yet on a global and national scale progress towards these goals is perverse: we have seen the emergence of the anthropocene for the first time in human history and environmental problems faced by diverse groups around the world are increasingly tied to capitalist ideology. Critical theorists explained this perversity by looking to the way capitalist ideology narrowly defines reason (by prioritising instrumental rationality over dialectical forms of hermeneutic cultural knowledge), and thus highlighting how reason

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12 Žižek, *Sublime*. The Frankfurt School is a group of Marxist influenced scholars associated with the Institute for Social Research at Frankfurt University, who relocated to New York in 1934. Members I refer to include Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse. I also refer to the contributions of Walter Benjamin, who was associated with, although not a member, of the school and the later member Jurgen Habermas who joined the Frankfurt School after it relocated back to Germany in the 1960s. Buchanan, *Critical Theory*.

13 By perverse, I mean functioning to negate, or in a manner that is contrary to, the cultural value in question, as theorised by: Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Translated from vol. 5, 1987 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

14 The anthropocene describes the current geological age (including the past 200 years), whereby society has developed technologically and globally to the point where the climatic and geological Earth systems are no longer understood as independent of influence by human civilisation. For example, climatic change has been seen to increase exponentially due to increased carbon dioxide emissions. Eckart Ehlers and Thomas Krafft, *Earth System Science in the Anthropocene* (New York: Springer, 2006).
becomes reified, in a ‘negated’, instrumental form, due to a lack of dialectical synthesis with cultural criticism.\(^{15}\)

As the most recent form of Pakeha landscape\(^{16}\) mythology, the 100% Pure New Zealand\(^{17}\) tourism marketing campaign is an excellent example of the effects of instrumental rationality on myth. This is because the predominance of 100% Pure imagery, in the form of pristine wilderness landscapes in the national imagination, ignores and hides the modern realities of industrialisation and environmental pollution in New Zealand. 100% Pure thus functions perversely, because it is designed to facilitate the capitalist development which is responsible for the destruction of its cornerstone icon: pristine wilderness landscapes.\(^{18}\) So, rather than functioning in a rational manner - by maintaining consistency with the cultural value of environmental purity, and the clean, green imagery that it reflects - the outcome of 100% Pure is non-rational environmental degradation.

The negative cultural effects of instrumental rationality have meant that many researchers are turning to a hermeneutic engagement with cultural knowledge, rather than scientific knowledge alone, in an attempt to solve environmental problems. Such research has particularly highlighted how an instrumentally rational approach to managing the environment, both: separates nature and culture in a dualistic manner, and; prioritises knowledge of the scientifically verifiable kind

\(^{15}\) As explained by Habermas, the form of critical reason, or subjective rationality, exists at the level of, or is located in, the individual self (rather that information verifiable using the scientific method, known as instrumental rationality; which has no depth of hermeneutic value, meaning or purpose, being capable only of dealing with materiality and quantitative, empirical, knowledge. Grbich, Qualitative.). Reason is thus linked to faith in oneself through the ability to critically reflect on hermeneutic knowledge, including cultural values, meanings and beliefs. This means that critical reason is an act of potentiality, it is not scientifically verifiable, nor does it nihilistically relinquish all cultural meanings as relative. Jürgen Habermas, An Awareness of What Is Missing: Faith and Reason in a Post-Secular Age (Polity Press: Cambridge, 2010).

\(^{16}\) Landscape will not be limited to the traditional European, aesthetic sense of the term, but rather refers to the symbolic value of the ‘New Zealand landscape’ in the cultural imagination. For a discussion of how landscape became an aesthetic subject in Europe, see: Simon Schama, Landscape and Memory (London: HarperCollins, 1995).


\(^{18}\) For example the pollution of rivers by intensive dairy farming developments and the negative effects this has on ecosystems and biodiversity undermines notions of environmental purity. For a summary of freshwater ecology research with regards to dairy farming, see: M.K. Joy, "Watering Down the Image", in Organic Explorer New Zealand, eds., T. Ward and L. Johnsen (Whakatane: Organic Explorer, 2011).
associated with the natural sciences accordingly.19 This scientific approach to environmental management has been deemed problematic because it fails to account for the way the environment is inherently tied to the meanings embedded in social life and associated cultural values20 – particularly in the anthropocene. However, the cynicism inherent to late capitalist ideology means that this kind of criticism is often rendered ineffective, because the late capitalist ideology functions cynically to take criticism into account in advance.21

The cynicism of late capitalist ideology was exemplified when the current Prime Minister of New Zealand, John Key, responded to criticism that the 100% Pure brand was hypocritical. In the face of public concern for environmental degradation occurring throughout the nation, Key stated that the 100% Pure slogan was not supposed to be taken literally.22 Rather, Key suggested that 100% Pure was better thought of as akin to the McDonald’s I’m lovin’ it brand, and so taken with a “pinch of salt”.23 Such a response effectively dismissed relevant criticism, by subjugating cultural values, expressed through voiced environmental concerns, to goals of national branding. Key’s evasion of the debate over environmental issues amongst the New Zealand citizenry clearly highlighted how late capitalist ideology functions in the national context, by rendering critical discourse redundant in a cynical manner. As Egoz and Bowring explain: “This commodification of the New Zealand

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20 For example, in the field of sustainable landscape architecture, Egoz and Bowring explain how their attempts to move beyond sentimental views of landscape have “a concern with the way nature and culture are conflated”. See: Shelley Egoz and Jacky Bowring, "Beyond the Romantic and Naïve: The Search for a Complex Ecological Aesthetic Design Language for Landscape Architecture in New Zealand", *Landscape Research* 29, no. 1 (2004), 58.


23 Davison, "Pm Dismisses". The expression to take something with a ‘pinch of salt’ suggests that the brand is not supposed to be completely believed, or taken as representative of national values, in a sincere and critically reflexive manner.
landscape is another outcome of globalization and an example of a cynical approach to landscape meaning." 24 This ideological cynicism has been explained by the critical theorist Žižek, as a new formulation of Marx’s concept of ideology. 25 Therefore, because critical theory lies in the Marxist tradition, this has changed the nature of critical theory.

Žižek posits that capitalist ideology no longer functions in a way that people are naively unaware of it and how it shapes their actions. This means that Marx’s description of ideology, as functioning amongst society in a manner that “they do not know it, but they are doing it”, is redundant in the late capitalist context. 26 Rather, Žižek argues that modern global society is cynically aware of how, collectively, our actions contribute to the ongoing dominance of capitalist ideology. 27 This ideological cynicism has effectively relegated part of the role of rational cultural criticism defunct, because critique is already cynically accepted in a totalitarian manner. As Žižek explains, the dominance of late capitalist ideology “is not secured by its truth-value but by simple extra-ideological violence and promise of gain”. 28 Here Žižek highlights how the value of late capitalist ideology, as exemplified in New Zealand by the 100% Pure brand, lies in its ability to foster economic development, and that this perspective on its value presides over any other cultural concerns citizens might have regarding its negative effects. Additionally, Žižek suggests that this cynical form of ideology functions due to both the perceived: threats and consequences that radical challenges to such an ideology might meet; and, or alternatively, due the potential benefits and rewards of

24 Egoz and Bowring, "Beyond the Romantic", 58.
25 Žižek, Sublime.
26 Marx, Capital, cited in and translated by: Žižek, Sublime, 27.
27 This is particularly exemplified by the criticism directed towards 100% Pure, and Key’s response, as documented in the mainstream media. Davison, "Pm Dismisses". This idea is also supported by a 2001 study which reported that almost half of the New Zealand population surveyed recognized New Zealand’s ‘clean green’ image as mythic. See: P.J. Gendall, et. al., New Zealanders and the Environment: International Social Survey Programme (Palmerston North: Department of Marketing, Massey University, 2001). Additionally, the New Zealand government could be seen to be aware of the mythic nature of this ‘clean green’ landscape imagery (as well as threats to its stability amongst both the national and global population in the face of environmental degradation) due to current research in the field of sustainability conducted under the auspices of the state, such as that conducted by the Parliamentary Commission for the Environment. See: Fiona Coyle and John Fairweather, "Challenging a Place Myth: New Zealand’s Clean Green Image Meets the Biotechnology Revolution." Area 37, no. 2 (2005).
28 Žižek, Sublime, 27.
passively going along with it. Therefore, due to this cynical late capitalist ideology, the state sponsored 100% Pure brand is able to evade criticism, not because there is lack of critique, but because there is a lack of *sincere* belief in the value of critique. These recent developments in critical theory have thus highlighted how the function of critique in late capitalism must be dialectically relocated to cultural beliefs, rather than located in the ability to rationally critique and transform them alone. In the context of environmental sustainability, any collective belief in the value of sustaining the environment comes into question accordingly. In light of this focus on collective cultural beliefs, I argue that a critical belief in Pakeha landscape mythology is a critical belief in Pakeha culture. However, the investigation into Pakeha beliefs is complicated, because Pakeha is a highly disputed identity.

The most obvious and commonly used basis for defining Pakeha identity is found in the Maori use of the term to identify European pioneers who had started to settle in New Zealand. As explained by King: “Use of this word in Maori to denote Europeans was current in the Bay of Islands by at least 1814... But the use of the word Pakeha was widespread among Maori by the 1830s”. This usage was formalised in the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 “to refer to Queen Victoria’s non-Maori subjects in New Zealand”. Current use of the term Pakeha therefore almost always relies on this traditional definition of Pakeha as ‘European New Zealanders’. Therefore, the term Pakeha will be used, primarily for convenience, to refer to all New Zealanders of European descent. However, emphases vary on who exactly these European New Zealanders might be, particularly in the late modern context of globalisation and postnationalism. As such, use of the term Pakeha varies, as it is politically charged

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30 *History*, 168-169.
31 Ibid., 168.
33 Postnationalism refers to two concurrent processes. Firstly, the increasing collaboration between nation states and international private corporations in a global neoliberal political economy of deregulation and privatisation - as highlighted by R.M. Irwin and M. Szurmu, *Dictionary of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012). Secondly, these neoliberal national economies are increasingly relinquishing control over the flow of resources across national boundaries - as explained by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2001). Watson explains how at the centre of such changes is “state prioritization of the pursuit of competitive advantage through enterprise, innovation and technological change”. Tony Watson,
and of central relevance to differing critical perspectives with regards to the colonial history of New Zealand. For example, some New Zealanders of European descent resist the term Pakeha due to such political associations. Consequently, it is difficult to provide any further definition of what Pakeha identity is, because this would constrain the goals of my research: to address the very question of what the landscape of New Zealand means to a wide range of European New Zealanders. This, in turn, will provide insight into Pakeha identity, because Pakeha identity is inherently linked to the place of New Zealand.

This thesis aims to salvage a sincere and reflexive relation to the myths of our surroundings, by arguing for a reengagement with, rather than against, Pakeha landscape myths. In particular, I argue that Pakeha beliefs about the New Zealand landscape can inform a critical cultural consciousness precisely because nature and culture are indivisible. For example, using the phenomenon of national parks in America, Schama explains how their:

...scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock... The wilderness, after all, does not locate itself, does not name itself. It was an act of Congress in 1864 that established Yosemite Valley as a place of sacred significance for the nation... Nor could the wilderness venerate itself. It needed hallowing visitations from... preachers... photographers... painters in oil... and painters in prose... to represent it as the holy park of the West; the site of a new birth; a redemption... an American re-creation.

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*Sociology, Work and Organization* (New York: Routledge, 2011). This situation has resulted in claims that national identities are increasingly relevant, because: they are increasingly appropriated for purposes of national branding in global markets, and; this situation has seen a concurrent range of cultural responses aimed at collective identification, and/or democratic action, on scales above and below that of the nation state, in order to reclaim sovereignty lost in the postnational context. Arthur Versluis, "Antimodernism", *Telos* 137, (Winter), (2006).

34 To clarify, my use of the term ‘colonial’ refers to the colonialism of the nineteenth century. My use of the term ‘postcolonial’ does not suggest that colonialism is over; rather it addresses the ongoing colonisation of New Zealand during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, thus representing: "a critical engagement with colonization". Giselle Byrnes and Catharine Coleborne, "Editorial Introduction: The Utility and Futility of ‘the Nation’ in Histories of Aotearoa New Zealand", *New Zealand Journal of History* 45, no. 1 (2011), 2.


36 Other key terms associated with the analysis of Pakeha culture will be explained in the opening section of Chapter One, in order to clarify how Pakeha landscape mythology will be analysed, followed by a discussion of the research methodology.

Here Schama highlights the cultural way in which value is ascribed to the landscape. Through this process, landscape comes to bear both the burden of the past and hope for the future of culture in a mythic form.

Due to the focus on mythic beliefs, hopes and memories tied to landscape, the research approach can be described as a poetic, because, as Pollock explains: “A poetic means to imagine our place in the world”. By focusing on the language and literature used by Pakeha to make sense of geographical space the mythologies of place that Pakeha have borrowed, invented, critiqued and transformed will be interpreted, to show how European beliefs in New Zealand have changed over time. The aim is to locate a critical Pakeha tradition with a depth of sincerity and meaning suited to the democratic critique of capitalist cynicism in New Zealand today, by discussing and applying recent developments in critical theory to Pakeha landscape mythology.

Critical theory will be outlined in Chapter One and applied throughout the thesis, in order to distinguish Pakeha landscape myths that are therapeutic, from those which are critical. This is because, as Žižek explains, religious, or mythic, belief:

...either helps individuals to function better in the existing order, or it tries to assert itself as a critical agency articulating what is wrong with this order as such, a space for the voices of discontent—in this second case, religion as such tends toward assuming the role of a heresy.

Here Žižek shows how belief can function either as therapy or critique, depending on whether one reflects on belief critically or not. This is because, reflecting critically on our beliefs, and hence myths, can enable them to perform a radical

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40 The idea of a therapeutic myth can be understood in the Marxist sense, embodied in Marx’s statement that “Religion is the opiate of the masses”. Marx, “Contribution to the Critique”, 42. Here Marx critiques the therapeutic function of ideological myth, by comparing it to an opiate: “a thing that soothes or stupefies... causing drowsiness or a dulling of the senses”; thus inducing amongst the populace a false “sense of contentment”. Stevenson and Lindberg, Dictionary, 5618.
function in society, rather than a therapeutic, or non-critical, function. Accordingly, by considering the diverse and complex meanings, values and beliefs that landscape has embodied for Pakeha in the following chapters, critical aspects of Pakeha landscape mythology will be distinguished from therapeutic ones.

In Chapter Two I will explain critical perspectives regarding how 100% Pure functions undemocratically as ‘mass’ culture, by highlighting the instrumentally rational ways the branding of the nation has been directed primarily for reasons of political economy.\(^{42}\) However, the roots of 100% Pure symbolism will also be located historically in the colonial sentimental myth of New Zealand, as an Antipodean Arcadia, in Chapter Three. Following this will be a consideration of the nature of high culture, in Chapter Four. This will provide the theoretical basis for an analysis of the cultural nationalist ‘anti-myth’,\(^{43}\) of New Zealand as a harsh and lonely wasteland, in Chapter Five. Although the beliefs associated with these Pakeha landscape myths are complex and interrelated, chronological patterns can be seen. These patterns have been identified and picked apart accordingly for purposes of analysis. In particular, the comparison of the colonial Arcadian myth with the cultural nationalist anti-myth will show how a more critical consciousness developed in New Zealand over the twenty-first century.

The critical Pakeha beliefs tied to landscape will be studied through an analysis of the Romantic value of ‘imagination in nature’; which is tied to the ideas of New Zealand as a prophetic ‘wilderness of becoming’ and nostalgic ‘garden of contemplation’, in Chapter Six. The way these sincere beliefs are still resilient in the form of the current conservationist movement in New Zealand will be discussed,

\(^{42}\) As Shuker explains, the political economy approach to analysing culture “has as its starting point the fact that the producers of mass media are industrial institutions essentially driven by the logic of capitalism: the pursuit of maximum profit... owned and controlled by a relatively small number of people... [and] involving considerable ideological power”. Roy Shuker, *Understanding Popular Music* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 19.

\(^{43}\) Cultural nationalism was a critical cultural movement that ran from the 1930’s to the 1970’s and focused on articulating the experiences of, primarily Pakeha New Zealanders, in order to develop a unique national culture. Francis Pound, *The Invention of New Zealand: Art & National Identity, 1930-1970* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2009). Note that the anti-myth is different to the negation, or perversion, of reason, seen in ‘negated’ or instrumentally rational myths. The cultural nationalist oeuvre was referred to as an anti-myth because it was *opposed* to the instrumentally rational, uncritical and sentimental colonial myth of New Zealand, and thus attempted to replace it with an anti-colonial myth.
before analysing the way these beliefs have been deconstructed, signalling the end of the cultural nationalist movement, in Chapter Seven. By analysing the diversity of these mythologies, as well as the criticism directed against them, critical, rather than only therapeutic, meanings will be interpreted. This allows the possibility for radical landscape mythologies to be uncovered, so that a critique of instrumentally rational landscape mythology in the context of capitalist cynicism can be effected.

The way critical theorists, such as Habermas and Žižek, have explicitly reengaged with religious faith in order to continue the critical theory project will be discussed in the final chapter. These critical theorists have emphasised how, not only the values and meanings, but the belief inherent to myth, is necessary for a rational cultural critique to be effective.\(^4^4\) This provides a theory for a negative dialectical move that re-locates a form of critical, or atheistic, belief, as central to the critique of therapeutic, non-critical, beliefs.\(^4^5\) This theory of negative dialectics has emerged in the form of an atheistic theology, through a radical interpretation of Christianity. A radical new form of critical theory has thus emerged from a conservative religious tradition: orthodoxy is the new radicalism.\(^4^6\)

The question therefore becomes one of sincerity with regards to not only what Pakeha might believe in, but how they might believe. The relevance of the local situation to global issues of environmental sustainability is explained by Michael King, with regards to capitalist development in New Zealand:

> What distinguishes New Zealand’s history from that of other human societies is that these themes have been played out in a more intensive manner, and at a more accelerated pace, than almost anywhere else on Earth. For this reason, their course and consequences have interest and relevance for human history as a whole.\(^4^7\)

\(^4^4\) Habermas, *Awareness*; Žižek, *Puppet*.

\(^4^5\) Žižek, *Puppet*.

\(^4^6\) Ibid.

\(^4^7\) King, *History*, 26.
CHAPTER ONE – CULTURE AND CRITICAL THEORY: MYTH AND THE DIALECTIC OF CRITIQUE

KEY DEFINITIONS

Myth, culture, identity and symbol are all abstract concepts. This means that they should be regarded as heuristic devices, providing a framework for investigation and explanation, rather than objective definition. Consequently, they are often defined and used in a variety of ways, depending on the context of use, because they are all social phenomena that are inherently related to the human meaning making process.

The focus on the nature of Pakeha beliefs means that the terms myth and religion will be used interchangeably at times, in association with reference to ideology. This is because the concepts of myth, religion and ideology all embody an element of belief, which is suitably subjected to democratic and rational criticism. So, accordingly, the element of cultural belief inherent to myth will be understood as akin to the concept of religious faith, particularly with regards to the designation of what is sacred and profane. This is because the distinction between the sacred and profane in modern democracies is a useful means of distinguishing what is of most value collectively. With regards to ideology, therapeutic beliefs can be seen to mirror what Marx termed ideological false consciousness, as exemplified in his phrase: “Religion is the opiate of the masses”. However, I have chosen to use the term myth, because I think that it is more suited to the secular context of the New Zealand nation state and the fact that over one third of the New Zealand population does not identify as religious. Following on from using the term myth, rather than

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48 Shuker, Understanding.
49 The function of mythology in an ideological manner has been theorised by: Ellwood, Myth; Lincoln, Theorizing Myth.
50 According to Durkheim’s 1915 distinction, which he eminently used to define the phenomenon of religion. See: The Elementary Forms of Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology. Translated by J.S. Swain (London: Allen & Unwin, 1915).
51 False consciousness is a therapeutic form of belief, which obscures critical consciousness and therefore prevents political action. Buchanan, Critical Theory.
religion, will be a discussion of 'high' (or 'avant-garde'), 'low' and 'mass', culture, as secularly designated concepts that mirror the distinction between the sacred and the profane. A further discussion of culture and the interpretation of cultural symbolism can help explain how belief emerges in the form of myth, through identification with cultural symbolism.

The study of culture embodies the dialectical tension between individualism and collectivism, expressed through the system of constantly evolving ideas, objects and social practices that comprise everyday human life. As such, use of the term culture in the descriptive sense suggests that there are certain meanings, attitudes or values that are collectively shared, which highlights how culture is an inherently social phenomenon. These shared cultural meanings are communicated through symbols, such as language and art, by providing a network of reference “to any social object (for example, a physical object, a gesture, or a word) that stands in place of or represents something else”.

Symbols both help people to interpret the world, and make it meaningful to them. As such, symbolism is crucial to the social construction of culture, with the meaning of symbols being actively shaped by the autonomy and interpretation of individual humans. Which interpretations are emphasised depends largely on how the history of culture is told, justified, explained and consequently believed – in other words, how culture is mythologised. As such, culture is inherently political,


57 Williams, "Symbolic Interactionism", 849.
58 Midgley, The Myths, 1.
59 This is because, from a symbolic interactionist and humanist perspective, all humans can: “negotiate, modify, or reject the meanings they learn... human beings are active creators of symbols and culture”. Williams, “Symbolic Interactionism”, 849.
60 In modernity this has occurred particularly at the national level. Ellwood, Myth; Thompson, Customs. Ellwood also explains how this increasingly occurs at the individual level in late modernity. Myth.
because those with the most power often have more control over the myth-making process than others.\textsuperscript{61} In this sense, the question ‘what is culture?’ can be better articulated as ‘when, how and by whom is culture?’ This means that cultural history can be understood accordingly, not only as the stories told about society in the present,\textsuperscript{62} but primarily the stories of the past that are told by those with the most power.\textsuperscript{63} Aspects of Pakeha culture and cultural criticism will therefore be discussed with an awareness of the political nature of the nation; because this not only provides a framework for historical analysis, but recognises that Pakeha identity arose in association with the colonisation of New Zealand.

The concept of the nation embodies both materiality\textsuperscript{64} and culture. In particular, the nation provides a modern representation, or suggestion, of collective identity with regards to its citizens, in a manner that alludes to the empire building associated with colonialism in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{65} Therefore, because the nation is tied to notions of modernity, capitalism, sovereignty and power – in New Zealand, considering (post)colonial forms of power is important when discussing dominant national symbols.

In response to the colonial process of forging a nation-state, many critics have used postcolonial theory\textsuperscript{66} to question the relevance of the nation as a level of collective identification.\textsuperscript{67} This is because, as Byrnes and Coleborne explain, the nation, is:

...an historical category and a matrix through which to view past actions, decisions and events; at worst, it is seen to be complicit in continuing, rather than addressing, the excesses of the colonial project.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{61} This has particularly been highlighted in postcolonial literature in New Zealand with regards to the power Pakeha have had over the construction of national identity and landscape mythology, as discussed in Chapter Two.

\textsuperscript{62} King, \textit{History}, 8.

\textsuperscript{63} Ellwood, \textit{Myth}; Lincoln, \textit{Theorizing Myth}.

\textsuperscript{64} With regards to physical geography, the nation in "...the broadest sense... refers to a group of individuals usually (but not always) living in a defined and recognized geographical place". Giselle Byrnes, "Nation and Migration: Postcolonial Perspectives", \textit{New Zealand Journal of History}, 43, no. 2 (2009), 124.

\textsuperscript{65} Byrnes, "Nation and Migration", 124.


\textsuperscript{67} Byrnes, "Nation and Migration", 129

\textsuperscript{68} Byres and Coleborne, "Editorial Introduction", 4-5.
Here, Byrnes and Coleborne highlight how the state can often act in a way that continues to colonise indigenous populations and their homeland, in a manner that is in direct contrast with the democratic ideal the modern nation state is designed to embody. Additionally, because individuals have multiple place-based identities, ranging from the local to the global, the relevance of the nation in an increasingly global, or postnational, world has been seen to fluctuate: decreasing as globalisation has increased, yet also reviving, as people reengage with these national boundaries, their traditional identity markers and cultural myths, in the face of increasing uncertainty and multiculturalism across the globe.\textsuperscript{69} This situation can problematically result in the postcolonial majority reasserting their dominance over new ethnic migrant populations and the prior indigenous minority. Therefore, regionalist and internationalist, rather than just nationalist, perspectives on landscape mythology will be used to consider this aspect of Pakeha identity from different angles.\textsuperscript{70} This approach is particularly important because the reflexive process of identification means that these nationalistic symbols and myths are open to radical, as well as conservative, reinterpretations - at scales above and below that which they were created - especially in the postnational context.\textsuperscript{71}

The inconsistencies inherent to culture mean a diverse range of cultural interpretations can be made at any one time, particularly depending on the historical context that such interpretations are made and the manner in which one reflects on, or identifies with, symbols. In particular, because symbols can have a diversity of meanings, which vary depending on their use by different people and in different times and places, the collectivism implied by the term culture has been deemed problematic.\textsuperscript{72} This is because use of the term culture, in the descriptive sense, often fails to account for the inherent contradictions, conflicts and changes

\textsuperscript{69} Ron Palenski, \textit{The Making of New Zealanders} (Auckland University Press, 2012); Prieto, \textit{Literature}.
\textsuperscript{70} This is because theorising history from internationalist and regionalist perspectives provides an alternative view as to how national identity has been constructed in New Zealand. Peter Gibbons, "The Far Side of the Search for Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History", \textit{New Zealand Journal of History} 37, no. 1 (2003).
\textsuperscript{71} For example, the way cultural nationalists rejected the sentimental colonial myth of the rural idyll can be seen in their regionalist responses to the myth, as discussed in Chapter Five.
\textsuperscript{72} Thompson, \textit{Customs}. 
that are as essential to culture as are its collective meanings. Therefore, in order to understand how these cultural meanings emerge, or are interpreted, the reflexive process of identification must be explicated.

Identity, or more appropriately, identification, is a practice. Identification is something that people do to both perceive similarities and differentiate; in order to classify and understand other things or persons, as well as to classify and understand oneself. So although identity can be applied, like symbols, to any ‘thing’ or ‘being’, the comparative process of identification means that identity is necessarily accompanied by the verb ‘to identify’, because it is an active process. Likewise, identity has both individual and collective elements because people may identify themselves as unique in some respects, or part of groups in others. The ability to identify with a range of groups or symbols means that one may have multiple identities at different times, in different places and in different contexts. This is because identification has an inherent element of reflexivity:

Identifying ourselves or others is a matter of meaning, and meaning always involves interaction: agreement and disagreement, convention and innovation, communication and negotiation. To add the ‘social’ in this context is therefore somewhat redundant.

So, although cultural meanings are transmitted through the symbolic nature of material artefacts, as represented of what humans have done in the past, they are inextricably interpreted with regards to their social context, in a reflective process of identification in the present. This means that symbolic meanings develop through reflexive identification and interpretation of complex interactions between materials, people and social contexts.

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73 These more individualist perspectives on culture tend to be emphasised increasingly in modernity, as the construction of mythology became more individualistic during this time. Ellwood, *Myth*.


75 Sherry, “Postcolonialism”, 415.


77 Shuker, *Understanding*.

78 Ibid. For example, the symbolic meanings that occur and develop between an artwork, a visitor to an art gallery, and a social context (which might include the curator, critic or distributor of that artwork), enables and shapes such an interaction, in which this process of symbolic identification and interpretation takes place. As Williams explains: “Literature exists in a variety of contexts that govern its reception as well as its production – economic, journalistic and critical”. Mark Williams, ed., “Introduction”, in *Writing at the Edge of the Universe: Essays from the ‘Creative Writing in New Zealand’ Conference, University of Canterbury, August 2003* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2004), 15.
The element of reflexivity inherent to the process of identification is crucial because identities are created and circulate in the ‘collective imagination’. As Cubitt explains, identities must be understood as the “imaginative ordering of that experience, not its revealed reality”. Subsequently, the concept of collective identity has evolved with the increasing cultural diversity of twenty-first century societies. Rather than being driven by ideas of unison, the concept of the ‘imagined community’ has emerged, which interprets collective identities as both sharing an element of comradeship, or psychological bonding, whilst being tolerant and inclusive, by allowing diverse individuals to embrace their own interpretations of how they might be a part of such communities. However, both Habermas and Žižek have emphasised how this idea of the imagined community problematically lacks cohesion, especially in the late capitalist context of ideological cynicism.

The notion of the imagined community leaves the question open as to how people might be motivated towards achieving democratic progress in the construction of collective identities and goals, as well as the solving of collective problems - such as increasing global inequalities and environmental destruction associated with the anthropocene. As Habermas explains, without motivation to engage in, or a belief in the value of, the democratic process, there will be no successful application of it: if the imagined community does not have the power to “awaken an awareness of injustice”, define injustice, make people care about injustice, or make people believe in the ability to do something about injustice, it will forever lack the sincere commitment of citizens required for effective operation. Žižek has deemed this problem particularly pertinent in the late capitalist context, due a pervasive ideological cynicism with regards to belief in the democratic process:

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81 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
83 Habermas, *Awareness*; Žižek, *Puppet*.
84 Habermas, *Awareness*.
85 Žižek, *Puppet*.
86 Habermas, *Awareness*, 51.
87 Ibid.
Cynical reason is no longer naïve, but is a paradox of an enlightened false consciousness: one knows this falsehood very well, one is well aware of a particular interest [i.e. political economy] hidden behind an ideological universality, but still one does not renounce it.88

Here Žižek highlights how the democratic process in late capitalism has been affected by a lack of faith in the value of democracy, compared to political economy. This cynicism was also discussed in the Introduction with regards to the function of the 100% Pure brand. New Zealanders cynically take 100% Pure with a 'pinch of salt', because its value lies in its ability to foster economic production,89 rather than sincere and critical cultural reflexivity.90

The views of Habermas and Žižek highlight how debates surrounding culture have recently swung back to an engagement with the question of collective values in a way that has been avoided in late modernity, out of a fear for strengthening (post)colonial and neonationalist agendas.91 Before these issues are discussed with regards to the New Zealand context, the methodology of the research will be outlined, in order to explain how the interpretation and analysis of landscape mythology will be conducted.

**METHODOLOGY**

The method consists of a critical socio-historical analysis of landscape mythology in New Zealand: it is an application of critical theory to Pakeha landscape mythology. However, critical theory has evolved since its development by the Frankfurt School. Therefore, in order to understand how this critical methodology comes together, I will firstly discuss the theological art of interpreting texts – hermeneutics – which will be used to interpret the cultural traditions associated with Pakeha landscape mythologies in a reflexive manner. Then I will discuss the other part of the critical process, which involves a more historicist approach. The dialectical combination of

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88 Parenthesis added. Žižek, *Sublime*, 28-30. Habermas also discusses this cynicism what he sees as breakdown of solidarity in late modern societies and how it is difficult to motivate collective action against injustice in this situation. *Awareness*.
89 Bell, *Inventing*; Coyle and Fairweather, "Challenging"; Egoz and Bowring, "Beyond the Romantic"; Steel, "Problem".
these two approaches is inspired by what has been termed ‘postcritical’ theory, which has also been referred to as poetics in landscape studies. This methodological approach underlies how this research adds a new facet to the study of landscape mythology in New Zealand, because it has been designed explicitly for the critique of landscape mythology in the late capitalist context of ideological cynicism.

**INTERPRETING TEXTS: HERMENEUTICS**

Literature and literary critiques of New Zealand society and culture will be the foundational sources of the analysis, supported by reference to art. The nature of this research, with regards to analysing the meanings and beliefs of landscape mythologies, means that literature is an ideal primary data source. This is because, as Templeton highlights, literature is an important store of cultural meanings, with the creation of texts “analogous to making social meaning because all understanding takes place in language”.

Literature is inherently linked to a social constructivist paradigm that recognises, epistemologically: “Knowledge as a human construction... There is no ‘Truth’ to be known; Researchers examine the world through textual representations of it”. This means that the ‘truth’ of reality is not a graspable object, but an *interpretation* of the object by the subject. Consequently, this thesis overtly adopts the idea that “reality is socially constructed”, which means that when interpreting texts, the Cartesian dualism associated with the subject’s perception of the cultural object in question becomes defunct - because perception is relational. Therefore,

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92 Mardorossian, "Poetics of Landscape"; Pollock, "Homeland".
93 This is primarily because, as explained in Chapter Five, literature was the first realm of Pakeha high culture to develop, with critics more specialised in literature than art. Art criticism was initially conducted by the literati. However, this has since been deemed amateurish, and an attempt to justify the construction of a literary canon by drawing on aspects of art that supported this, rather than an expert assessment of New Zealand art in and of itself. Francis Pound, "The Words and the Art: New Zealand Art Criticism C.1950 - C.1990", in Headlands: Thinking through New Zealand Art, ed. Mary Barr (Sydney: Bloxham and Chambers, 1992).
hermeneutics, as the art of interpreting symbols,\textsuperscript{97} is a key aspect of the analysis. This is because landscape mythology is being used to interpret the meanings Pakeha have ascribed to their place in New Zealand. Accordingly, the research is conducted in a way that does not suppose that myth directly mirrors experience at all. Rather, because they are symbolic, myths provide a source of meanings for rational criticism to engage with - as these meanings embody what Pakeha have believed about New Zealand over time.

Hermeneutics is related to what has been termed a culturalist approach to analysing social history. Shuker describes culturalism as emphasising the active, rather than passive, interpretation of culture, by highlighting the oppositional politics that can emerge from conservative or totalitarian cultural contexts.\textsuperscript{98} Therefore, it is important to emphasise that reflexivity is an important part of the hermeneutic method: the use of hermeneutics explicitly acknowledges how the various meanings associated with landscape mythology over time, will inevitably be interpreted from my subjective Pakeha perspective. Similarly, because this thesis has been motivated by a personal concern for environmental justice in New Zealand, it should be noted that the research is axiologically driven.

**CRITICAL THEORY**

The use of critical theory’s historicist approach can balance out the disadvantage of the social constructionist’s overly subjective focus. This is because it is concerned with critiquing culture, and in particular, ideology, in a historicist manner: by locating the origins of myth in a historical context, critical theory views reality as "power directed".\textsuperscript{99} Accordingly, texts will be interpreted against their historical context in a rational and reflexive manner, by considering how those with the most power in society influence the telling of history and thus the predominant forms of mythology that circulate amongst the populace. Therefore, the way landscape mythology has historically been justified, the discourses used to justify it, and the


\textsuperscript{98} Shuker, *Understanding*.

assumptions that underlie such discourses, will be discussed - in association with a consideration of the views of other critics regarding these myths and their rationale.

The sociology of knowledge has informed this research approach, because it has shed light on the way that people from different eras and societies take different perceived ‘realities’ for granted, and that the variance between them may be better understood by examining the specific historical contexts of the two societies. This idea emphasises the importance of analysing multiple perspectives in relation to their historical context, in a sociology of knowledge manner when critiquing myth - because myth can embody an element of therapeutic, or non-critical, belief, which functions to suggest that what one perceives is reality. Accordingly, therapeutic beliefs allow the subjective perception associated with such beliefs to be taken for granted, because they are not critically reflected on. However, this approach does not suppose that an element of faith can be purged from critical reflection, but rather, that increasing the critical perspectives on the object of thought can improve the accuracy of reflexive perception, as emphasised by Berger and Luckmann:

...ideologizing influences, while they could not be eradicated completely, could be mitigated by the systematic analysis of as many as possible of the varying socially grounded positions. In other words, the object of thought becomes progressively clearer with this accumulation of different perspectives on it.

Therefore, my approach does not presume that ideological influences can be eliminated, but rather than they can be minimised, by explicitly acknowledging the role of myth in both legitimising the writing and affecting the interpretation of history.

Applying critical theory to the national situation highlights how Pakeha culture is linked to that of all late capitalist societies, where the cynical dominance of positivism and the scientific method fosters an ideology which teaches people to

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100 Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction.
101 Ibid., 22.
102 For example, in Chapter Two, a discussion of how dominant theoretical positions (in particular anti-intellectualism in the form of realism and pragmatism), have shaped what can count as knowledge, by hiding the fact that what appears to be a “freedom-from theory is heavily theoretical” will be discussed. Roger Horrocks, “No Theory Permitted on These Premises”, And 2, (1984), 120.
“accept the world ‘as it is,’ thus... perpetuating it”. Capitalist ideology hence functions to foreshorten “people’s imagining of what is really possible in an advanced technological society”. This is problematic because it means that capitalist ideology promotes the cynical idea that the actions of individuals are irrelevant to changing society. However, by critically distinguishing aspects of culture that reflect and perpetuate this cynical and instrumentally rational ideology from those that are creative, more diverse social possibilities can be imagined. Therefore, this critical process is referred to as ‘transformative’ critique, because it opens up the possibility for social change. This possibility is created not only by revealing contradictions between reality and social ideals in order to stimulate critical consciousness, but also by interpreting cultural history in a sincere manner, so that it may be understood, communicated and shared.

The focus will particularly be on Pakeha myths for several reasons, but primarily because I do not wish to attempt to speak for Maori, or those of other cultures that make up the nation, with which I do not identify. Although this focus on Pakeha myths means that different cultural perspectives that are equally relevant to the nation are not included in parts of my discussion that engage with symbols of national identity, this does not prevent the main critical function of the thesis from being achieved. Because those of European descent, and particularly those ‘postcolonising’ actors who are descendants of colonial pioneers, have been seen to dominate the process of national identity formation in New Zealand, this suitably

106 Seidman, Contested.
positions me, as a Pakeha, to both critique and respond to criticism regarding this Pakeha driven symbolism. Relevant criticism by those who do not identify as Pakeha is incorporated from my Eurocentric perspective. The method therefore lies in the postcritical tradition of critique, which aims to interpret and share, as much as it aims to judge.

**POSTCRITICISM, POETICS AND DIALECTICS**

The combination of critical and hermeneutic perspectives on Pakeha landscape mythology is inspired by Glissant's 108 'poetics of landscape', which he used to research Caribbean identities by working towards a creolised environmentalism, that avoids both relativism, with regards to the issue of environmental destruction, and extreme 'deep ecological' responses. 109 This means I want to avoid reducing Pakeha identities to the instrumental rationality of their actions (as identified by many critics using postcolonial theory and deconstruction to analyse therapeutic cultural myths), whilst also being cautious of how more interpretive approaches to cultural analysis can minimise the negative consequences of instrumentally rational Pakeha actions. The aim is to produce a critique which is effective in the face of capitalist cynicism in the way that postcolonial and deconstructionist critiques are not, by looking for elements of sincere and critical reflexivity with regards to Pakeha landscape mythology, as well as elements of instrumentality or sentimentalism.

A postcritical Pakeha poetics of place will be produced that considers the diversity of ways European New Zealanders have related to, and believed in, the New Zealand landscape since colonisation. Meis explains the increasing relevance of the hermeneutic aspect of postcriticism:

> Some critics seem to know instinctively, to feel it in their very critical bones, that the death of the critic-as-authority is the birth of another kind of

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108 Edouard Glissant was an influential Caribbean writer and critic, who is significant in the field of postcolonial theory, because, as Mardorosian explains, Glissant significantly theorised a post-postcolonial: “creolization, both as cultural and biological phenomenon, without obfuscating the costs of its historicized cultural encounters on and through colonized landscapes”. "Poetics of Landscape", 985-986.

criticism... The idea is that criticism does not stand outside the work of art, but stands alongside, maybe even inside, the work of art, participating in the work in order to further express and tease out what the artist already put there. In this theory of criticism, we don’t need the critic to tell us what is good or bad, to tell us what to like and dislike. We need the critic, instead, to help us experience.\textsuperscript{110}

In order to better understand the various different functions Pakeha landscape mythology has performed over time, the way critical theory has evolved to reach this postcritical moment will be discussed, in relation to changes in understanding modern culture. The resulting critique reveals the historical elements that have contributed to the way Pakeha have constructed and engaged with landscape mythology, in order to consider what relevance these myths might have in the future, particularly with regards to the problem of environmental destruction.

Dialectics will be used to interpret conflicting elements within the themes that emerge from the analysis of Pakeha landscape mythology. This is because critics have tended to use the term Pakeha in different ways in discussions on national identity,\textsuperscript{111} so a dialectical approach allows a reflexive, hermeneutic consideration, of how such contradictions might both be meaningfully true.\textsuperscript{112} In this sense it lies in the critical theory tradition that takes an interdisciplinary\textsuperscript{113} and reflexive approach to generating self-knowledge, rather than an empiricist approach to

\textsuperscript{110} Morgan Meis, "On the State of Criticism in 2011" (The Pennoni Honors College, Drexel University), accessed October 25, 2012, http://www.thesmartset.com/article/article01041101.aspx. Also see, Brighton, "Crowdsourced". The emphasis on the interpretive, communicative and sharing aspects of critique has been referred to as ‘postcritical’ by Pruchnic, because it has been deemed a change from the traditional emphasis on rationality and judgement. For a detailed review of recent postcritical literature, see: Jeff Pruchnic, "Postcritical Theory?: Demanding the Possible", Criticism 54, no. 4 (2012).

\textsuperscript{111} In particular, depending on whether they take what I have identified and defined accordingly as either a critical (primarily referring to critics employing deconstructionist methodologies and postcolonial theory to reveal dominant power relations and show how these function to control people) or culturalist (a more interpretive, yet still critical, approach to interpreting Pakeha history which seeks sites of creativity and counter-cultural resistance to the power relations operating in society). This culturalist approach is used to balance critical perspectives that look for modes of cultural control (particularly by deconstructing reified cultural symbols used to construct collective identities) with interpretive ones that seek counter-cultural interpretations of such cultural symbols.

\textsuperscript{112} Dialectics as a method of reasoning engages with the conflict between an original idea, or thesis, and its contrasting proposition, or antithesis, because by considering both perspectives this can result in a progressive synthesis, or solution that incorporates elements of both the thesis and antithesis. Michael Joseph Franciscioni, "Dialectics", in Encyclopedia of Time: Science, Philosophy, Theology, & Culture, ed. H. James Birx (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2009).

generating objective information. By combining critical and culturalist perspectives on Pakeha identity, a different kind of knowledge can be created in a dialectical manner, by reflexively considering how opposing views regarding what landscape means to Pakeha might both meaningfully be true. A dialectical approach to critiquing myth is particularly pertinent with regards to the Pakeha landscape myths, because of the diversity of values and meanings ascribed to the land. Before I discuss the findings of this method of analysing Pakeha myths, I will discuss the wider context of this research with regards to the phenomenon of myth in modern societies and how this is related to the application of critical theory.

MYTH IN MODERNITY

The function of belief in the context of modernity is of crucial importance to this study. So, although modernity is a notoriously difficult term to define, as it has a multitude of definitions depending on how it is being used - for the purposes of this thesis, the focus is on the central belief, or mythic element, of modernity: a belief in progress, through the use of reason and engaging with new discoveries in science, to improve the conditions for all in society. This modern faith in reason is thus linked to the humanistic element of the Enlightenment and highlights the crucial relationship between reason and faith, since the eighteenth century, in Europe. Accordingly, modernity is also often used to describe the social relations that emerged through the embrace of rationality since the Enlightenment, particularly industrial capitalism and associated developments such as the rise of the democratic secular nation state, science, capitalism and political liberalism in the West. These modernising forces affected the function of myth in society, with faith increasingly placed in the material realm of scientifically verifiable

114 Egoz and Bowring, "Beyond".
115 This definition of modernity is linked to the idea of reflexivity, as discussed by: Raymond L. M. Lee, "Reinventing Modernity: Reflexive Modernization Vs Liquid Modernity Vs Multiple Modernities", European Journal of Social Theory 9, no. 3 (2006). Also see: Versluis, "Antimodernism".
117 The industrialisation concurrent with social modernisation emerged during the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain. Stevenson and Lindberg, Dictionary, 3994.
information, rather than the hermeneutic value and meanings inherent to culture and religion.

The increasing body of scientific knowledge associated with the Enlightenment meant that a secular\footnote{As explained by Žižek, when he describes modernity as “the social order in which religion is no longer fully integrated into and identified with a particular cultural life-form, but acquires autonomy”. 
\textit{Puppet}, 3. Also see: Habermas, \textit{Awareness}.} understanding of human history developed in Europe, which challenged the traditional Christian interpretation in the West, and replaced it with a historical materialist one.\footnote{Allan G. Johnson, ed., "Materialism", in \textit{The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology: A User’s Guide to Sociological Language} (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).} This revealed the traditional aristocratic social order not as a natural one, but as a result of historical conditions, which meant that the aristocracy declined and was replaced by the new modern society organised around industrial capitalism.\footnote{Anderson, \textit{Imagined Communities}; Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch", \textit{Partisan Review} 6, no. 5 (1939).} The secular reliance on democracy in modern nation states, rather than the aristocratic reliance on religion, has been summarised by influential historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, accordingly:

Modern man’s originality, his newness in comparison with traditional societies, lies precisely in his determination to regard himself as a purely historical being, in his wish to live in a basically desacralized cosmos.\footnote{Mircea Eliade, cited in: Altizer, \textit{Mircea Eliade}, 23.}

However, although the secularisation thesis proposed that the role of religion would decline in modern society,\footnote{Jürgen Habermas, "Notes on Post-Secular Society", \textit{New Perspectives Quarterly} 25, no. 4 (2008).} this did not reduce the need for humans to attribute meaning and purpose to their lives.\footnote{R.L. Euben, "Premodern, Antimodern or Postmodern? Islamic and Western Critiques of Modernity", \textit{Review of Politics} 59, (1997).} Nor did it reduce the desire for people to share a sense of comradeship and collective values, which had previously been provided by religion.\footnote{As Žižek explains: "...in the modern times of Reason, religion can no longer fulfill this function of the organic binding force of social substance—today, religion has irrevocably lost this power not only for scientists and philosophers, but also for the wider circle of ‘ordinary’ people”. \textit{Puppet}, 5. This has been deemed problematic throughout modernity, beginning with the Romantic reaction to the Enlightenment. Euben, "Premodern, Antimodern or Postmodern?". It has also been addressed, particularly by conservative critics such as T.S. Eliot, since the mid-twentieth century. Stefan Collini, \textit{Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). This has been followed up by criticism that traditionally avoided an engagement with religion, such as that of the less conservative critical theory tradition, exemplified by the shift in Habermas’ work towards an increasing engagement with religion. J.S. Dreyer and H.J.C. Pieterse, "Religion in the Public Sphere:} Therefore, in order to better understand the role of
religion, culture, or myth, with regards to its symbolic and cohesive functions in modern society, an analysis of the modern critique of instrumental rationality will be further explained.

Critical theorists have argued that the scientism, secularism and industrialisation concurrent with modernity are a departure from the principle tenets of the Enlightenment (such as belief in humanistic progress), moving society towards a narrowly defined, instrumental form of subjective rationality.\footnote{126} This was deemed to be because rational collective progress had become linked to instrumental rationality alone; as summarised by Midgley:

...certain ways of thinking that proved immensely successful in the early development of the physical sciences have been idealised, stereotyped and treated as the only possible forms of rational thought across the whole range of our knowledge.\footnote{127}

In particular, Adorno and Horkheimer posited, in their 1947 magnum opus Dialectic of Enlightenment, that the prioritisation and uncritical application of instrumental rationality under capitalist ideology was resulting in irrationalism, or the perversion of reason, due to a lack of critical engagement with hermeneutic forms of knowledge, or myth.\footnote{128} Consequently, some myths have been described as 'negated'\footnote{129} in modernity; particularly when myth is thought of as opposed to, rather than necessarily functioning to decide the significance of, science and instrumental rationality. For example, capitalist ideology has directed progress through an instrumentally rational belief in free market economics (as the best means of distributing resources, or progressively eradicating problems such as poverty and environmental destruction), with negative effects – as many of these

\footnotesize{What Can Public Theology Learn from Habermas’s Latest Work?” Theological Studies 66, no. 1 (2010); Žižek, Puppet.}  
\footnotesize{126 Adorno and Horkheimer, Dialectic. However, as explained by Peukert, the Enlightenment notion of rationality was not limited to scientific or objective knowledge, but also included hermeneutic knowledge. “Enlightenment and Theology”.}  
\footnotesize{127 Midgley, The Myths, 13.}  
\footnotesize{128 Adorno and Horkheimer, Dialectic. Subsequently, as explained by Žižek: “The ultimate victims of positivism... the radical pursuit of secularization, the turn towards our worldly life, transforms this life into an ‘abstract’ anemic process”. Puppet, 39.}  
collective problems are becoming exacerbated. Therefore, the modern analysis of myth has highlighted how myths cannot be erased from society, but rather tend to transform into a form that is difficult to recognise or understand, even to the point of negation.

The Frankfurt School analysis of the cultural effects of instrumental rationality has thus been crucial to the development of critical theory, because it has effectively theorised how collective mythology still plays a crucial, albeit often hidden, role in modern secular societies. However, although modernity has been characterised as the era that both embraced instrumental rationality in the name of progress, as well as a form of self-critique (seen in the abundance of criticism directed towards instrumental rationality from a variety of different perspectives), as mentioned previously, this criticism is now being appropriated in advance by late capitalist ideology that renders rational critique useless.

The acceleration of globalisation in late modernity meant that the critical awareness of the hidden, and increasingly cynical, nature of mythology in modern capitalist societies coincided with increasing religious and cultural pluralism. This situation resulted in a revision of the secularisation thesis by later critical theorists, such as Habermas, because it was increasingly obvious that religion and myth was something that reason could not successfully purge from modern society.

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131 Midgley, *The Myths*.

132 In particular, see: Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic*.

133 For an account of a wide range of critiques of modernity from within modernity, including: pre modern, early modern and Romantic reactions to the Enlightenment; fundamentalist religious critiques; as well as antimodern and postmodern criticism, see: Euben, "Premodern, Antimodern or Postmodern?". For a discussion of the function of antimodernism inherent to modernism, see: Versluis, "Antimodernism". For an application of this theorising by Versluis to the New Zealand context, see: Mike Grimshaw, "The Antimodern Manifesto of the Rural Flaneur: When D'Arcy and John Go for a Wander", *Journal of New Zealand Studies*, no. 13 (2012); Mike Grimshaw, "D'Arcy's View from the Hill: 'Weak Thought' on Pakeha as Particular, Regional 'Buggers'", *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies* 9, no. 2 (2012).

134 Dreyer and Pieterse, "Religion in the Public Sphere"; Habermas, "Notes".

135 As explained by Reder and Schmidt in their engagement with Habermas' later work: the postsecular analysis of late modern society was becoming increasingly important, as it became apparent that the foundations of modern democracy were dependent "on moral stances that stem from pre-political sources", and that it is therefore impossible to separate religion from the operative discourse of modern democratic and secular states. This was particularly as increasing cultural
Accordingly, in order to understand how the increasing practical application of reason in modern society was resulting in a concurrent description of society as postsecular, it is important to understand not only how myth cannot be purged from society, but also how myths can function differently. A subsequent focus on the function and nature of belief inherent to mythology has resulted in a crucial distinction having been made between therapeutic and critical beliefs.\textsuperscript{136} In order to engage with these aspects of modern beliefs, the development of critical theory will be discussed throughout the following chapters and applied to the Pakeha context.

By showing how modern myth can be distinguished as either critical or therapeutic, depending on whether, or how, one reflects on and believes in myth, the critical function of some Pakeha landscape mythologies will be located. This will be shown by revealing how some therapeutic landscape myths, such as 100% Pure, are akin to mass culture: particularly when prescribed in a cynical manner by using instrumental reasoning based on political economy alone.\textsuperscript{137} Other expressions of Pakeha landscape mythology that function as low culture, when sincerely critical of conservative high culture or mass culture, but lacking self-critique and subsequent creative transformation and development, will also be discussed.\textsuperscript{138} Finally, the way landscape has embodied the characteristics of high culture will be explained, by referring to aspects of Pakeha landscape mythology that have been engaged with in a more democratic, reflexive and sincere manner, through a continual process of self-critique. Consequently, the difference between low, mass and high Pakeha culture is inherently tied to the function of criticism, and in particular, self-critique,

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\textsuperscript{136}Žižek, Puppet.
\textsuperscript{137}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{138}Here low culture can be seen as the early stages of high culture, which ties in with Baxter's discussion, regarding what I see as two forms of low culture in modernity; "sentimental", or low culture, and "propagandist", or mass culture. "Fire", 26. Smithies supports this idea in his discussion of how critique became reflexive in modernity. "Imagining". Similarly, Thompson's research highlights how \textit{pre modern} low plebeian culture was critical of aristocratic high culture, but that the lower classes tended to lack the same time and education to develop their culture compared to the patricians. \textit{Customs}. 

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which allows an analysis of the functions of landscape mythology in modern New Zealand to be conducted accordingly. The nature of high, low and mass culture is therefore in what people *do*, particularly with regards to the process of identification, rather than some characteristic of culture as an ‘object’: the distinction between the sacred and profane is thus founded in a faith in critical reflection.\(^{139}\)

\(^{139}\) Habermas, *Awareness.*
CHAPTER TWO – 100% PURE SYNTHETIC OPIATES: 
MASS CULTURE AS MUNDANE THERAPY

THE 100% PURE NEW ZEALAND BRAND

The perversion of myth can be seen in the current negated form of landscape 
mythology in New Zealand - the 100% Pure brand. This is because 100% Pure 
promotes symbolism associated with the Arcadian ideal: New Zealand as 
embodying both the cultivated rural idyll and the wild alpine tourist sublime. As 
Bell explains, the Arcadian ideal embodies these two sentimental views of 
landscape, as:

...either beautiful but potentially dangerous: sanctified, visited, enjoyed, 
photographed, then left; a vision to inspire. Or it is beautiful and beautifully 
cultivated, a tribute to both nature itself and to the efforts of human 
labour.\footnote{Bell, Inventing, 29.}

These mythical Arcadian beliefs about the New Zealand landscape are 
symbolised by 100% Pure, which offers a reflection of national land veneration, 
through the promotion of idealistic landscape imagery. This symbolism is 
sentimentally appealing to foreign tourists and national residents alike, who often 
claim that one of New Zealand’s greatest assets is the natural landscapes and ‘clean 
green’ image of the country.\footnote{Bell, Inventing; Coyle and Fairweather, “Challenging”.} However, the 100% Pure myth functions in a 
manner that directly opposes the values of those who critically and sincerely revere 
landscape, particularly because it is founded on the idea that the New Zealand 
environment is a commodity – a selling point for the nation. 100% Pure thus 
functions in a perverse manner.\footnote{Bell, Inventing; Coyle and Fairweather, “Challenging”; Egoz and Bowring, “Beyond the Romantic”; Steel, “Problem”.} Consequently, the function of mythology has not 
been erased from modern New Zealand. Rather, it has been reduced to an ideal and 
negated. It functions perversely through promoting either an unreflexive, 
sentimental form of belief tied to idealistic Arcadian mythology, or a cynical 
acceptance that reasoning based on political economy takes priority over critical 
cultural reflection. Therefore, because the beliefs tied to 100% Pure tend to be 
either sentimental or cynical, rather than sincere and critical, 100% Pure is a form of 
mass culture: a therapeutic Pakeha mythology.
100% Pure especially embodies the aesthetic gaze toward empty alpine landscapes that can be seen to embody the wild, rather than cultivated, aspect of Arcadian mythology. The predominance of these empty landscapes in the national imagination will be partly explained by referring to a range of postcolonial criticism, which highlights how this empty landscape symbolism effectively removes the realities of social inequality and environmental degradation from the national imagination, by ignoring these negative aspects of life in New Zealand.143 Additionally, postcolonial theory has shown how, as (post)colonising actors, Pakeha have dominated the construction of this symbol of national identity in an undemocratic manner,144 by favouring reflections of the nation, such as 100% Pure, that ignore the negative realities associated with their colonial heritage and ongoing capitalist development. Therefore, this focus on empty landscape will be discussed by referring to critiques of this popular landscape symbolism, which effectively reveal the power relations that drive its construction, as well as critically engage with the negative social and environmental consequences of this aspect of landscape mythology.145 However, before these critiques are discussed, the historical phenomenon that is mass culture will be properly located, and the therapeutic nature of belief associated with mass culture explained. A discussion of the roots of mass culture in modern European civilisation, prior to the British colonisation of New Zealand, provides insight into exactly what mass culture is - and how it functions in modern democratic societies today.

THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL, MASS CULTURE AND THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

The work of Shils is used in this discussion of culture, which continues throughout the following two chapters, in association with the development of critical theory in response to mass culture. This is because Shils highlighted how the conservative distinction between high and low culture in pre modern aristocracies can be given a radical application when freed from its traditional class based origins - by using it to

143 Bell, Inventing; Ream, “Capturing”.
144 Bell, Inventing; Byrnes, “Nation and Migration”; Byrnes and Coleborne, “Editorial Introduction”; Evans, Forgetting; Gibbons, “The Far Side”; Moeke-Maxwell “Bi/Multiracial”; Rata, “Treaty”; Steel, “Problem”. This power has also been expressed as “white privilege” by Gray, Jaber and Anglem, “Pakeha Identity”, 100.
145 Bell, Inventing; Steel, “Problem”.
locate the function of critique in modern culture. This is relevant to the New Zealand context because of the British colonisation of the nation, which included a process of cultural, rather than just physical, colonisation.

In pre modern and early modern European societies, high culture was patronised by the aristocratic ruling elite class, with a strong element of folk culture tied to the common people as well.\(^\text{146}\) So, although the aristocracy conservatively critiqued and distinguished folk culture as a lower form of culture; the plebeians often used a form of ‘kynicism’\(^\text{147}\) to counter critique the aristocratic culture.\(^\text{148}\) This meant that, as Thompson explains: “there was a profound alienation between the culture of patricians and plebs”.\(^\text{149}\) However, as British society transferred from an aristocracy to a modern democracy, the relationship between high and folk culture changed. Rather than culture being explicitly linked to class, culture was democratised, because all people now had the power to direct the progression of their society, through participation in politics, such as by voting.\(^\text{150}\) This opened up the process of cultural creation and criticism to all citizens, hence the use of the term ‘masses’ to describe this new class.\(^\text{151}\) However, the democratisation of culture was accompanied by the rise of the mass culture industry.

Shils identified the changing relationship in the conservative aristocratic distinction between high and low culture in the shift to late capitalism. This is because, in modernity, the traditional British aristocratic distinction between high and low

\(^\text{146}\) Thompson, *Customs*.

\(^\text{147}\) Turner referred to the pre and early modern form of cynicism using the ancient term ‘kynicism’. This was in order to differentiate kynicism from late capitalist cynicism, because this distinction highlights how kynicism traditionally performed a critical function against authority, because it was not appropriated in advance, in the same manner as criticism in late capitalist societies often is. “The Public Intellectual”.

\(^\text{148}\) Thompson, *Customs*.

\(^\text{149}\) Ibid., 1.

\(^\text{150}\) The rise of the urban working class was a result of industrial capitalism, because this system provided the opportunity to gain employment as part of the new means of production, as well as citizenship under the new democratic nation state. Edward Shils, "Mass Society and Its Culture", *Daedalus* 89, no. 2 (1960).

\(^\text{151}\) In particular, the term ‘masses’ was used in order to describe the rise of urban working class culture, particularly where the Frankfurt School were located - in America during the 1930s. Shils, "Mass".
culture changed, as society changed and mass culture emerged.\textsuperscript{152} In particular, modern avant-garde culture and mass culture were understood as the new formulation of what was previously a distinction between aristocratic, or patrician, high culture and plebeian, folk, or low, culture. As summarised by Shils:

Quite the opposite of what is believed by those who see mass culture... as an infection doing harm to the culture of the educated class, it is the poor culture of the educated classes which is doing harm to mass culture.\textsuperscript{153}

Here Shils highlights how mass culture was no longer created by, or in service of the masses, in the same way that low, or folk, culture had been in pre modern societies.\textsuperscript{154} Rather it was created for the new mass society, by the modern culture industry and the wealthy elite who controlled its means of production.

The decline of the aristocracy in Britain meant that artists, writers, poets, and other creators of high culture who had relied on aristocratic patronage, were forced to look elsewhere to support their livelihoods. However, this decline in traditional sources of patronage was counterbalanced by an increased demand for cultural goods by the growing middle classes.\textsuperscript{155} Consequently, the industrialisation of cultural production\textsuperscript{156} in modern Western nations, such as America and England, was concurrently able to meet the increased demand of the newly urbanised and increasingly literate masses.\textsuperscript{157} However, because culture became part of the capitalist means of production, it not only changed the quantity of culture being produced and consumed; it also changed the essence of culture, by placing priority on quantity rather than quality, of cultural goods. The Frankfurt School critics thought this was problematic, because it meant that the masses no longer had the same kind of control over the production of cultural goods as they did in pre modern societies. For example, this idea was highlighted when Horkheimer and Adorno stated that:

\textsuperscript{152} For more information on the early modern distinction between high patrician and low plebian culture in eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain, see: Thompson, \textit{Customs}.

\textsuperscript{153} Edward Shils, \textit{The Intellectuals and the Powers, and Other Essays} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 121.

\textsuperscript{154} Shuker, \textit{Understanding}; Thompson, \textit{Customs}.


\textsuperscript{156} Adorno and Horkheimer, \textit{Dialectic}.

\textsuperscript{157} Bell, "The Cultural Wars".

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Films and radio no longer need to present themselves as art. The truth that they are nothing but business is used as an ideology to legitimate the trash they intentionally produce. They call themselves industries, and the published figures for their directors’ incomes quell any doubts about the social necessity of their finished products.\footnote{Adorno and Horkheimer, \textit{Dialectic}, 99.}

This analysis of the culture industry highlights the necessity for profit to be gained through the capitalist means of production, thus explaining how reasoning based on political economy drives the culture industry. Because the production of culture by the culture industry is focused on maximising the size of the audience that would be willing to consume it, the culture industry is therefore associated with the production of instrumentally rational forms of mass culture.

The Frankfurt School engaged with and modified Marxist theory, in order to critique mass culture.\footnote{B. Day, "From Frankfurt to Ljubljana: Critical Theory from Adorno to Žižek", \textit{Studies in Social and Political Thought 9}, (2004).} In particular, they modified Marx’s theory of historical materialism, which attempted to explain how social systems change, in a scientific, or materialist, manner, through dialectical tension between their internal contradictions (in particular, the tension between the proletariat and bourgeoisie); resulting in Marx’s prediction of a communist revolution.\footnote{Johnson, \textit{Dictionary}.} This critique was deemed necessary, because mass culture was not only seen to be providing material comforts to the population, but also perpetuating modern capitalism, by promoting consumerism, pacifism, and providing a means of distraction and control.\footnote{This is because the mass culture industry was seen to be deactivating the ability for art to generate change or provide a medium for protest. Day, "From Frankfurt to Ljubljana"; Peukert, "Enlightenment and Theology".} Consequently, the Frankfurt School understood mass culture primarily as a form of entertaining society, rather than a means of critically reflecting it. This is particularly the case because it attempts to appeal to the widest audience possible and avoids challenging or difficult material in order to do so.\footnote{John Scott and Gordon Marshall. \textit{A Dictionary of Sociology} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Shils, "Mass".} For this reason, they saw mass culture playing a therapeutic rather than critical function in society, reifying the capitalist ideology through the reproduction and reflection of capitalist realism,
resulting in a “state of total reification and commodification in which the dynamic process of change and flux was arrested by a capitalist reproduction of the same”.\(^{163}\)

The Frankfurt School analysis of mass culture became increasingly pertinent after World War II, because capitalism had stabilised into the mode of monopoly capitalism, as Marx had predicted would occur in late capitalism; however, contrary to this theory, there had still been no communist revolution in the West.\(^{164}\) Therefore, rather than modern culture having been democritised, the Frankfurt School argued that the culture industry was perpetuating an uncritical acceptance of capitalist ideology and was a new form of cultural control. Instrumentally rational culture had become the new “opiate of the masses”\(^{165}\) because of its therapeutic function in modern society. So, rather than God and religion providing the therapeutic function to society that Marx had derided, it was now seen to be a manufactured form of therapy. Therapy was being manufactured by the mass culture industry.

The analysis of mass culture as a form of cultural control is particularly relevant to my discussion of culture at the national level, because it is tied to the idea that leaders can use mass culture to promote certain versions of cultural history that support current power relations,\(^{166}\) or appropriate culture in order to do so.\(^{167}\) This means that a cultural tradition can be invented.\(^{168}\) As explained by Hobsbawm and Ranger, traditions are often invented in order to promote the repetition of symbolic rituals amongst the citizenry in an “attempt to establish continuity with a suitable

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\(^{165}\) Marx, "Contribution to the Critique", 42.

\(^{166}\) Collini, Absent; Greenberg, "Avant-Garde"; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Thompson, Customs.


\(^{168}\) Tradition is defined as: “...an artistic or literary method or style established by an artist, writer, or movement, and subsequently followed by others”. Stevenson and Lindberg, Dictionary, 8473. In addition, it should be noted that the traditional is often defined as the antithesis to the modern, in the sense of something being pre modern in particular. Lee, "Reinventing".
historic past.\textsuperscript{169} Such cultural histories can evolve into popular belief, or myth, amongst the populace, through repetition alone - particularly through the education system of the state and events designed to boost patriotism.\textsuperscript{170} Similarly, cultural symbols can be appropriated and reified in order to project a collective identity that has the appearance of innovation and change,\textsuperscript{171} to flatter citizens by ‘lowering’ high culture to a level more easily engaged with,\textsuperscript{172} or to appeal to a wider audience - particularly by removing or altering potentially offensive or challenging material in order to do so.\textsuperscript{173}

The process of appropriating and inventing uncritical cultural stereotypes has been deemed particularly relevant in modernity, as a time of constant change and innovation, because tradition functions to provide some structure in contrast to this state of flux.\textsuperscript{174} Additionally, in the modern Western context, because the function of Christianity had been made somewhat redundant with regards to social cohesion, nation states consequently invented cultural traditions in order to provide a sense of comradeship amongst the citizenry.\textsuperscript{175} However, as nation states are increasingly competing in and integrated into global markets, culture is being increasingly instrumentally rationalised: culture is being used for the purposes of national branding within these postnational political economies.\textsuperscript{176}

In New Zealand, uncritical histories particularly tend to ignore the realities of colonialism, and in particular, the way British sovereignty was primarily used to justify the use of colonial power to control and subjugate Maori and confiscate their

\textsuperscript{169} Hobsbawm and Ranger, \textit{Tradition}, 1.
\textsuperscript{170} Collini, \textit{Absent}; Thompson, \textit{Customs}.
\textsuperscript{171} Shuker, \textit{Understanding}.
\textsuperscript{172} Greenberg, “Avant-Garde”; Stephens, “Babylon’s”. This has been a popular approach in New Zealand in order to appeal to an ‘anti-intellectual’ population, as discussed in the following Chapter.
\textsuperscript{173} Shuker also discusses the appropriation and minimisation of revolutionary messages in the music industry, using examples from the work of artists such as Bob Marley, whose image was “subtly remoulded, moving from the Rastafarian outlaw of the 1970s to the natural family man of the 1980s to the ‘natural mystic’ in the 1990s. This process reflected the incorporation of his music along with his image and message”. \textit{Understanding}, 48. As Stephens explains, this ‘remoulding’ of Marley’s image was designed “to appeal to a more mainstream white audience”. Stephens, "Babylon’s", 145.
\textsuperscript{174} Hobsbawm and Ranger, \textit{Tradition}.
\textsuperscript{175} Ellwood, \textit{Myth}.
Therefore, a consideration of the colonial era of national history is crucial to a consideration of what it means to be a Pakeha, and especially, what the landscape means to Pakeha - because the land was taken by force. This idea will be considered with regards to therapeutic function of 100% Pure Pakeha landscape mythology accordingly - in the critical theory tradition that views the construction of mythology as dominated by those with the most power.

(POST)COLONIALISM

This section will focus on criticism that has defined, located and explained mass cultural versions of Pakeha landscape mythology - before other forms of landscape mythology are considered in following chapters. In particular, reference will be made to criticism that has engaged with the discourses used to explain and justify the 100% Pure myth. This will show how Pakeha have continuously appropriated Maori culture and landscape for instrumentally rational purposes of political economy, from the construction of a collective ‘national identity’ during the colonial era, to the more recent era of increasing economic deregulation. Therefore, 100% Pure will be shown to epitomise mass culture in New Zealand, because: it is used in an instrumentally rational manner focused on goals of political economy; it does not engage with diverse critical perspectives, and; it acts as a therapeutic myth by cynically appropriating criticism in advance, whilst hiding negative aspects of Pakeha history and current realities of social inequality and environmental destruction in the process. 100% Pure is not reflexive or rational – because it is either not historically accurate (particularly because it ignores colonialism), or it is

177 New Zealand has been subject to the equal sovereignty of both the Crown and Maori since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. However the Treaty has not been honoured by Pakeha, for example, the it was deemed a nullity in 1877 by the Chief Justice. King, History. Likewise, forced appropriation of Maori homeland has since been critiqued for causing Maori disenfranchisement and alienation. Donna Awatere Huata, Maori Sovereignty (Auckland: Broadsheet, 1984).

178 Economic deregulation can be seen particularly in the policy of the 1984 Labour government, under David Lange and with Roger Douglas as Finance Minister. This Labour government implemented neoliberal strategies referred to as ‘Rogernomics’ and described by Labour party member at the time, the trained historian Michael Bassett, as a strategy which represented how: “[The] era of big government had largely been played out. The world economic downturn in the 1970s rendered further expensive extensions to the welfare state unaffordable, especially in New Zealand, where poor economic stewardship [had] caused the country to subside swiftly down the OECD performance ladder. In any event, doubts were growing inside the Labour party about the effectiveness of big spending”. Cited in: King, History, 490. This economic deregulation can be seen today in the postnational context with the 100% Pure brand designed to market New Zealand as a commodity globally.

179 Steel, “Problem".
not sincere (accepts criticism regarding these inaccuracies but embodies cynical belief).

Pakeha, as those with the most power in New Zealand society, have been able to deploy the mythological nature of collective identity as a form of nationalist mass culture – particularly through 100% Pure symbolism - in a therapeutic, totalitarian and instrumentally rational manner. Mass culture in New Zealand has been documented by a range of critics accordingly.\textsuperscript{180} Explanatory descriptions of mass culture in New Zealand, and the associated turn to place for a sense of collective identity, have often focused on the role of Pakeha as perpetuating mass culture, by rejecting cultural criticism. In particular, an uncritical appropriation and commodification of idealistic wilderness landscapes and Maori culture within the national imagination has been seen as a key therapeutic response to the negative realities of colonialism by some critics,\textsuperscript{181} which functions sentimentally or cynically to persuade “all is well when all is not well”.\textsuperscript{182} One of the main reasons for this rejection of cultural criticism has been attributed to what critics have identified as Pakeha anti-intellectualism.

Anti-intellectualism is a complex social phenomenon, which is a useful umbrella term to describe the rejection of cultural criticism. Anti-intellectualism has many different facets. In the New Zealand context it has especially been related to descriptions of Pakeha as philistine, lacking cultural exceptionalism, as well as

\textsuperscript{180} For example, pressure on privatised television broadcasters and newspapers from advertiser's means that decisions on content are based on commercial ratings, rather than any consideration of what content would be most beneficial for society through informing, intriguing and challenging viewers. P. Beaton and S. Cox, “The Arts”, in New Zealand: Sociological Perspectives, eds. Paul Spoonley, David G. Pearson and Ian F. Shirley (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1982); Williams, ”Introduction”. The influence of mass culture has also been discussed with regards to the increasing sponsorship of the arts by the State and the way this has been used to promote New Zealand abroad through creative branding. See: Bell, Inventing; Evans, Forgetting; J.F. Harding, C.G. Sibley and A. Robertson, ”New Zealand = Maori, New Zealand = Bicultural: Ethnic Group Differences in a National Sample of Maori and Europeans”, Social Indicators Research 100, no. 1 (2010); Roger Horrocks, “A Short History of ‘the New Zealand Intellectual’”, in Speaking Truth to Power: Public Intellectuals Rethink New Zealand, ed. Laurence Simmons (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007); Mills, ”Dictatorship”; Turner, “Compulsory Nationalism”; Williams, ”Introduction”.

\textsuperscript{181} Bell, Inventing; Steel, “Problem”.

experiencing a heightened sense of identity unease. However, I will also show how anti-intellectualism is related to anti-colonialism in the following chapter; especially with regards to how the anti-colonial turn away from colonial culture embodied a turn towards nature – a turn that was both therapeutic and critical. Therefore, these different aspects of anti-intellectualism can be seen in a range of different Pakeha landscape myths, because it is one of the main social phenomena which helps to explain why Pakeha have rejected cultural criticism with regards to landscape mythology - or why therapeutic, rather than critical landscape mythologies are prevalent in New Zealand. This chapter will focus on the aspect of anti-intellectualism that is tied to a rejection or dismissal of cultural criticism within Pakeha society, particularly regarding colonialism, before I consider a more anti-colonial element of anti-intellectualism in following chapters.

The anti-intellectual turn to landscape within the national imagination has been partly explained by some critics who claim that this is because Pakeha lack cultural exceptionalism and have an associated sense of identity unease. For example, Fairburn defined Pakeha culture as unexceptional, due to what he saw as a lack of significant events in Pakeha history, which makes it difficult to locate the defining aspects of the Pakeha culture in the national imagination, other than landscape. Rather, he argued Pakeha could be seen as an amalgamation of other cultures, in

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184 As Lealand explains, “There is a joke that still circulates in New Zealand – like all long-lived jokes it bears a ring of truth – that relates how visitors to New Zealand are asked within ten minutes of their arrival, ‘And what do you think of New Zealand?... points to a nation... with a low level of self-confidence’”. G. Lealand, "Preface to in-Depth Section: New Zealand Literature and Culture", Journal of Popular Culture 19, no. 2 (1985). Others who discuss the low level of confidence of New Zealanders in association with identity unease include: Miles Fairburn, "Is There a Good Case for New Zealand Exceptionalism?", in Disputed Histories: Imagining’s Pasts, eds., Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006); Winks, These New Zealanders.

185 Fairburn, “Exceptionalism”.
particular British, American, Australian and Maori cultures. A similar view of Pakeha as lacking cultural production in general, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century, can be seen in the work of Chapman, who, referring to the 1951 Writers’ Conference, explained that it was of common opinion amongst those attending that literary criticism in New Zealand was saturated due to a lack of local literary production. Often critics sharing this stance emphasise instead the role of Pakeha as instrumentally rational (post)colonial actors who share an exacerbated sense of identity “unease” accordingly. This means that Pakeha identity unease has not only been linked to their second settler status, but also their unexceptional and relatively short cultural history, particularly in the context of increasing cultural diversity.

European settler identities have been problematic throughout New Zealand’s history because, as Bell explains, Pakeha have an unsteady claim in a land that was settled by Maori prior to their arrival, and will as such be forever plagued with an “ontological unease” when identifying with New Zealand as home. However, Pakeha identity unease has also been exacerbated because of the increasingly multicultural migration to New Zealand, because this threatened the Pakeha majority. This aspect of anti-intellectualism, regarding identity unease, has been

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186 Ibid. The unexceptionalism thesis has also been used by other critics in various different ways, such as: Horrocks, “No Theory”; Steel, “Problem”.
187 Chapman, “Fiction”.
190 When I refer to Pakeha as ‘second settlers’, this is not to distinguish them from other non-European settlers, but to emphasise the nature of European settlement as after Maori settlement, and the fact that Pakeha will always be second settlers, in the same manner as: Byrnes, The New Oxford; Alex Calder, The Settlers Plot: How Stories Take Place in New Zealand (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2011).
191 Avril Bell, “Bifurcation or Entanglement? Settler Identity and Biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand”, Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies 20, no. 2 (2007), 254. This sense of identity unease and the subsequent turn to landscape is not unique to Pakeha. For a discussion of postcolonial French Carribean identities, including: their sense of ‘double alienation’; their subsequent strong yet ‘uneasy’ identification with landscape symbolism; critiques that their local landscape mythology is a form of ‘camouflage’ or ideology to hide the struggle of the islands’ indigenous populations and prevent emancipatory social change; as well as an account of how the French Carribean population have developed a unique ‘niche’ culture due to their uneasy sense of identity - particularly with regards to the poetics of place studies and ‘in-between’ identities see: Prieto, Literature.
192 Bell, “Dilemmas”; Bell, Inventing; Stafford and Williams, Anthology.
used to help explain why Pakeha have often rejected cultural criticism regarding the unfavourable legacy of colonialism.

**BICULTURALISM AND PAKEHA IDENTITY UNEASE**

From the very beginnings of New Zealand’s history as a nation state, colonial power was exerted to the point where the existence of Maori culture was threatened with extinction - primarily by cultural assimilation into the European majority and aggressive confiscations of Maori land. This process of colonisation was continued, through the promotion of histories of New Zealand that privileged Eurocentric, colonial perspectives, in order to justify the colonial project and minimise the ‘first settler’ status of Maori within the collective imagination. These perspectives remained relatively unchallenged until the second half of the twentieth century. Subsequently, colonisation has had negative ramifications for Maori that are ongoing and structurally ingrained (particularly with regards to Maori underachievement seen in health, education and socio-economic indicators), in what has been described as a more monocultural European (and later multicultural), rather than bicultural, New Zealand society.

Critics have emphasised differing reasons as to why the negative effects of colonialism began to be acknowledged by Pakeha around the latter half of the twentieth century. However, most critics using postcolonial theory focus on the post-World War II ‘baby boom’ era, because this is when Maori began to increasingly move from rural to urban areas, primarily to gain employment. As a result of becoming increasingly marginalised, while at the same time more

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193 Although I do not wish to minimise the brutality of colonisation, it must be noted that the aim of this thesis is not attempt to provide an historical account of colonisation, but rather highlight how colonisation often been, and is still, minimised in the national imagination. I will also suggest ways that our colonial history might be more critically reflected upon by Pakeha. For a history of New Zealand which does discuss colonisation and events such as the confiscation of land during the New Zealand Wars, see: Byrnes, *The New Oxford; King, History.*

194 Byrnes and Coleborne, “Editorial Introduction”.

195 Moeke-Maxwell “Bi/Multiracial”.

196 “From 16 births per 1000 population in 1935-36, the rate rose to over 26 per 1000 by the late 1940s and this was maintained until 1961”. *King, History, 414.*

197 This was partly in response to the fact that traditional family farming was becoming increasingly difficult for rural Maori to maintain in the 1940s; due to increasing competition from Pakeha settlers who had greater access to capital and were able to mechanise aspects of dairy farming accordingly. *King, History, 470.*
urbanised and educated, Maori increasingly pushed for more recognition in government by highlighting the lack of egalitarianism in New Zealand society during the late 1960s. Consequently, many critics employing postcolonial theory focus on this push from Maori as catalysing state attempts to amend the structural disadvantaging of Maori since the 1970s.

During the latter half of the twentieth century it slowly became generally agreed that Maori have special status in New Zealand because they are ‘first settlers’ and their unique culture is at home nowhere else in the world. In response to the disadvantaged position of Maori, an understanding of national identity in New Zealand as bicultural was gradually taken up by the state. However, the way that this biculturalism has, and has not, been acknowledged over time, almost always had destructive impacts on Maori, despite what are sometimes good intentions at reparation. In particular, it has been argued that the state was slow to implement the changes required to amend the structural disadvantaging of Maori, with differing opinions amongst critics as to why this was the case.

The historian Michael King stated that the state was slow to implement changes due to a failure to understand the consequences of what these amendments would involve institutionally. Nevertheless, the state did eventually manage to implement the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 as: “a forum to hear iwi [tribal] grievances

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198 C. Houkamau, "Identity Construction and Reconstruction: The Role of Socio-Historical Contexts in Shaping Maori Women’s Identity", Social Identities 16, no. 2 (2010); Moeke-Maxwell, “Bi/Multiracial”.
199 However, other factors, such as a more critical consciousness amongst Pakeha influenced partly by cultural nationalism and global counter-cultural influences also motivated this process of amending the structural disadvantaging of Maori. These will be discussed in the following Chapter in association with an increasingly critical awareness of environmental issues.
200 As explained by King, Pakeha began to recognise the special nature of Maori indigeneity with regards to how their East Polynesian culture evolved in isolation, to become Te Ao Maori, prior to European contact and colonisation brought new cultures to New Zealand. History.
201 Elizabeth Rata, "Rethinking Biculturalism", Anthropological Theory 5, no. 3 (2005). For example, there were heated political debates regarding the official cultural definition of the state as bicultural, in opposition to multiculturalism and ‘One Nation, One People’ rhetoric, at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century. For a discussion of the kind of political discourse which reduces the special first-settler status of Maori, by grouping them in equally with all the other cultures which make up ‘the multicultural nation’, as used by Don Brash at his 2004 ‘Orewa Speech’, see: J. Johansson, “Orewa and the Rhetoric of Illusion”, Political Science 56, no. 2 (2004).
202 For example, through the inclusion of Maori language in schools. King, History, 468
against the Crown”,\textsuperscript{203} especially with regards to breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi and Maori land confiscation. As such, the bicultural project has sometimes been seen as a genuine effort by the state to address the negative effects of colonisation on the Maori population, by embracing Maori culture formally. However, on the other hand, critics have argued that institutional changes were slow because reparations proposed a challenge to the white settler majority.\textsuperscript{204} From this perspective, Pakeha identity unease is related to the effective operation of democracy in New Zealand, because threats to Pakeha identity have been seen to slow the reparation process and incite defensive reactions to the calls for recognition of Maori sovereignty.

The multicultural immigration of the postnational era increasingly threatened Pakeha identity and prosperity, due to a more challenging economic environment, increasing non-European migration\textsuperscript{205} and the demise of the British Empire.\textsuperscript{206} Therefore, new forms of global power and threats to Pakeha identity complicated traditional colonial power relations in New Zealand, as well as the binary of bicultural rhetoric. These changes prompted an increased engagement with culture by the state, in order to emphasise a unique national identity on an increasingly global stage, rather than simply to amend the structural disadvantaging of Maori.\textsuperscript{207} For this reason, the bicultural project has also been described as a process of cultural colonisation, because Pakeha had the most control over the construction of this new bicultural national identity and directed this construction for purposes of

\textsuperscript{203} Moeke-Maxwell, "Bi/Multiracial", 499. However, as King explains, little notice was paid to the Waitangi Tribunal amongst the general population “until 1985, when its powers were made retrospective to 1840”. History, 487.


\textsuperscript{205} In particular, Pacific Islanders were encouraged to move to New Zealand to build the national industrial workforce. Between 1945 and 2000 the number of Pacific Island Polynesians living in New Zealand increased from approximately 2000, to 128,000. Spoonley explains how this migration did not help race relations in New Zealand, particularly during the more difficult economic era of the 1970s, when Polynesians were seen to be threatening to other New Zealanders as unemployment rose. "Contemporary Political Economy".

\textsuperscript{206} Ties with England diminished as the European Economic Community was developed, alongside New Zealand’s concurrently increasing ties with America, the increasing availability of air travel and increasing globalisation in general. King, History, 416.

\textsuperscript{207} Harding, Sibley and Robertson, "New Zealand = Maori, New Zealand = Bicultural", 139.
national branding. As Rata describes: biculturalism “morphed from the inclusive biculturalism of the early 1980s with its idealistic commitment to difference in unity to a separatist iwi politics”.

In the later stages of the bicultural project, Maori identity became a key aspect of national branding in the global political economy – alongside the nation’s pristine landscape imagery. Nationally, the effect of this could be seen as reparations required identification with Maori culture to be based on one’s ability to prove ethnic identity and lineage in association with iwi. This meant that the state narrowly defined, and therefore instrumentally rationalised, Maori identity, because Maori identification was being based on lineage (blood), rather than cultural practice or self-identification. This was problematic because many Maori who no longer had affiliation with their iwi were those who were already the most marginalised (in particular disenfranchised urban Maori), so reparations tended to exclude those Maori who were in most need of help. This narrow state definition of Maori identity meant that Maori culture could be commodified, with iwi instrumentally incorporated into the global capitalist system because reparations were based on capital - thus iwi became corporatised due to the nature of the claims process and reparations. As Moeke-Maxwell explains: “The resulting compensation packages (land, money, etc.) provide iwi with the opportunity to compete alongside Pakeha in the capitalist marketplace”. Therefore, this process of bicultural branding, rather than helping disenfranchised Maori, really allowed further appropriation of the indigenous culture and their homeland into the political economy – it was extending, rather than amending, the effects of colonisation on Maori and their homeland.

Under the bicultural project Maori culture and homeland increasingly became a commodity packaged for consumption. For this reason, critics have focused on the hegemonic, nationalist process of prescriptive ‘nation building’ and manufacturing

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208 Gibbons, “The Far Side”.
209 Rata, “Treaty”.
211 Moeke-Maxwell, “Bi/Multiracial”; Rata, “Treaty”.
the legitimacy of authority, particularly in response to Maori sovereignty claims, by highlighting how a reliance on the physical environment and the indigenous population for national uniqueness means that particular and local identities, individual agency and democracy are diminished in the process. Consequently, the appropriation of landscape for national branding has been as a form of therapeutic, rather than critical culture, because it promotes pristine and empty, 100% Pure landscapes, which ignore the realities of environmental destruction and colonisation. Turner has described this neo-national appropriation of culture and landscape for national branding as ‘compulsory nationalism’.

COMPULSORY NATIONALISM

Compulsory nationalism has been part of the process of building the nation since the very instance New Zealand was colonised, particularly by drawing on a sentimental image of the unique landscape in order to encourage people to immigrate. This emphasis on compulsory nationalism by the State was seen to abate during the time of social liberalism and the Welfare State, before being exacerbated again during the Rogernomic period of neoliberal economic deregulation in New Zealand. This is because when the national economy opened to free trade on the global market, as well as the international trade relations and influence of multinational corporate interests which accompany such a move, the effect of global mass culture on the national identity intensified in a way that paralleled Pakeha identity unease earlier in the colonial project (in their alienation from 'home' as Britain in particular). For this reason, compulsory nationalism can be seen as a defensive manoeuvre.

Turner explains how compulsory nationalism is achieved, by controlling cultural imagery according to dominant conceptions of national identity in New Zealand that are:

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214 Steel, “Problem”.
215 Turner, “Compulsory Nationalism”.
216 For a discussion of the propaganda early colonial entrepreneurs used to entice immigration to New Zealand, (for example by those involved with the New Zealand Company, including Edward Gibbon Wakefield), particularly aimed at people who could afford to purchase land and working class labourers, see: Chapman, “Fiction”; King, History.
217 Steel, “Problem”.

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...increasingly corporatized, media-driven and government sponsored... where criticism and culture follow from and are defined by economic opportunity, rather than preceding economic opportunity and providing a framework by which market openings or initiatives might be considered to add value.\textsuperscript{218}

Here Turner highlights how when the basis for national progress is narrowly defined (by being founded on economic goals of trade and material progress rather than citizens), criticism can be equally defined as contrary to national interests and hence rejected in a totalitarian manner. Therefore, uncritical forms of collective identity are undemocratic, because anyone who has a critical stance towards that identity is made to feel less of a citizen, with their views collectively forgotten in the process.\textsuperscript{219} Consequently, because such critical views are not tolerated by the state, power relations no longer remain transparent and the role of democratic cultural criticism becomes redundant, particularly with regards to the check and balance of power accumulation.\textsuperscript{220} Accordingly, the kind of belief associated with this myth in the late capitalist context can be seen as a cynical one. This will be shown to be in contrast to the sentimental beliefs associated with landscape mythology during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, because landscape mythology today already negotiates a range of criticism. As a consequence, the critical function is rendered useless and the myth functions therapeutically in a cynical manner, rather than critically in a sincere manner.

**GET RID OF LANDSCAPE?**

Due to the uncritical, therapeutic and cynical nature of neonationalist landscape imagery, some critics have suggested that landscape mythology should be purged from the national imagination.\textsuperscript{221} However, such an approach towards Pakeha landscape mythology is inappropriate for several reasons. Firstly, it does not

\textsuperscript{218} Turner, “Compulsory Nationalism”, 14.
\textsuperscript{219} Patrick Evans, "On Originality: No Earth Tones", in *Writing at the Edge of the Universe: Essays from the Creative Writing in New Zealand Conference, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, August 2003*, ed. Mark Williams, (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2003), 75.
\textsuperscript{220} As Peukert explains, the check and balance of power accumulation is also the goal of theology: "since the rise of the great world religions, theology, as a methodically controlled reflective form of religion, has been concerned with the basic problems of advanced civilizations that developed simultaneously with it. The thesis seems plausible to me that the unsolved fundamental problem of advanced civilizations is that of mastering the tendency towards power accumulation". "Enlightenment and Theology", 352.
\textsuperscript{221} Bell, *Inventing; Steel, “Problem”*. 
consider other more critical aspects of Pakeha landscape mythology, which might help to better explain why this myth has been so successful in the New Zealand context. Such a reactionary approach also fails to acknowledge the anti-colonial impulse in Pakeha culture. Nor does it account for the influence of international trends, such as an increasing awareness regarding the negative effects of capitalist development on the environment (discussed in the following chapter), which have also contributed, along with the push from Maori, to the development of a more critical Pakeha consciousness regarding colonialism. Additionally, this approach is not suited to the current postnational and cynical context of late capitalism, which has been shown to negotiate a range of criticism directed towards the 100% Pure brand already. For these reasons, removing landscape from Pakeha and national identities would be a reductionist response.

The reductionist suggestion that Pakeha landscape mythology functions only therapeutically is tied to the difficult application of postcolonial theory in postnational contexts. As explained by Dominy, some aspects crucial to the successful critique of Pakeha landscape mythology in the context of late capitalist cynicism are missed by some postcolonial critics because “[t]he anthropology of postcolonialism has tended to neglect or homogenize the varied expressions of cultural and national identity of British settler descendants”.

Here Dominy highlights how many postcolonial critiques of national identity and symbolism fail to account for the ways Pakeha have critically, rather than therapeutically, engaged with landscape. Williams also provides insight into the tendency for postcolonial criticism to narrowly define Pakeha identity, by suggesting that Pakeha colonial history might be more effectively engaged with if: “confronted, not denied; met in its complexity, not forced into manichean oppositions; understood, not simply resisted”. Thus Williams alludes to how the potential for more radical interpretations of Pakeha landscape mythology, and therefore more critical European identities in New Zealand, are lost when opposed or critiqued in a cynical and reductionist manner.

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The neo-Marxist emphasis on political economy and economic determinism seen in postcolonial critiques of Pakeha landscape mythology can be counter-productive, because the relevance of such power relations in different times and places is not straightforward, and can be reinterpreted or resisted. So, as summarised by Gikandi, it is important to consider these intricacies when applying postcolonial theory, because theories that might have been liberating in one context can become less helpful, or even dangerous in another context, particularly with regards to the postnational context or ideological cynicism.224 With regards to Pakeha identity in particular, this means that the sense of identity unease exacerbated due to the founding of Pakeha identity during modernity, a time of increasing globalisation and diverse migration,225 is an important consideration when applying postcolonial theory - to both the postnational New Zealand context and the context of ideological cynicism. Therefore, although some explanations of nationalist mass culture in New Zealand tend to equate this phenomenon with colonisation and Pakeha identity, this does not consider either the diversity of Pakeha identities or the vastly different context Pakeha identities are constructed within in the postnational context.226 As explained by Hardt and Negri, postcolonial theory is a “very productive tool for rereading history, but it is entirely insufficient for theorizing contemporary global power”.227

The new global context of power relations has been referred to by Mbembé as “the postcolony”.228 This is because postcolonialism is no longer seen as limited to the transitioning phase of the nation state, but rather something that is implanted in the geopolitical landscape long before and after colonialism. Accordingly, citizens are

224 Simon Gikandi, "Theory, Literature, and Moral Considerations", Research in African Literatures 32, no. 4 (2001), 16. This idea is supported by Prieto: "Theories of difference, for example, may play a liberatory role in a society characterized by powerful institutions and a dominant national culture (as in many Western countries), but they may have disastrous consequences in societies that lack institutional stability and that are struggling to forge a cohesive national identity in the face of conflicting demands from rival subcommunities". Prieto, Literature, 147-148.
225 The turn to landscape for identity is seen especially in fin de siècle colonial period (to make New Zealand seem more homely), and in the post WWII era (as globalisation and post-war baby boom materialism is critiqued in a critically Romantic way, which sees landscape as superior to the social world and its increasingly noticeable consumerism). Stafford and Williams, Anthology.
226 The postnational context, as defined in Chapter One, has inspired what have been termed post-postcolonial responses in the field of place studies. Prieto, Literature. These can be seen as akin to postcritical approaches to cultural criticism.
227 Hardt and Negri, Empire, 148.
understood as no longer awaiting the return to a traditional homeland (in the case of Maori), or the uncovering of a homeland (in the case of Pakeha), but rather, that the postcolony, as Prieto explains:

...is increasingly considered to be something that has no end and that is now simply part of the way the world is... What we had thought to be a transitional phase or interregnum has turned out to be the way of the world, making it necessary to understand even the horrors of the slave trade as, in Derek Walcott’s turn of phase, ‘men acting as men’.229

This quote alludes to how the ongoing process of colonisation, and in particular the effects of instrumental rationality, is not an issue that is unique to Pakeha, but rather is an ongoing global issue, which requires an equally global perspective. Therefore, the critique of colonial domination in the late capitalist context needs to consider global forms of power and local forms of resistance that criticism directed towards Pakeha alone fails to account for.230 The following chapters will focus on these counter-cultural aspects of Pakeha culture.

Colonialism is an issue in New Zealand that is never going to go away. The history of the colonial event will forever be ingrained in fabric of the nation. However, this should not be a cause for cynicism. Although rigid or static reified symbols of national identity are problematic, this does not mean that we cannot, or should not, attempt to create meaningful stories about, or goals for, society at the national level. A failure to critically consider the more diverse meanings landscape holds for Pakeha means that Pakeha identity has often been narrowly defined by critics, with a lack of consideration of the diversity of European experiences in New Zealand. Consequently, the following chapters will show how landscape has been a

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229 Prieto, Literature, 144. This idea is supported by Toledo’s research, because he explains how it is important not to succumb to the trope of the noble savage, when discussing the effects of instrumental rationality on people from different cultures. This is because “acknowledgements of positive links between indigenous peoples has been increasingly tempered by the recognition that under certain circumstances (high population densities, market pressures, unsuitable technologies, local disorganization) indigenous peoples can act as disruptive, not as conservationist, actors”. V.M. Toledo, "Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity", in Encyclopedia of Biodiversity, ed. A. Levin, (San Diego: Academic Press, 2001), 460.

230 This idea is supported by Madororssian, who in engaging with Glissant’s work, argues how Westerners are problematically framed as the only group of people who are responsible for environmental rationalisation. So, as Madororssian argues: "Much has been said—and rightly so—about the ways in which the Western imposition of its environmental agendas on the Third World is an extension of an imperialist mindset set on ‘enlightening’ the non-West. My point, however, is that... [i]t should be possible to criticize the effects of human development without having these be automatically seen as an extension of an identitarian and anti-immigration ethos or of deep ecological thinking”. "Poetics of Landscape", 985-986.
foundation for critical Pakeha identities, in order to show how removing such a key symbol of collective Pakeha identity would exacerbate Pakeha identity unease. In particular, I argue that the elimination of a traditional foundation from which Pakeha have engaged with critique would exacerbate problems associated with the evasion of cultural criticism in New Zealand society, rather than helping to solve them. An alternative response is thus suggested: continually subjecting the landscape myth to transformative critique. The role of the critic in response to such negated cynical mythologies is thus one of sincere and reflexive interpretation,\(^{231}\) as much as one of critical judgement. My interpretation of contemporary Pakeha landscape mythology will therefore look to the roots of landscape mythology in Pakeha’s European ancestry - particularly through Christianity, and the Modernism which developed out of the European Romantic period\(^{232}\) of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries - in order to consider what might be found in a modern landscape mythology, rather than focusing only on what has been lost.

\(^{231}\) As Baxter explains: “The professional critic or reviewer differs from the casual reader only in making an occupation, paid or unpaid, of what all must do to understand a literary work... He is the best man at the marriage of poet and public”. “Fire”, 14.

CHAPTER THREE – THE ANTIPODEAN ARCADIAN MYTH: LOW CULTURE AND SENTIMENTAL COLONIAL BELIEFS

The cultural values that colonists brought with them gradually changed, in relation to the elements of the new physical and cultural environment of New Zealand. In 1966 the historian and poet William Oliver summarised this idea when he stated that: “Poetry in New Zealand is the child of a marriage between inheritance and environment”. The significance of this quote lies partly in its reference to poetry in its national entirety, because in doing so, it also speaks for Maori, who already had a distinct cultural tradition in New Zealand before Pakeha arrived. This refers to one of the greatest problems of Pakeha cultural development: it has often attempted to speak for both Maori and Pakeha, and in doing so, naturalise the place of Pakeha in New Zealand. However, Oliver’s statement also emphasises cultural change. Therefore, the following chapters will discuss various different critical views and interpretations of Pakeha landscape mythology, in order to explain how not only therapeutic, but critical, Pakeha beliefs have been related to landscape.

To see what other values the landscape myth has held for Pakeha the evolution of a more critical Pakeha consciousness in New Zealand will be considered, both prior to and in association with the push from Maori described in the previous chapter. In order to understand how early symbols of Pakeha identity were expressed, the following discussion will interpret the meanings and beliefs that were tied to the European myth of Arcadia, and especially how these were transferred to New Zealand by early colonists to become part of the collective Pakeha imagination. This will be achieved by considering not only how European values underlay the colonial appropriation of landscape into mass culture, but also the development of a Pakeha high culture: by increasingly engaging with more diverse critical perspectives over time and enhancing cultural reflexivity in an intersubjective manner.

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234 Prieto’s research into the development of postcolonial criticism amongst various different second settler contexts will be used, because it shows how the emergence of postcolonial criticism tends to follow on from an anti-colonial impulse amongst second settlers. Prieto, Literature.
CULTURALISM AND CYNICAL VERSUS SENTIMENTAL BELIEF

In order to excavate the alternative meanings associated with Pakeha landscape mythology, culturalist approaches will be used to identify points at which Pakeha have both rejected and reinterpreted instrumentally rational colonial, and nationalist, mythologies. This is in order to balance the discussion of deconstructionist and postcolonial critiques of therapeutic Pakeha landscape myths, with a consideration of sincere and creative interpretations of more critical ones. This process will show how the relationship between colonialism and second settler identities is not straightforward. In particular, the ways Pakeha have responded to colonialism in a counter-culture manner will be explained. Smithies notes how this is a task that is often avoided, due to a fear of strengthening essentialist nationalism:

A history of cultural imaginings can reveal many aspects of the culture in question that were previously hidden. The term allows certain depths to be tapped within a culture that have been avoided until recently, out of a fear of continuing to strengthen essentialist notions of the nation that are rigid, inscribed with discourses of power and (in some senses, if harnessed to certain ideological perspectives) dangerous.235

Nevertheless, such culturalist approaches can allow a more nuanced understanding of the construction of Pakeha values early in the history of the nation, which enables an important distinction between sentimental beliefs (inherent to Pakeha low culture), and cynical beliefs (inherent to propagandist mass culture), to be made. This is achieved in a way that many postcolonial and deconstructionist critics fail to accomplish in their approach, which does not tend to distinguish between sentimental, and propagandist or cynical, Pakeha culture and beliefs. However, this distinction and associated focus on the mode of belief is crucial to my critique of Pakeha landscape mythology in the late capitalist context.

Although sentimental and cynical beliefs in landscape mythology both function therapeutically, rather than critically, sentimental beliefs can be transformed through critique in a way that cynical beliefs cannot. This is because cynical beliefs, such as those attributed to 100% Pure, are the product of a process of critique that

235 Smithies, “Imagining”, 6-7. For example, this can be seen in Turner’s response to Michael King’s histories of New Zealand. Turner interpreted King’s histories as “less critical”, and thus as having “disturbing ramifications”, with regards to the ongoing effects of colonialism. Turner, “The Public Intellectual”, 89.
subjugates cultural beliefs, and their rational critique, to knowledge of the material, instrumentally rational, kind: that which is verifiable through the scientific method. In this sense they can be seen as a kind of negated belief, because faith is placed in scientific rationality alone: a form of reasoning that attempts to purge belief from knowledge, and thus myth from modern society. In order to negate this negation, I will explain how sentimental European beliefs about New Zealand have been developed, through an increasingly democratic process of transformative critique, into a more critical form of belief, as seen in Pakeha high culture. This emphasises the other reason for the importance of culturalist, or postcritical, approaches to history, because they are focused on locating counter-cultural interpretations of mass culture. So, although dominant cultural histories tend to be told by those with the most power and thus promote the most positive elements of culture that the dominant group identifies with, this does not mean that dominant cultural beliefs have always been used in this way, or that they will always be used in this way.

A critical history of mythological beliefs is focused on sincerely reflecting elements of culture that Pakeha believe in, enabling a consideration of what beliefs might be suited to a critical, rather than therapeutic, Pakeha mythology. As explained by Žižek, the interpretation and communication of critical cultural beliefs is particularly relevant in the context of capitalist cynicism because:

The basic tension is not so much the tension of reason versus feeling, but, rather, the tension of knowledge versus the disavowed belief embodied in external ritual—the situation often described in the terms of cynical reason whose formula, the reverse of Marx’s, was proposed decades ago by Peter Sloterdijk: ‘I know what I am doing; nonetheless, I am doing it.…’ This formula, however, is not as unambiguous as it may appear—it should be supplemented with: ‘… because I don’t know what I believe’.

Here Žižek highlights how the late modern ideological turn to cynical belief is often partly due to the fact that belief has been deemed out of date in modern society. This is exacerbated in the Pakeha context, due to the sense of identity unease which has been deemed characteristic of the Pakeha experience; due to the founding of...

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236 Shuker, Understanding.
237 Often to appeal to a majority of citizens, in the same way that mass culture must appeal to consumers. Bell, Inventing.
Pakeha identity during the flux of modernity, their second settler status, and claims that Pakeha lack culture, or cultural exceptionalism. However, a culturalist approach challenges the authority of these claims.

**LOW CULTURE AND ANTI-COLONIALISM**

Although mass culture is designed primarily to entertain, rather than to challenge, critique, or show thorough and sincere reflections of society, and while a powerful minority of people can use mass culture for the purposes of cultural control, this does not mean that its interpretation will be passive. Accordingly, culturalist approaches to interpreting culture see hope in popular culture in a way that the Frankfurth School did not, by considering the increasingly critical and counter-cultural nature of popular cultural production, as documented in a vast range of research, particularly at the end of the twentieth century and during the twenty-first century. In particular, culturalist approaches have highlighted how it is possible for mass culture to be interpreted in a way that subverts and challenges its original hegemonic meaning or intent, especially as culture is transported around the world, from one cultural context to another, such as from England to the Antipodes. This shows how mass culture can be creatively and actively reinterpreted and used as a form of critique that effectively relocates it to the sphere of culture ‘of’, rather than ‘for’, the people; especially by critiquing dominant power relations, such as colonialism. This is possible due to the dialectical nature of culture, with regards to how meanings are not fixed, but fluid. Accordingly, it is important to consider how invented cultural traditions do not usually take hold

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239 Scott, *Capitalism.*
240 Collini, *Absent.*
241 Shuker, *Understanding.*
242 For an overview of the critical function performed in popular culture see Shuker, *Understanding.* For example, Shuker explains how “Academic sociology was initially slow to explore the relationship between popular music and its largely adolescent consumers” and analyses the various different perspectives on culture accordingly. *Understanding,* 4. In particular, the development of popular youth subcultures have been seen as sites of active cultural production, rather than passive consumption, in a manner that is critical of mainstream mass culture. For example, a detailed account of the development of dancehall culture in Jamaica, as a critical subculture against colonial elitist culture, has been conducted by Stolzoff who explains how “[f]or downtown people, especially the youth, the dancehall provides a medium through which the masses are able to ideologically challenge the hegemony of the ruling classes and state apparatuses”. Norman C. Stolzoff, *Wake the Town & Tell the People: Dancehall Culture in Jamaica* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 7.
243 Templeton, “Sociology and Literature”.
244 Peter Beilharz, "From Sociology to Culture, Via Media—Some Thoughts from the Antipodes", *The American Sociologist* 40, no. 3 (2009); Thompson, *Customs.*
amongst a population unless there is already some sort of disposition towards it in the society already.\textsuperscript{245} This does not mean that collective culture, such as landscape mythology, is not somewhat prescriptive, but that the operation of cultural authority requires both:

...some pre-existing disposition in the culture to assign value or understanding to the activities in which that [authoritative] figure is seen to be distinguished, and there has to be some pre-existing disposition to be receptive to the expression of views on the topics they address.\textsuperscript{246}

Here, Collini, in his historical study of British intellectuals, highlights how the interpretation of culture is influenced both through the legitimisation of authority (as previously discussed, particularly with regards the authority given to instrumental rationality and nationalist histories in modern society), but also the process of locally authenticating culture,\textsuperscript{247} because people have the ability to interpret cultural mythologies in an active process of reflexive identification, rather than passive consumption. This can particularly be seen where new forms of locally authenticated identities are replacing national identities with local, regional, or global, postnational forms of representation and power.\textsuperscript{248} Self-described “post-

\textsuperscript{245}Collini, Absent.
\textsuperscript{246}Parenthesis added. Collini, Absent, 57.
\textsuperscript{247}Rebecca Ream, "Capturing the Kiwi Spirit: An Exploration into the Link between National Identity, Land and Spirituality from Māori and Pākehā Perspectives" (M.A. Thesis, University of Canterbury, 2009).
\textsuperscript{248}The creation alternative local forms of power can be seen in grass-roots social movements, such as the community group ‘Project Lyttelton’, in the port town of Lyttelton, New Zealand. Project Lyttelton has created a community timebank, which offers a local alternative means of employment and contribution, to paid employment within the national economy: “TIMEBANKING is a way of trading skills in a community. INSTEAD OF DOLLARS, time credits are used as payment. You earn time credits for the work you do, and then use them to 'buy' another member’s time to get the services you need. EVERYONE’S TIME IS EQUAL. No matter what type of work is done, one hour always equals one time credit. 1 = 1. Every person is equally valued.” “Timebank", Project Lyttelton, accessed 1st July 2013, http://www.lyttelton.net.nz/timebank. These alternative forms of civic participation are also occurring at a global scale. For example, Escobar discusses how international non-governmental organisations and social movements are preventing the appropriation of resources in biodiversity rich regions. Arturo Escobar, “Whose Knowledge, Whose Nature? Biodiversity, Conservation, and the Political Ecology of Social Movements”, Journal of Political Ecology 5, no. 1 (1998). Additionally, for a discussion of the fluidity and tension between, and in the construction of, global, local and regional forms of identification, which is increasingly occupying the focus of research in the burgeoning fields of Landscape Studies and Place Studies, see: Jacky Bowring, “Navigating the Global, the Regional and the Local: Researching Globalization and Landscape”, in The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies, eds., Peter Howard, Ian Thompson and Emma Waterton (New York: Routledge, 2013).
postcolonial” scholars are increasingly documenting these postnational forms of identification accordingly.249

In postcolonial nations, an understanding of how colonial history shapes the present society tends to follow on from what could be seen as a somewhat naive, yet still critical, anti-colonial stance amongst second settlers.250 This is because second settlers often react in an anti-colonial manner following colonisation, in an attempt to end colonialism and create a collective identity that better reflects the evolution of their culture since colonisation.251 Therefore, this chapter will discuss how, amongst Pakeha, this often sentimentally failed to comprehend the way that colonialism is a phenomenon with no end. However, as a counter-cultural awareness anti-colonialism was crucial to the development of a more critical Pakeha culture. Therefore, the historical context of these sentimental anti-colonial beliefs will be considered, before a discussion of their critical transformation, in order to better understand why and how European settlers sincerely believed in landscape early in the nation’s history.

EUROPEAN BELIEFS IN NEW ZEALAND AS AN ANTIPODEAN ARCADIA

Sentimental depictions of New Zealand have not only viewed the nation as an empty and sublime Arcadian wilderness landscape, as symbolised in 100% Pure, but also as an Arcadian rural idyll. Accordingly, New Zealand has been described by academics of utopian movements as a country “with a special place in the history of utopianism”.252 This idea of New Zealand as a utopian Arcadian paradise is also reflected in the dominance of sentimental depictions of landscape as a rural idyll in New Zealand’s art and literature.253 However, this myth of the rural idyll was a European notion, imported directly from England,254 which had been used increasingly since the Industrial Revolution. As Schama explains, the myth of the rural idyll suggested that the Arcadian:

249 Prieto, Literature.
250 Ibid., 143.
251 Ibid.
253 Pound, “Words”; Stafford and Williams, Anthology.
...rustic life was to be valued as a corrective to the ills of court and city; for the medicinal properties of its plants; for the Christian associations of herbs and flowers; and above all for its proclamation of the stupendous benevolence of the creator. What this emblem was supposed to invoke was the quintessentially English scene... It supplied the prototypical image that was reproduced in countless paintings, engravings, postcards, railway train photographs, and war posters, which merely had to be executed in order to summon up loyalty to the temperate, blessed isle.255

Here Schama alludes to how the success of sentimental, idyllic and Arcadian landscape imagery in New Zealand was partly tied to the critical European traditions of Romanticism and Christianity. Before these critical aspects of the Arcadian myth are discussed, the reasons why it has been critiqued for being uncritically, or sentimentally, linked to values of egalitarianism, ruralism and isolation in New Zealand will be considered. In particular, it will be explained how depictions of the landscape as a rural idyll was a means by which European settlers, who felt a sense of alienation having arrived at the isolated island that is New Zealand, attempted to create a feeling of being at home in New Zealand. This meant that they often focused on positive and hopeful depictions of the land being developed into pastures, produce, towns and cities.256 In this sense, colonial hopes for the future can be seen as a form of prophesy, which when sincerely, rather than cynically believed, will be shown to underlie current conservationist values in New Zealand today.

The Arcadian ideal of idyllic rural abundance was fundamental in the European imaginings of New Zealand, both prior to European settlement, and in founding New Zealand as a modern nation.257 The hopes and dreams of those who chose to immigrate to New Zealand were often based on this myth, and tied to the idea that New Zealand would be home to a better life than in their home country; “without the very rich or the very poor”.258 Although this idea was often far from reality, for

255 Parenthesis added. Schama, Landscape, 11.
258 This was the kind of mythologising promoted by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the New Zealand Company in the mid nineteenth century to encourage immigration. Sargisson and Sargent, Living in Utopia, 12.
many who did choose to immigrate and face the challenges associated with colonial life, the myth of the egalitarian rural idyll was resilient amongst Pakeha. This was partly because it was aided by the fact that some successful pioneers managed to work their way up to the status of property ownership in New Zealand, which was almost unheard of in Britain at the time. The feats of these ‘common’ men thus took on a mythic proportion that cemented the rural idyll in the Pakeha imagination.

Although depictions of pioneers taming an alien and wild land in heroic fashion has been deemed hyperbolic to late modern taste, when considered in their historical context it helps to explain why landscape mythology has been so popular amongst Pakeha - because it expresses the hope for, and value in, egalitarianism. At the end of the nineteenth, and during the early twentieth century, this value of democracy was also embedded culturally in New Zealand through sport, war and social policy.

Participation in war, and team sports such as rugby, brought Maori and Pakeha together on ‘the field’, emphasising physical prowess, as well as loyalty and equality through the promotion of team spirit. Although primarily focused on men, this was somewhat unifying and symbolic at a national level. However, the value of egalitarianism was also mirrored in social policy during the fin de siècle era of social liberalism, which led to New Zealand becoming exemplary with regards to social welfare. For example, New Zealand was the first nation to implement women’s suffrage (1893) and old age pensions (1898), which led to the nation being referred to with esteem as the “social laboratory” of the world. As Palenski explains, social

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{259} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{260} King, History.
\item \textsuperscript{261} Stafford and Williams, Anthology.
\item \textsuperscript{262} King, History; Palenski, Making.
\item \textsuperscript{263} S. Crawford. "The Game of ‘Glory and Hard Knocks’: A Study of the Interpenetration of Rugby and New Zealand Society”, \textit{Journal of Popular Culture} 19, no. 2 (1985); Lealand, “Preface.”
\item \textsuperscript{264} King, History, 385-409; Palenski, Making. Egalitarianism is a value seen strongly in team sport and war, emphasising loyalty, rather than individualism. However, as Crawford explains, the egalitarianism associated with sport in New Zealand has been contestable, particularly because Maori were excluded from a team chosen to tour South Africa in 1948, although the later Springbok Tour protests were somewhat seen to reaffirm the social egalitarianism of New Zealand as a sports oriented society, with rugby and its values as a way of life. “Game”.
\item \textsuperscript{265} King, History; Palenski, Making.
\item \textsuperscript{266} King, History, 282.
\end{itemize}

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liberalism was something New Zealanders were proud of and consequently this “enhanced national identity as New Zealanders increasingly saw themselves for what they were” - rather than simply where they were.267

The idea of New Zealander’s as forward thinking with regards to social equality continued to have pride of place amongst the social imagination. However, this emphasis on equality also meant mainstream Pakeha culture has been described as materialistic,268 and conformist.269 This conformism was deemed to be partly due to the small size of the New Zealand population, its relative isolation, lingering colonial sentimentalism and secular puritanism270 - with anyone who questioned sentimental ideals, or raised the issue of Maori disenfranchisement, often socially rejected as disloyal, unfaithful or overly intellectual.271 This conformist element of egalitarianism has been used to explain why the landscape is such a successful symbol of national identity, because it turns attention from less favourable aspects of social reality to an idealistic nature mythology,272 by reflecting sentimentally on New Zealand’s geographic isolation, agricultural heritage and pioneering history.

The idea of New Zealand as a rural idyll was also linked to its isolation from the European centres of modern civilisation. This colonial value placed on New Zealand’s geographic isolation is epitomised accordingly in the 1872 engraving by Frenchman Gustave Dore - The New Zealander - which pictures a Maori figure

267 Palenski, Making, 125.
268 Although the chances of each individual in New Zealand to make their way up the social ladder were more evenly spread for European settlers, compared to the more class based society of Britain, and attainable by hard work rather than by birth, there was a consequent focus of many people was on making socially visible material progress. King, History. A description of settler culture as materialistic when compared to Britain can be seen in comments early in the nation’s history, for example see: Mary Anne Barker, Station Life in New Zealand (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1870).
270 Secular puritanism refers to the social context where communal judgement threatens individuals with isolation or social shaming if their conduct does not conform to popular opinion. Barbara L. Brookes, At Home in New Zealand: Houses, History, People (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2000). For a thorough discussion of the values of ‘secular puritanism’ in New Zealand society at the beginning of the twentieth century see Chapman, "Fiction".
272 Bell, Inventing; Steel, “Problem”.

contemplating a scene of London in ruins. On a ‘death watch’, observing the fall of Western civilisation, *The New Zealander* embodies the European idea of Antipodean lands like New Zealand as a distant Arcadia, providing hope for those who viewed Europe as decadent. Antipodean places were seen as refreshing, a place where decadence could be escaped, redeeming hope in the British Empire through isolation from the Old World.

The idea of New Zealand as isolated from, yet still loyal to Europe, can be seen as an extension of the rural idyll: New Zealand was thought of as a place where the corrective to industrial urban life was sentimentally imagined, in the same way as the British rural idyll was imagined. For example, the title of Ursula Bethell’s collection of poetry, *From A Garden in the Antipodes*, has been interpreted not only as emphasising the idea that the place of New Zealand is being described by a European, because the term ‘antipodes’ refers to the ‘other’ of the Northern Hemisphere, but the title of this collection of poetry has also been interpreted as linked to the Christian notion of the Garden of Eden, because, as Whiteford explains:

> ...the very notion of a creating a garden in the antipodes is a wry glance towards the fate of Eden, for one of the legends about Eden had it washed away during the flood to settle in the South Seas.

Accordingly, distance and isolation from Europe has been a key factor contributing to the understanding of Pakeha culture, both from within, and from outside, the nation. However, such imagined detachment has also been interpreted as enabling a *flaneur* like view of modernity, offering a place to critique modern society by an imagined isolation from it, on the ‘periphery’; rather than having a concern for more local issues.

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277 Ibid., 96.

278 Grimshaw, "The Antimodern Manifesto".
Isolation has enabled New Zealanders to sentimentally “view their country as unspoiled, untainted, independent; a safe haven a long way from the bad things in the rest of the world”.\textsuperscript{279} Similarly, local cultural producers have been imagined as free from European decadence through the “very uncouth nature of the New Zealand community which had produced them”.\textsuperscript{280} However, this engagement with isolation was decreasingly relevant as many of the problems associated with modernity, such as mass culture and industrialisation, increasingly became part of New Zealand culture.\textsuperscript{281} Nevertheless, the turn to nature and Maori culture in the cultural imagination was symbolic, because it sentimentally suggested that New Zealand’s geographic isolation meant that its inhabitants might be able to escape the worst aspects of alienation and industrialisation associated with modernity, particularly by keeping grounded in nature like pre-industrial societies, even though the development of the land by settlers was inherently industrial.\textsuperscript{282}

Farming is a part of Pakeha heritage that is closely related to the colonial history of New Zealand, with pioneers breaking in the land to create a new nation.\textsuperscript{283} Pride for the new environment has thus often been tied to industry, enterprise, practicality, physicality, and a hard work ethic\textsuperscript{284} - with these values not necessarily believed to be opposed to conservatism. The popularity of sentimental high country stories and myths of the rural idyll are thus linked to the ongoing importance of rural New Zealand, where agriculture is seen as the “backbone of the country”.\textsuperscript{285} However, sentimental ideas about farming continued long after the worst effects of industry on the land were recognised, primarily because the nation relied on agriculture

\textsuperscript{279} Bell, \textit{Inventing}, 38.
\textsuperscript{280} Broughton, “Three”, 14. As Smithies explains: “Such people often attempted to transcend their society with dreams of the untouched environment that existed before the European invasion of the nineteenth century”. "Imagining", 5.
\textsuperscript{281} Such as the environmental problems referred to in the Introduction, with regards to capitalist development. Palenski, \textit{Making}, 35.
\textsuperscript{282} Although the turn to nature in this sense can be seen as uncritically sentimental, the way a critically Romantic contemplation of nature has held hope for Pakeha will be discussed in following chapters.
\textsuperscript{283} Chapman, "Fiction".
\textsuperscript{284} Palenski, \textit{Making}; Stafford and Williams, \textit{Anthology}.
\textsuperscript{285} Bell, "Dilemmas", 145. For example, this can in an obsession with rural landscapes expressed strongly in New Zealand art, where it has been the most popular subject, occupying a prominent place since New Zealand was settled. Pound, “Words”; Steel, “Problem".
economically, even though most of the population was urban.\(^{286}\) Therefore, because the myth of the rural idyll in New Zealand focused on Pakeha men developing the land whilst ignoring the realities of environmental destruction and Maori disenfranchisement tied to this development, the values of the urban majority have often been uncritically shaped by the ideals associated with historical farming communities. This has meant that more diverse and critical perspectives of what it meant to live in New Zealand have often been excluded from myths of national identity, particularly those of Maori, artists, intellectuals and women, unless they reproduced the ideal of the rural idyll - and their place in it.\(^{287}\) The Arcadian rural idyll therefore often functions as a therapeutic myth, because it has contributed to how the increasingly industrial nature of agriculture has been minimised in the national imagination throughout the twentieth century. However, the beliefs associated with it have been of a sincere, rather than cynical, nature, which means that they have been successfully transformed over time through critique.

**CLINGING TO PLACE**

The timing of colonisation meant that the technological forces of modernity associated with increased industrialisation also allowed modern communications to be installed. This provided Pakeha with a global awareness that was both an opportunity and a threat to the new settlers in New Zealand. Modern technology allowed a communications infrastructure to be installed within the nation soon after colonisation, which meant that intra-national communication facilitated the development of a national consciousness.\(^{288}\) However, it also meant that in an international context, European settlers had a relatively short time to establish an identity based in New Zealand, before accepting and responding to increasing

\(^{286}\) The relationship between urban and rural New Zealand today is still dichotomous: 85% of New Zealand's population lives in urban areas, yet economically the nation still relies heavily on primary production and tourism. R. Goodyear, *Life in a Rural Paradise: Work Knowledge and Skills in Urban/Rural New Zealand* (Report for Statistics New Zealand, 2006).


\(^{288}\) Such as telegraph and railways during the 1870's and 1880's. Palenski, *Making*. 
cultural diversity and the onslaught of mass culture\textsuperscript{289} associated with modernisation and increased globalisation.\textsuperscript{290}

As a result of the time-space compression associated with modernity, it has been argued that Pakeha identity formation still tended to focus on the material realities the population were faced with in day to day life, rather than less visible aspects of culture, as the local population clung to “place and neighbourhood or to nation... as specific marks of identity”.\textsuperscript{291} However, the identity unease associated with modernisation was compounded because of the unsteady basis for Pakeha cultural reflection.

New critiques of the colonial project that brought these settlers to New Zealand further challenged the basis of Pakeha identity. So, alongside the fact that it became more widely recognised that the rural landscape Pakeha so strongly identified with was Maori homeland, globally, there was an increasing body of evidence that increasingly highlighted the negative effects of the colonial project not only on indigenous peoples, but on the natural environment.\textsuperscript{292} Accordingly, another facet of anti-intellectualism (other than the rejection of cultural criticism regarding colonialism) can help explain why the Arcadian myth has been so resilient amongst Pakeha, in spite of this increasing body of knowledge that challenged the sentimental colonial view of New Zealand as an antipodean rural idyll.

The importation of culture here early in New Zealand’s colonial history meant that there was a perceived separation between culture and everyday life in settler culture. This fostered an element of philistinism, or anti-intellectualism, amongst Pakeha.\textsuperscript{293} Because local cultural production was often simply designed to further the uncritical and sentimental idea of New Zealand as the utopian “colonial

\textsuperscript{289} As summarised by Bell, “...in New Zealand we have to construct on a daily basis a self-identity that is quite fragile and fights to compete against a daily bombardment from America, British and Australian news and popular culture. This is the context in which New Zealand identity has to be forged”. \textit{Inventing}, 12.
\textsuperscript{291} Palenski, \textit{Making}, 35.
\textsuperscript{292} King, \textit{History}.
\textsuperscript{293} Beatson and Cox, “The Arts”. Similarly, there was deemed to be a lack of literary production prior to the 1940s. Chapman, “Fiction”.

63
sublime”,

both 'back home’ and amidst the minds of the new settlers, this led to a predominant understanding of culture as an overly intellectual and unnecessary phenomenon. Accordingly, the natural world was often viewed preferentially to the cultural realm. This anti-colonial turn to nature is complex. It embodies an element of anti-intellectualism and a rejection of cultural criticism, but it also embodies an element of both sincere and critical reflection. Therefore, before I discuss this aspect of anti-intellectualism further, firstly I will explain how conservationist values are tied to sincere beliefs about the environment amongst Pakeha, by referring to evidence that shows how these values are locally authenticated. This is because the turn to nature rather than culture in the collective imagination has itself been part of an anti-intellectual rejection of colonial culture amongst some Pakeha: the turn to landscape has been a form of anti-colonialism, rather than simply representing an anti-intellectual rejection of criticism regarding colonialism.

CONSERVATIONISM AND LOCAL AUTHENTICATION OF LANDSCAPE MYTHS

The beginnings of a conservationist awareness have been located, by King, in the nation’s first conservation campaign to ‘save Lake Manapouri’ from developments tied to the power generation industry, during the late 1950s. This awareness developed into an increasingly critical consciousness in the 1960s, because around this time there was an expanding global recognition that colonial and capitalist development was destroying, rather than developing, nature. This critical consciousness was exacerbated over the second half of the twentieth century, as the body of scientific knowledge regarding the negative impacts of humans on their environment increased. For example, it was not until the 1980s that the decline in global biodiversity was documented. This new scientific information challenged colonial paradigms regarding what had been deemed the development of nature, particularly by conducting a more critical evaluation of colonial and capitalist

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294 Evans, Forgetting, 47.
295 For more details on this campaign to save Lake Manapouri from developments that were deemed to have negative environmental and social impacts see: King, History.
297 Escobar, "Whose Knowledge, Whose Nature?"
development. Therefore, this adds another perspective to the discussion regarding why Pakeha began to recognise the negative effects of colonialism - in addition to those discussed by postcolonial critics (regarding the ‘push’ from an increasingly urban and educated Maori population), in the previous chapter.

In 1980s New Zealand, the French bombing of the Greenpeace vessel, Rainbow Warrior, in New Zealand waters, as well as the government designation of New Zealand as a nuclear free zone, meant that ‘clean green’ symbolism was deployed to motivate action regarding environmental issues. The Arcadian myths of the rural idyll and sublime wilderness fed into these beliefs about the value of ‘clean green’ New Zealand amongst Pakeha. This can be seen in sociological evidence which highlights how landscape based values amongst Pakeha are not only tied to colonialism and neo-national branding, but are locally authenticated.

A range of contemporary academic research has been conducted on the values of New Zealanders today, with regards to beliefs held about the environment. For example, Sargisson and Sargent’s study of utopian movements in New Zealand highlighted how the nation has, per capita, more intentional communities driven by a utopian idealism - groups who have decided to live communally and sometimes also work towards a shared goal together - than any country in the world. The Arcadian myth can be seen to inform the values, beliefs and ideals that many of these groups aspire to and work towards. Similar research conducted by Rebecca Ream into the spirituality of New Zealander’s (both Pakeha and Maori) highlighted the diverse ways people attribute meaning to the landscape; from visiting the beach, to enjoying parks and gardens, to seeing the mountains on the horizon. For example, Ream explains how the research participants in her study “recounted very diverse sublime alpine experiences”.

The meanings ascribed to landscape amongst Pakeha are diverse, and widely

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298 King, History; Pawson and Brooking, Making a New Land.
299 Coyle and Fairweather, “Challenging”.
300 Living in Utopia.
301 Ibid.
302 Ream, “Capturing”.
303 Ibid., 143.
shared, because of the process of identification and in particular, the way people learn to value certain things based on their experiences, which leads to a stronger identification with certain things rather than others. In the New Zealand context, the close proximity of rural and wilderness areas, including the ocean, to urban areas, means that this affects the process of identification. For example, this idea of the landscape as holding meaning for urban Pakeha can be seen when Ream refers to one research participant, who enjoys the view of the mountains in the distance when commuting to work in Christchurch:

This meaningful, daily encounter with the New Zealand landscape is what makes her a Kiwi; it is a process of locally authenticating her Kiwi-ness. This localised, meaningful, yet everyday spirituality makes way for not just a distinct Kiwi spirituality but a spiritual Kiwi-ness, which all participants have demonstrated. This local authentication is a secular spirituality.

Here, Ream highlights how the relatively small size of New Zealand's urban centres means that meaningful encounters with nature are never far away, and that, more importantly, these encounters affect the value that New Zealanders place on the landscape with regards to their personal identity and sense of belonging. Accordingly, what Ream refers to as a secular spirituality can be seen as a form of secular belief. These beliefs are commonly shared because landscape mythologies are locally authenticated. Pakeha are not only cultural dupes, or postcolonising neo-nationalists, they also engage with the myths of national identity in a way that holds meaning for them personally.

A critical reengagement with landscape that acknowledges that there are positive aspects of Pakeha identification with the land can inform an effective cultural criticism. This is because the land represents a form of secular spirituality that is diverse and has a sincere element of belief. Nevertheless, the problem of reflecting uncritically on landscape is still an issue. The ongoing destruction of landscape and structural disadvantaging of Maori under therapeutic versions of landscape mythology, are tied to both the cynicism of 100% Pure mass culture, as well as associated sentimental values tied to the Arcadian myth of the rural idyll. For example, sentimental landscape values were recorded in 1998 by Swaffield and

\[^{305}\text{‘Kiwi’ is a colloquial term for ‘New Zealander’. Ream, “Capturing”, 140.}\]
\[^{306}\text{Ibid.}\]
Fairweather, who reported that their study of 58 smallholders, or residents on ‘lifestyle blocks’, around the city of Christchurch, highlighted “the way Arcadian ideals and values motivate people to move to the country and to remain there”.\(^\text{307}\)

So, although these sentimental Arcadian values can underlie sincere and critical conservationist values, often they can also be seen as a form of anti-intellectualism - particularly when they are not critically reflexive with regards to the realities of (post)colonial development in New Zealand and the way that environmental degradation and social inequality are ongoing. This facet of anti-intellectualism will be discussed further, particularly with regards to how it differs from the blatant rejection of criticism regarding colonialism discussed previously.

**ANTI-INTELLECTUAL COUNTER-CULTURE**

Anti-intellectualism has been described as a particularly strong in colonial nations because they are sites of counter-cultural, or kynical, responses to the links that traditionally existed between pre modern aristocracies of the mother country and its high culture.\(^\text{308}\) The distinctiveness of settler cultures are therefore often defined by emphasising the contrast between the older, more established, high culture of the mother country, and the rawness of culture in the settler country.\(^\text{309}\) By rejecting the cultural ideals, such as intellectualism and high culture, associated with dominant colonial power relations, these ideals are criticised in a manner that functions similarly to kynical criticism towards aristocracy in pre modern societies.\(^\text{310}\) This is because the anti-colonial rejection of intellectualism and high culture has a similar element of counter-cultural criticism. However, because counter-cultural criticism often lacks thorough self-criticism, such anti-colonial responses can often be seen as a form of low culture.

The emergence of counter-cultural values that challenged colonial power relations often failed to note how anti-colonial cultural development was a process of cultural colonisation itself.\(^\text{311}\) This meant that it often lacked the rigorous critical

\(^{307}\) Swaffield and Fairweather, "In Search of Arcadia", 111.
\(^{308}\) Collini, *Absent*.
\(^{309}\) Ibid; Horrocks, "A Short History".
\(^{310}\) Bellarz, "Sociology"; Thompson, *Customs*.
\(^{311}\) Cultural colonisation will be discussed further in Chapter Five with regards to cultural nationalism.
development associated with high culture. Consequently, anti-intellectualism is a key theme used by cultural commentators, not only when referring to a rejection of cultural criticism in general, but when referring to elements of culture which are critical of dominant power relations, such as colonialism, but that are not thoroughly self-critical. Nevertheless, this form of low culture will be distinguished from mass culture, because: it has an element of critique; it has an element of sincere belief; and it is not solely focused on instrumental rationality with regards to political economy.

The counter-cultural reaction amongst Pakeha meant that landscape was symbolic because it was not only focused specifically on the place of New Zealand as a centre of culture in and of itself - it was focused on nature as opposed to culture. Consequently, there is a common thread amongst intellectual discourse in New Zealand emphasising activism, realism and pragmatism, situated in binary opposition to abstraction, theorising and those who performed intellectual and artistic work alone. This ‘anti-intellectual intellectualism’ was exacerbated because of the emphasis on ruralism in New Zealand, which has been related to a rejection of culture and the arts in general - as the only real work was seen to be physical work, rather than intellectual or cultural work. Subsequently, there has been an associated anti-intellectual rejection of writers, critics and artists, especially those who dare to unsettle the relevance of this work ethic in more modern times.

Anti-intellectualism limited Pakeha engagement with reflexive cultural criticism. As a result Pakeha identity was weak in the face of increasing foreign influences such as the global free market (rather than protected or colonial markets), world wars, increasing cultural diversity and a growing underclass that did not fit the nation’s ideal of equality. The need to develop cultural maturity through critical reflection


313 Horrocks, “A Short History”, 34-35.

314 For a discussion of anti-intellectual intellectualism in Britain, as well as how this is linked to ruralism and especially the sentimental ideal of the rural idyll, see: Collini, Absent.

315 Smithies, “Imagining”.

316 Baxter, "Fire".
was emphasised by a range of critics accordingly. As the historian J.C. Beaglehole argued: “If the arts in New Zealand are to flourish in an adult way, then we desperately need criticism as a working partner of creation”.317 Yet cultural maturity involved critical reflection and few Pakeha at the time were willing to do this. As such, Pearson warned:

No artist can work without an audience willing to co-operate: if he is to be honest his audience must be honest; they must be prepared to speculate about themselves. This is something New Zealanders will not do.318

THE INTERNAL EXILES: EMBRACING ISOLATION, EMBRACING LOW CULTURE

Although many people who were engaged with the creative arts and ideas tended to be excluded from mainstream Pakeha society - and chose to leave New Zealand accordingly - many returned again because they found that Europe was not as liberating or inspiring culturally as they imagined it would be.319 One of the main reasons was because after leaving they realised that there was a certain freedom associated with life in New Zealand, with regards to the ability to reach an inherently Modernist, flaneur like subjectivity in association with the land of New Zealand. This subjectivity was deemed to be not only due to isolation from the centres of culture, but the isolation such people felt within New Zealand society. Consequently, isolation translated from an external, to an internal exile. This is relevant because it shows how the Pakeha relationship to isolation changed from a sentimental belief, to a more critical belief: it became acknowledged that New Zealand was not isolated from modern culture, but rather, that another form of isolation, within modern New Zealand society, was liberating in the critique of not only foreign culture, but Pakeha culture. This signalled a changing Pakeha relationship to the place of New Zealand accordingly.

The sense of internal exile felt by some Pakeha prompted a reactionary stance that saw them critically, rather than sentimentally, embrace isolation; as well as other

aspects of Pakeha culture, particularly those realms of culture not traditionally linked with European high culture. By looking to other forms of culture a unique Pakeha identity could be seen to evolve. This was partly because Pakeha had somewhat rejected realms of culture usually associated with colonial high culture, such as art and literature. The focus was instead on elements of culture that emphasised practicality, in what was deemed to be a more egalitarian expression of values – team sport being a perfect example of this. This idea is supported by the historian Palenski, whose research emphasises how Pakeha exceptionalism evolved steadily over time, rather than being linked to any singularly defining historical events. This was seen to occur osmotically, in association with numerous smaller events, such as New Zealand’s pioneering role in enacting universal suffrage. In particular, Palenski emphasised how historical events are not the only basis for the formation of a unique national identity, because the idea of the nation in the collective imagination is also forged through identification with common symbols. Motifs of New Zealand’s unique native flora and fauna, and the backdrop of the landscape, have been key symbols since the very time that colonial pioneers arrived in New Zealand: both in popular culture, such as in early newspaper advertisements; sports team uniforms and stamps. These were symbolic of the nation because they were seen to belong to all New Zealanders, and to New Zealanders alone.

During the cultural nationalist period, from the 1930s, these anti-colonial elements of Pakeha culture were sought, embraced and developed into a local high culture. Cultural nationalists actively rejected the idea that settler culture was ‘periphery’ or low, by embracing elements of popular Pakeha culture to develop into a local high culture, rather than copying colonial sentimental or high culture. The local vernacular language was to be used for literature, topography for art, and bush huts or baches for architecture. This idea was also reflected in the following quote regarding the lack of fine detailing in Pakeha artwork and architecture, which

320 Those using an historical approach include: King, *History*; Palenski, *Making*. Cultural studies approaches also contributed to my reassessment of the unexceptionalism thesis, by writers such as Gordery, "Tom"; Crawford, "Game"; Lealand, "Preface".
322 Ibid.
323 Pound, *Invention*. 
Tomory described as suitably representing “colonial brutalism”.\textsuperscript{324} The selection of these elements of popular culture, to provide a foundation for nationalist culture to be canonised accordingly, was seemingly achieved in an egalitarian, non-elitist, manner. As explained by the art historian Francis Pound, in his \textit{magnum opus} on New Zealand’s cultural nationalist art movement:

\begin{quote}
...a form previously considered outside (or below) literature is now welcomed into the fold... as an unselfconscious tradition, without privilege or pretence, and without the unwanted encumbrances of intellectuality and theorisation.\textsuperscript{325}
\end{quote}

Therefore these aspects of low culture were interpreted as a challenge to foreign colonial culture, including its traditional aristocratic values and their elitism, by providing a more inclusive symbolism, which helps to explain why they have thrived.\textsuperscript{326} However, the continued sentimental manner that Pakeha related to landscape symbolism often slowed cultural development, and its interpretation often attempted to speak for the entire nation - even though Maori and female perspectives were rarely included until the end of the twentieth century. This process of cultural development, through the cultural nationalist project in particular, will be discussed further in following chapters. However, firstly, the nature of high culture will be outlined, in order to show how not only critical reason, but also belief, is crucial in the development of a modern high culture: a belief in creativity, and a belief in culture that benefits all in society, rather than an elite few.

\textsuperscript{324} Tomory, "The Visual Arts", 76.
\textsuperscript{325} Invention.
\textsuperscript{326} Ibid., 330.
CHAPTER FOUR
EMBRACING BELIEF IN THE CRITIQUE OF MYTH:
THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL AND THE AVANT GARDE

As previously described, the Frankfurt School thought that modern mass culture was providing a means of control, primarily through the culture industry, by promoting consumerism and pacifism. Mass culture was seen to prevent critical reflexivity, or a critical consciousness, amongst the population in a therapeutic manner. This therapeutic function of mass culture was used to help explain why Marx’s prediction of a communist revolution - through his theory of historical materialism - had not eventuated in late capitalist societies. For this reason, mass culture can be seen to help explain why therapeutic, rather than critical, mythologies are perpetuated in late capitalist societies, because it functions to prevent transformative critique. Accordingly, the Frankfurt School studied the links between art, aristocracy and pre-capitalist culture, in order to engage with the paradoxical situation, whereby high culture was seen to thrive outside of mainstream, or mass, society, in modern democracies. However, in their development of critical theory - designed to critique mass culture - they also realised that they needed to find a foundation for their critique that went beyond instrumental, or subjective rationality. This was because instrumental subjective rationality was the form of rationality characteristic of mass culture – a form of culture they thought was repetitive, rather than creative – a form of culture and rationality they wanted to change through critique.

The avant-garde provided a source of hope, because the Frankfurt School members such as Adorno, Marcuse, and later Habermas, thought that it was not so easily used for social control as mass culture. This was primarily because the avant-garde was deemed to be free from the instrumentally rational constraints of the culture industry with regards to creativity.327 Their belief and hope in the ability of art to be creative, and therefore generate social change, was where the theological motifs

327 For example, alluding to the radical creativity of the avant-garde, Adorno stated: “That works of art do exist, indicates that non-being could come into existence”. Cited in Peukert, “Enlightenment and Theology”, 356. Similarly, Marcuse highlighted the nonconformism of surrealist poets, celebrating their idealistic, revolutionary and transcendent work. Herbert Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).
in critical theory began to show their relevance. This is because it hints at something that cannot be explained by critical theory’s reliance on a rational, historical materialist approach\(^{328}\) – it suggests a form of belief is necessary for rational criticism to be successful. Consequently, a foundation for their critique that went beyond historical materialism needed to be found, in order to successfully critique the Enlightenment project, and therefore Western culture, in its progression. Subsequently, historical materialism became the subject of their reanalysis of the role of religion in society.

One of the most famous critiques of historical materialism was made by Walter Benjamin, in his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*.\(^{329}\) Benjamin theorised that historical materialism is actually quasi-religious, by using a metaphor of the ‘The Turk’ chess master puppet, to reveal its theological aspect.\(^{330}\) He used this metaphor to show how theology (the dwarf and real chess master), was hidden in historical materialism (the puppet), and was therefore necessary for its successful application. In particular, because historical materialism requires the historical process to be considered from the perspective of its victims (the poorer working class, or masses, rather than the upper middle class bourgeoisie, or ruling elite) it can be seen to have a theological aspect that was never acknowledged\(^{331}\) - a belief in the power of democracy, rather than aristocracy. Therefore, by ignoring this theological aspect, this belief, inherent in historical materialism, this meant that the theory was not reaching its potential. To remedy this, the Marxist inspired critique of capitalist ideology and false consciousness had to engage with the very thing Marx had declared society should go without when he said: “Religion is the opiate of the masses”.\(^{332}\) Critical theory had to embrace belief.

\(^{328}\) Peukert, “Enlightenment and Theology”.
\(^{330}\) Ibid.
\(^{332}\) Marx, “Contribution to the Critique”, 42.
NEGATIVE DIALECTICS AND A SECULAR SACRED REALM

By explicitly acknowledging the theological motif in dialectical materialism, a new kind of critique emerged, which was able to provide a place to critique the increasingly cynical form of belief characteristic of late capitalist mass culture and ideology. The belief in equality, through a communist revolution driven by the working class majority, has come together with the belief in the creativity of art, in a way that goes beyond the traditional Marxist theory of historical materialism.

Through his engagement with the avant-garde, Benjamin realised that critical theory had to evolve. In particular, it had to embrace the very thing that it had previously tried to purge from its critical method. This would require a transformation of theology, and therefore its main method of hermeneutics, from the sacred to the profane, through “a radicalization of the dialectic into the very glowing core of theology”. Consequently, this new kind of critique would need to be a new kind of theology - a negative, secular, or materialist theology – which is often referred to in the Nietzschean tradition, as ‘Death of God’ theology. This means that the theological method of hermeneutics should be applied (in a rational and reflexive way), in a negative dialectical manner to the realm of culture, rather than religion alone. This negative dialectic has been summarised by Altizer, in engagement with the work of Mircea Eliade, as related to the idea of modern man negating the sacred and in the process killing the idea of a transcendent God, by creating a:

...radically profane mode of existence ...as Nietzsche would have it, modern man can only be himself, can only truly be man, by being the murderer of God... Having banished the transcendent from his horizon, modern man has chosen a wholly immanent mode of being... Consequently, modern man can only know the sacred dialectically; now the sacred can appear only through a negative dialectic, insofar as modern man has chosen to be a profane being...

333 Peukert, “Enlightenment and Theology”.
334 This was also recognised by Adorno, because in his relations with Benjamin he gained an appreciation for the theological motif in Marx’s historical materialism. Adorno therefore wanted this theological motif made more explicit in critical theory, in order to strengthen it, through what he referred to as “inverse theology”. Adorno, cited in Peukert, “Enlightenment and Theology”, 357.
335 Death of God theology recognises that the process of secularisation (including postsecular societies) that followed the Enlightenment, meant that the idea of a transcendent God was no longer directing the functioning of society, and therefore, as described by Altizer: “we must recognise that the death of God is a historical event: God has died in our time, in our history, in our existence. Insofar as we live in our destiny, we can know neither a trace of God’s presence nor an image of his reality”. Mircea Eliade, 13
the sacred and the profane are human phenomena, they are created by man's existential choice.\textsuperscript{336}

Therefore, in an ideal modernity, the sacred and profane become existential designations. This is because they are created by man: by democratically distinguishing between high and low culture - through a secular \textit{interpretation} of the sacred and profane in modernity - because there is no longer a sacred and profane realm as previously designated by the Christian God for Western civilisation. Therefore, in secular modernity, high culture becomes the new realm of the sacred. This belief in high culture as sacred has been crucial to the work of later Frankfurt School member Habermas and his \textit{fin de siècle} turn back to engaging with not only hermeneutics methodologically, but religious belief theoretically.\textsuperscript{337} In order to better understand why critics and theologians deemed high culture the new sacred realm of modern society, the nature of modern high culture will be explained.

\section*{HIGH CULTURE AND INTERSUBJECTIVE RATIONALITY}

High culture is critical, rather than therapeutic, because it is sincerely reflexive - by having both an historical awareness and embracing diverse hermeneutic perspectives. For this reason, avant-garde, or high culture, has been described as richer in comparison to low culture, because it has a more refined creative and symbolic content, developed through a close appreciation for the traditional cultural production of previous epochs.\textsuperscript{338} Accordingly, the content of high culture appeals more to people who have an equally critical appreciation for its tradition - for its history. Reflecting on and interpreting culture with such an appreciation means that one can understand the historical context the work is situated within, have access to its full symbolic and creative potential and access its full range of meaning.\textsuperscript{339} This higher level of historical cultural appreciation therefore requires an equally high level of critical reflection – through education, engagement with, or

\textsuperscript{336} Mircea Eliade cited in Altizer, \textit{Mircea Eliade}, 23-24
\textsuperscript{337} As summarised by Reder and Schmidt: "If one surveys Habermas's work as a whole, the first thing one notices is that, until the middle of the 1990s, it contained just a few systematic treatments of religion". However, they also note the way Habermas' turn, to an explicit engagement with religion, increasingly became a crucial part of his work. “Habermas and Religion”, 4.
\textsuperscript{338} Shils, "Mass".
\textsuperscript{339} Ibid.
immersion in culture - which low and mass culture does not require, in order to be accessible to the widest audience possible. This means that the nature of high culture, as self-critical and with an historical awareness, allows the creation of culture to be conducted in a manner that seeks originality and creativity - due to this thorough knowledge of what has already been done. Therefore, high culture is constantly in the creative process of becoming, rather than a static or reified entity, and involves critically following or inventing a tradition, through an active process of refining, or engaging with, cultural history in a reflexive manner. Consequently, historicist self-critique is crucial to the creative nature of high culture and this means that high culture is critical, rather than therapeutic.

The idea that high culture is in a constant state of becoming, rather than being, was supported by the New Zealand poet and critic, Baxter, when he stated that: “A good tradition is like fat: it can be clarified and used indefinitely”. Here Baxter describes a ‘good’ tradition as akin to high culture, because high culture is suited to ongoing clarification, being designed for critical or transformative use, rather than for reproduction, reification, or passive consumption. However, because those with the most power often dominate the telling of history as seen from their perspective, this can result in a top-down process of constructing dominant cultural mythologies that exclude the perspectives of the disenfranchised. Therefore, it is crucial to note that high culture in modern democracies engages with more diverse critical perspectives, including those who are not part of the wealthy or powerful elite, because this broader critical perspective prevents the reification of myths that only serve those with the most power – this broader critical perspective is thus more truly reflexive of society in its totality.

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340 Traditionally this was because the lower classes usually did not have access to the same levels of education, or as much free time for art and literature, compared to the higher classes. Shils, “Mass”. Although this class distinction is not as relevant in democratic societies, the central point Shils makes with regards to the levels of education, or time invested in, cultural matters, is still relevant with regards to the distinction between high and low culture.

341 Shils, “Mass”.


343 Hobsbawn and Ranger, Tradition.
High culture is always in a process of transformative critique because it is open to an engagement with diverse critical perspectives. This was relevant to Adorno, Marcuse and Habermas’ appreciation for the avant-garde, because they saw that, through its association with vanguard culture (which rejects mass culture and is experimental and innovative especially with regards to art and politics), it was open to diverse critical perspectives. Radical new forms of culture were seen to emerge through this process of transformative critique. This is why Habermas thought that the avant-garde provided a source of hope in the face of modern mass culture, because it represented:

...the productivity and explosive power of basic aesthetic experiences that a subjectivity liberated from the imperatives of purposive activity and from conventions of quotidian perceptions gains from its own decentring.

Here Habermas notes the value of engaging with a range of critical perspectives, rather than subjective instrumental rationality alone, when critiquing culture. However, because high culture had traditionally been sheltered from the instrumental rationality of political economy by aristocratic patronage, Habermas realised the need to translate this process into a mode suited to modern democracies.

In order to work towards high culture in a democratic and creative manner, Habermas used a different conception of reason to continue the critical theory project at the end of the twentieth century. The newer version of critical theory Habermas developed turned back to culture, as a store of meaningful intersubjective knowledge that reflected the values of Western civilisation as it has progressed throughout history. In particular, Habermas looked to Christianity, as the most important hermeneutic store of knowledge in the history of the West, and emphasised the value of equality and tolerance in this tradition. He interpreted this Christian value of equality into a secular theory, in order to work towards a post-aristocratic high culture, through “intersubjective rationality”.

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344 Greenberg, “Avant-Garde”.
345 Ibid.
347 Habermas, “Notes”.
348 Ibid.
Intersubjective rationality was to be worked towards using Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action, whereby an “ideal speech situation” in the public sphere is aimed for (through free, rational and communicative democracy), in order to work towards a consensus theory of truth in a sociology of knowledge manner. This means that a democratic engagement with culture is theorised as the best method for accurately reflecting and developing culture for all in society. The diversity of critical hermeneutic perspectives that contribute to a democratic approach to cultural development are thus valued, because they contribute to the ongoing transformation, and therefore creativity, of culture, for all, rather than for an elite few.

Democratic and transparent rational criticism prevents mythology from becoming reified or totalitarian and maintains its relevance through transformation, by allowing people to engage with the myth making process in a dialectical manner, rather than being reified in a forced ‘top-down’ manner by those with the most power. This highlights how it is crucial that cultural histories engage with diverse forms of criticism. The way society decides on collective mythology, or creates high culture in modernity can hence be understood in the tradition of Habermas’ intersubjective rationality. This theory will be applied in the following chapters to the New Zealand context, to see how Pakeha culture evolved gradually over time in a critical and dialectical manner, especially through the contributions of those who were concerned with Pakeha cultural development. Consequently, the rational historicist and democratic, or intersubjective, engagement with the myth-making process is the hallmark of modern high culture. This means that high culture is both rational and reflexive: high culture is critical, rather than therapeutic.

THE CRITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PAKEHA LOW CULTURE
The increased rewriting of alternative and revisionist histories from different perspectives, particularly using postcolonial theory to highlight how Pakeha have dominated the construction of national identity, has meant that a more democratic,

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349 For more information on the Theory of Communicative Action and ‘ideal speech situation’ see: Ibid.
intersubjective and therefore accurate reflection of Pakeha cultural history has emerged. By embracing these more diverse critical perspectives, particularly from women, Maori, and creative or intellectual people who did not fit the narrowly defined image of practical New Zealanders, this promoted the ongoing development of Pakeha high culture.

By making a clear distinction between anti-intellectual, or instrumentally rational traditions seen in therapeutic mythologies, from those traditions that are open to diverse critique (even if they may seem very similar in symbolism or narrative), myth can be dialectically transformed accordingly. For Pakeha, this process was achieved over time through the cultural nationalist movement, which engaged with Pakeha culture in a critical manner, especially by recognising that the sentimentalism of the colonial Arcadian myth was functioning therapeutically to continue colonial domination in New Zealand. Although, these critics were working within an anti-intellectual culture that did not appreciate their contributions for decades,\(^\text{350}\) the abyss of such reflection was both a deterrent and opportunity for intellectual and creative activity.

The relatively empty cultural context they were faced with was engaged with in a positive way that deemed Pakeha culture was special because it was not like culture from elsewhere. This meant that, rather than trying to compete to create a better version of foreign high culture – high culture from ‘centres’ of culture such as that of the colonial mother country, that of London – New Zealand became a centre of culture in its own right for Pakeha. New Zealand, as well as its provinces,\(^\text{351}\) became an antipodean centre of culture. Here a high culture was fostered that reflected this geography, this landscape, by being oppositional to colonial culture in the classical antipodean sense of “having the feet opposite”\(^\text{352}\).

\(^{350}\) King, History.
\(^{352}\) Stevenson and Lindberg, *Dictionary*, 316.
The lack of a local high culture, or cultural emptiness, which some critics perceived amongst Pakeha was reinterpreted: it came to provide a unique insight into the nature of the human condition and the task of modern man to make meaning out of the abyss, particularly the abyss of modernity - the abyss that is society after the Death of God. Similarly, isolation came to symbolise transcendence above modern mass culture and a fresh perspective in the face of instrumental rationality. This often meant that the critique of culture was performed in a manner that located the source of its negative aspects abroad, and as such was not always conducive to a self-critical approach. However, antipodeanism has also been interpreted in a way that emphasises a reciprocal relationship with centres of culture, rather than a completely isolated place. For example, this can mean that New Zealanders can reject the idea that our culture is inferior by interpreting the local context instead as a fresh cultural ‘page’. As the writer Janet Frame noted in her autobiography:

My reason for returning [to New Zealand] was literary. Europe was so much on the map of the imagination (which is a limitless map, indeed) with room for anyone who cares to find a place there, while the layers of the long dead and recently dead are a fertile growing place for new shoots and buds, yet the prospect of exploring a new country with not so many layers of map-makers, particularly the country where one first saw daylight and the sun and the dark, was too tantalising to resist. Also, the first layer of imagination mapped by the early inhabitants leaves those who follow an access or passageway to the bone. Living in New Zealand, would be for me, like living in an age of mythmakers; with a freedom of imagination among all the artists because it is possible to begin at the beginning and to know the unformed places and to help form them, to be a mapmaker for those who will follow nourished by this generation’s laying of the dead.

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354 For an analysis of the role of ‘Antipodeanism’ as both location and practice in New Zealand and Australian sociology of culture see: Beilharz, "Sociology".

CHAPTER FIVE – THE WASTELAND: THE CULTURAL NATIONALIST ANTI-MYTH

CULTURAL NATIONALISM AND MODERNIST CRITIQUE

Cultural nationalists\textsuperscript{356} critically engaged with culture of, for and by Pakeha - in order to foster cultural development and distinguish Pakeha identity from its sentimental colonial roots.\textsuperscript{357} This involved a challenge to the work of the ‘Bookmen’ generation, which consisted of mainly journalistic writers, who were deemed to be producing less critical work, as well as some librarians, who dominated the development of the literary scene up until around 1940.\textsuperscript{358} As Mills explains, the Bookmen “wrote most of what passed for literary criticism, edited

\textsuperscript{356} When I refer to cultural nationalists I mean primarily those writing (it was primarily a literary movement) against the sentimental colonial myth of New Zealand as a rural idyll, between 1930 and 1970. The poet and critic, Allen Curnow (1911-2001), can be seen as a leading figure of cultural nationalism, canonising many of those who wrote verse in his introductions to the anthologies: \textit{A Book of New Zealand Verse, 1923-45} (1945); and \textit{The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse} (1960). Peter Simpson, ed., “Introduction”, in \textit{Look Back Harder: Critical Writings 1935-1984} (Auckland: Auckland University Press). Curnow, in association with the literary historians Eric Hall McCormick (1906-1995) and Monte Holcroft (1902-1993), have been referred to as a triumvirate of ‘narrow’ cultural nationalism. Mills, “Dictatorship”; Smithies, “Imagining”. The early literati involved with cultural nationalism is sometimes referred to as the Phoenix-Caxton group, due to their associations with the Christchurch based Caxton Press, established by the poet and critic Denis Glover (1912-1980), and their links with the four-issue magazine \textit{Phoenix} (1932-34), which attempted to challenge the authority of their literary predecessors. For more information on the Phoenix-Caxton group see: Mills, “Dictatorship”. Their work is sometimes referred to and associated with the epithet of the ‘South Island Myth’, partly in association with the strong influence of the South Island based Caxton Press and \textit{Phoenix}, as well as the later journal \textit{Landfall}. \textit{Landfall} is still based in Dunedin today. It was founded in 1947 and originally edited by its founder, Charles Brasch, (1909-1973). Smithies, “Imagining”. I will not provide an exhaustive list of the other figures involved with the cultural nationalist movement, but rather will refer to the lives and work of poets, critics and novelists including: Ursula Bethell (1874-1945); Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923); Walter D’Arcy Cresswell (1896-1960); A.R.D. Fairburn (1904-1957); John Mulgan (1911-1945); Janet Frame (1924-2004) and the poet-historians John C. Beaglehole (1901-1971) and William Oliver, (1925-), in order to provide some insight into the nature of the movement. For literary histories that give a more thorough account of the personalities and works associated with the first phase of cultural nationalism, see: Hilliard, \textit{Bookmen’s}; Jones, \textit{Traces}; Mills, “Dictatorship”; Smithies, “Imagining”. Jones also covers a second phase, exemplified by the writer Louis Johnston (1924-1988), and the poet-critics James K. Baxter (1926-1972) and C.K. Stead (1932-), who critiqued the anti-myth, particularly after World War II; although both the earlier and the later camps have been strongly associated with cultural nationalism as a movement. \textit{Traces}.

\textsuperscript{357} This was not unique to New Zealand - defining national identities was a common theme in the interpretation of history in nation states around the world at the time. Hobsbawm and Ranger, \textit{Tradition}; Paul Robichaud, “Machiavellian and Muir: Scottish Modernism and the Nation as Anthropological Site”, \textit{Journal of Modern Literature} 28, no. 4 (2005), 135.

\textsuperscript{358} For more information on the Bookmen see: Hilliard, \textit{Bookmen’s}; Jones, \textit{Traces}; Mills, “Dictatorship”.

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anthologies and acted informally as literary agents”. Cultural nationalists challenged the Bookmen, and the Georgian sentimentalism of poetry in New Zealand at the time, because of its association with the myth of the rural idyll; embracing Modernism instead and formulating an ‘anti-myth’ accordingly.

Opposing colonial sentimentalism meant that there was an emphasis on realism. Realism was embraced in the formulation of the anti-myth, particularly by embracing the antipodean and isolated geography of New Zealand, because this symbolised the isolation artists and critics felt within New Zealand society. The title of the novel *Man Alone*, by John Mulgan, hence provides an important reference to cultural nationalism, because the story tells of isolation and struggle in harsh wilderness landscapes. Therefore, the symbol of the ‘man alone’ ties in to the way that a lack of Pakeha high culture and what was felt to be a subsequent alienation of artists and writers in New Zealand was extended to symbolise a cultural wilderness, a cultural struggle, which became something to cherish, rather than only something to rue, in an inherently Modernist manner.

Cultural nationalism was primarily a literary movement when it began, and as such Pakeha literary criticism developed out of the British tradition of literary criticism of the time. In particular, Modernist English literary critics who were part of the late eighteenth century English Romantic movement influenced the development New Zealand literary criticism. This was particularly relevant, because during the Romantic era land became seen as an identifier of the sacred homeland - a moral, aesthetic subject - as a critical countermovement to the Industrial

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359 "Dictatorship", 4.
363 In particular, Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, and Lionel Trilling. See: Smithies, "Imagining".
Revolution's use of land in an instrumentally rational way. This aspect of the Romantic worldview can therefore be seen as a protest against the disenchantment and rationalisation associated with modern secular capitalist civilisation. However, Romanticism did not simply reject Enlightenment rationality; it rejected the self-repeating, uncritical, instrumental reason. This is because instrumental rationality was seen to reproduce rather than create: as summarised by the philosophy of a key Romantic figure, William Blake: “He who sees the Ratio only, sees himself only”. Blake saw instrumental rationality as having “An Abstract objecting power that Negatives every thing” and as such, used the metaphor “mind-forg'd manacles” to describe it; which is similar to the way the Frankfurt School describes mass culture, with regards to cultural control and reproduction, rather than creativity. For this reason Blake could be seen to relate the instrumental application of subjective rationality to the perversion of reason long before the Adorno and Horkheimer formalised this theory in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. However, this reaction to instrumental rationality was not only tied to the negative effects of industrialisation, urbanisation and rationalisation.

The Romantic Movement was also critical of modernisation because this represented the loss of a spiritual and sacred dimension the world. As the Industrial Revolution progressed in England, the manufacturing achievements became tainted with the harsh realities of urban life: factories, disease and poverty were rife in nineteenth century cities, especially amongst the newly urbanised working class. Romantic painters consecrated the landscape accordingly to make up for this loss – the landscape was painted as a Garden of Eden or a mystical paradise, such as that seen in Blake's Preface to *Milton: A Poem*:

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370 Strong, *Visions*, 125.
And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen!\(^{371}\)

The way the Romantics "lamented the passing of traditional folk culture and asserted the need to meditate upon natural beauty"\(^{372}\) strongly influenced the Modernist attempt to achieve transcendence above mass culture, or be isolated from the instrumental rationality characteristic of modern society; which is why this aspect of Modernism is sometimes referred to as 'antimodernism'.\(^{373}\) Therefore, the antimodern impulse of modernity can be seen as having roots in the Romantic tradition, because it embodies the same creative, imaginative and critical impulse against the instrumental rationalisation associated with modernity.\(^{374}\) Accordingly, the development of Modernist literary criticism in New Zealand was strongly rooted in European civilisation.

The modern impulse of cultural nationalism was described by London editor of *New Writing*, John Lehmann, who explained how Pakeha writers at the time:

...were eager to assimilate the pioneer developments in style and technique that were being made in England and America ... to explore the world of the dispossessed and under-privileged for their material and to give their country a new conscience and spiritual perspective.\(^{375}\)

Although it would be reductionist to suggest that Modernism was embraced by all Pakeha concerned with cultural development in New Zealand,\(^{376}\) in spite of some


\(^{372}\) Smithies, "Imagining", 30.

\(^{373}\) Versluis, "Antimodernism".

\(^{374}\) Lowy and Sayre, *Romanticism*.


\(^{376}\) Leonard Wilcox, "Introduction: In-Depth Section: New Zealand Literature and Culture", *Journal of Popular Culture* 19, no. 2 (1985). Pound provides an important addition to the histories of cultural nationalism from an artistic, rather than literary, perspective by critiquing the 'hard light theory' in: "Harsh Clarities: Meteorological and Geographical Determinism in New Zealand Art Commentary Refuted", *Parallax* 1, no. 3 (1983). Pound explained how the cultural nationalist literati canonised artists such as Rita Angus (1908-1970) and Colin McCahon (1919-1987), whose work suitably supported, or illustrated, their literary aesthetic. This meant that the work of some more abstract Modernist artists, (such as Gordon Walters (1919-1995)), rather than 'Regional Realist' artists, failed to be canonised by the earlier cultural nationalists, due to not fitting their literary aesthetic. This was partly because they were not expert art critics, but it was also because of the way they used art to support their literary 'Regional Realist' project. *Pound, Invention*. In a similar vein, both Baxter and Horrocks noted how open-form poetry – a style characteristic of Modernism – was initially rejected.
Isolation in association with the beauty and awe of nature, outside of the towns and cities, allowed some Pakeha the same sense of anonymity that a large modern city affords. For example, Mulgan noted that the anonymity of walking around London was similar to being in the New Zealand bush. The emptiness of New Zealand's wilderness landscapes therefore provided a *flaneur* like perspective characteristic of modernity. However, by reversing the significances of the colonial myth in an antimodern manner, cultural nationalists emphasised their isolation from centres of culture in a way that meant they were still colonising New Zealand; albeit culturally, rather than physically. This was exacerbated because their anti-colonialism was expressed as a realist, nationalist and essentialist anti-myth, which minimised this process of cultural colonisation in the collective imagination accordingly. This minimisation of colonial history will be shown to be of the main foci for critique of the cultural nationalist movement. Consequently, some aspects of cultural nationalism can be seen as therapeutic, because they can be interpreted in a way that minimises the social realities of colonialism. Nevertheless, although the emphasis on realism and essentialism also meant that there was often a failure to acknowledge how European ideas informed the movement, cultural nationalism marked the beginning of a more critical consciousness in Pakeha culture – a critical consciousness crucial to the creation of a Pakeha high culture.

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*in New Zealand for being similarly ‘difficult’, (due to a lack of traditional metre and rhyme), as abstract Modernist art and thus was also not suited to their construction of a ‘Regional Real’ aesthetic. Baxter, “Fire”; Horrocks, "No Theory".*

377 Wilcox, "Introduction”, 68.
378 Grimshaw, "The Antimodern Manifesto”.
379 Ibid.
380 As Hilliard explains, cultural nationalist work which attempted to naturalise the place of Pakeha in New Zealand was a form of cultural colonisation, particularly when they ignored Maori history in the writing of New Zealand history from a Pakeha perspective. Hilliard, *Bookmen’s*. 
THE ANTI-MYTH

The cultural nationalist emphasis on realism meant that the movement has been described as an ‘anti-myth’. This is because, although it varied, with different contributors providing different critical and creative perspectives, there was cohesion around the idea that the colonial myth of New Zealand as an antipodean Arcadia should be critiqued. This brought the Phoenix-Caxton writers together. As highlighted by Jones: “the agenda for the revolt was set by the myth against which they were revolting, and the usual pattern of revolt was to accept its terms, but reverse their significances.” Here Jones refers to the way cultural nationalism reworked the sentimental colonial myth of New Zealand as the rural idyll, emphasising a counter-cultural and realist anti-myth of New Zealand as a harsh and lonely wasteland. The theme of wilderness extended from the Arcadian myth, to the anti-myth. However, the meanings of wilderness went beyond the aesthetic appreciation and sublime wonderment that were typical of the colonial engagement with mountainous areas of New Zealand. Similarly, the meanings associated with the rural idyll aspect of Arcadian mythology also, eventually, went beyond those of an Antipodean Albion.

Isolation through internal exile was deemed an opportunity, because the purported lack of a critical Pakeha culture was used to justify the cultural nationalist project, by emphasising their ‘transcendent’, or antimodern, position held in the face of mass culture and other supposedly negative influences associated with modern New Zealand. As Collini explained, in his study of British intellectuals, isolation can suggest:

...an epistemologically advantaged position: spurred by antagonism, pricked by the necessary start from scratch, unconstrained by the conventional, the outsider perceives things the complacently comfortable could never recognize... One sees more clearly, speaks more freely.

Collini’s quote therefore alludes to the appeal of the idea of intellectuals as outsiders, because this was tied to the notion that isolation enables one to be free

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382 Jones, Traces, 184.
383 Collini, Absent, 413-414.
from the constraints of conventional, or mass, culture. This Modernist idea extended from Britain, to New Zealand, amongst the cultural nationalist intellectuals. New Zealand was mythologised as a wasteland accordingly, rather than an Arcadia, which extended socially to the discourse surrounding the need to invent a cultural tradition out of a philistine nation. This allowed the cultural nationalists to not only engage with and critique early New Zealand myths, but space to ‘invent’ new ones – space to act creatively as cultural prophets.384

The anti-myth characterised European settlers living in New Zealand, as “unseeing, alienated, exploitative”385 – a critical perspective that can be seen as precursor to the postcolonial criticism discussed in Chapter Two. Such a description of Pakeha stood in stark contrast to narratives of heroic and pioneering development seen in the sentimental colonial mythology of the rural idyll popular at the time. Therefore, some of the repetitive themes in the cultural nationalist movement can be seen to emphasise difference from this sentimental mythology, and British colonial culture, in a counter-cultural manner that used these distinctions to define. Accordingly, the themes of anti-intellectualism, isolation and ruralism discussed in association with the Arcadian myth are also seen in the anti-myth - albeit in a more critically reflexive manner. Consequently, cultural nationalists did not paint the landscape in the cultural imagination as a sublime touristic space or a rural idyll, such as those viewed sentimentally from the Arcadian colonial perspective, they painted it as a place of local significance: a place that they wanted to help Pakeha to more critically appreciate. This was achieved particularly by highlighting how New Zealand failed to live up to the colonial myth of the rural idyll.386 As Belich explains, the internal exiles wanted “to remain in New Zealand and struggle to make the wasteland flower”.387

384 Cultural nationalists did this in the same way as British modernists, such as T.S. Lewis, to clear: “a public space for their own innovations in verse”. Chris Baldick, Criticism and Literary Theory 1890 to the Present (New York: Longman, 1996).
385 Jones, Traces, 194.
386 Ibid.
In the following chapters I will show how critical debates took place throughout the cultural nationalist period in a dialectical manner, in association with a diverse range of meanings and beliefs Pakeha had in relation to the New Zealand landscape. The aim is not to provide a detailed historical account of these debates, but rather to emphasise the dialectical manner in which they were conducted, by highlighting the different beliefs and criticisms associated with the sentimental colonial Arcadian myth, compared to the anti-myth of the wasteland, particularly with regards to the notion of wilderness, which is seen in both myths. This dialectic will be explained by referring to some key criticism of the anti-myth, which highlighted aspects of it deemed unsuitable to a democratic New Zealand leading into the end of the twentieth century; including the, misogyny, essentialism, anti-intellectualism and cynicism associated with their emphasis on realism.\footnote{\textsuperscript{388} It was not until the generation from the 1980s onwards that tended to be revisionist of cultural nationalist histories and used new theories associated with the \textquoteleft literary turn\textquoteright, such as Post-Structuralism, Postmodernism and Feminism. Current writers who adopted these newer theories include: Roger Horrocks, (1946-); the novelist and essayist Keri Hulme (1947-); the art critic and art historian Francis Pound (1948-); as well as the work of those academics discussed in Chapter Two, (particularly with regards to the embrace of Deconstruction and Postcolonial theories). Smithies, \textquoteleft Imagining\textquoteright. Postnationalists tended to deem the cultural nationalist movement as masculinist, Eurocentric and elitist, as well as anti-intellectual with regards to the emphasis on Realism. For example, see: Roger Horrocks, \textquoteleft The Invention of New Zealand\textquoteright, \textit{And 1}, (1983).} In particular, the way the cultural nationalist oeuvre omitted or minimised the perspectives of women and Maori, as well as emphasised views of the nation coming from rural and South Island perspectives, rather than more urban and Northern places, perpetuating an undemocratic reflection of \textquoteleft the nation\textquoteright, will be discussed. Consequently, it will be argued that cultural nationalism, by preventing a truly democratic engagement with diverse critical perspectives, was often a form of low, rather than high, culture. However, as the critical conversation progressed some themes remained resilient throughout this process – particularly that of wilderness.

The way this dialectical process of creating high culture was represented by wilderness landscapes will be discussed by engaging, not only with the anti-myth, but with criticism directed towards the cultural nationalist oeuvre as well. By considering the diverse meanings ascribed to landscape and their critique, this will show how some Pakeha beliefs in the New Zealand landscape are still relevant in creating a critical, rather than therapeutic, Pakeha mythology today.
REALISM AND MOVING AWAY FROM COLONIAL SENTIMENTALISM

The beginnings of the anti-colonial consciousness inherent to cultural nationalism are seen to lie in the 1930s, partly because the Depression helped to stimulate a critical consciousness amongst New Zealanders during this time. However, this critical consciousness was combined with what cultural nationalists deemed to be a severe lack of good work between World War I and the Depression in New Zealand. This apparent cultural emptiness meant that space was emphasised, in order to make room for the new. As explained by Mills, cultural nationalists created a climate of cultural need, by negotiating: “the gap between journalism and literature, creating audiences and insisting that critical reflexivity was crucial to the creation of excellence in literary endeavor”. So here we can see that cultural nationalists worked in a way that justified their project – they did not only critically engage with culture for entertainment or as part of the culture industry - they had a sincere belief that cultural development was crucial for developing the beginnings of a critical, anti-colonial, consciousness in New Zealand. As summarised by Curnow, New Zealand’s best verse was attuned to the particularities of the physical environment, its isolation and its history: “marking the beginning of a true reorientation – away from colonialism and on towards the island nation”.

In the 1940s the Centenary, the rise of universities and increased cultural specialisation in New Zealand all combined to boost the relevance of cultural development by the state which eventually influenced the general Pakeha population. Cultural nationalist critics took advantage of these suitable historical

389 For example, this was depicted in Mulgan’s 1939 novel Man Alone, when the lead protagonist of the novel participates in the Queen Street riots of 1932, (which emerged from protests regarding a lack of employment in New Zealand at the time). These riots represented an emerging revolutionary consciousness, partly associated with the spread of Marxist ideas and the creation of a more critical culture in New Zealand. For a discussion of the role of the Depression, with regards to the rise of a more critical culture in New Zealand and cultural nationalism, see: Chapman, "Fiction"; Mills, "Dictatorship"; Pound, Invention; Pound, "Words".
390 Pound, Invention, 3.
391 Mills, "Dictatorship", 1.
393 Of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi marking the founding of New Zealand as a nation state. King, History.
394 Mills, "Dictatorship".
conditions to engage with colonial culture in a critical way, questioning its relevance to the future of New Zealand.

Sentimentalism was identified as a key element of the colonial culture in New Zealand that needed to evolve, so that a more self-critical culture could develop. In particular, sentimentalism was linked to colonial myth of the rural idyll through what was seen to be the copying of the British Georgian style of poetry early in New Zealand’s literary tradition. In particular, Quentin Pope’s 1930 *Kowhai Gold* anthology of New Zealand poetry, as well as the journalistic literary endeavours of the Bookmen, were harshly criticised for encouraging Georgian or sentimental verse. This is highlighted in Jones’ detailed literary history, when he explains how Glover derided sentimentalism, by describing Georgian poetry as a: “dead weight... because it is conservative, respectable and lacking lustiness”. Instead, Glover suggested that New Zealand poets should turn to Modernist poets such as Yeats: “people of vitality and of awareness”.

Sentimentalism was continuously deemed an uncritical approach to cultural production and thus inappropriate to a modern New Zealand idiom. For example, sentimentalism was also discussed in 1957 by Baxter, who explained how:

> ...in sentimental poetry there is a blockage of associations, a partial blindness brought about by the poet’s unwillingness to make fully conscious relevant but disturbing material. The development of most New Zealand poets could be described as a slow convalescence from the disease of sentimentality, punctuated by frequent relapses.

Therefore sentimentalism can be seen as the very opposite of modernist impulses in the arts, which focus precisely on depicting such ‘disturbing’ material, rather than hiding it. Sentimentalism has thus been part of the therapeutic, rather than critical, Pakeha embrace of Arcadian mythology, because it undermines an engagement with more critical reflections of society. This is why it was one of the first aspects of

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395 Ibid.
396 Georgian literature is “of or relating to British literature of 1910–20, in particular pastoral poetry of a type strongly attacked by the early modernists”. Stevenson and Lindberg, *Dictionary*, 3246.
397 Jones, *Traces*; Mills, ”Dictatorship”; Smithies, ”Imagining”.
399 Ibid.
400 Baxter, ”Fire”, 28.
culture in New Zealand that the cultural nationalists critiqued, particularly after the Depression,\(^{401}\) when social conditions most clearly failed to meet the sentimental image of New Zealand propagated by early colonists. Realism was emphasised instead, so that New Zealanders could focus on sincerely reflecting the life of Pakeha in New Zealand. As Curnow described, this was an attempt to: "achieve a correct vision of their own time and place".\(^{402}\) However, this anti-colonial emphasis on realism meant that elements of essentialism emerged in an anti-intellectual manner that was undemocratic. In particular, it misogynistically linked sentimentalism to women, rather than men.

**COUNTER CRITIQUES OF THE ANTI-MYTH**

Literary historians have highlighted how misogyny was present in cultural nationalism's attack on sentimentalism.\(^{403}\) This is because, although some of the earlier poetry by male cultural nationalist figures such as Brasch and Fairburn was inspired by Georgianism, it was later rejected for being derivative and "weakly Romantic",\(^{404}\) and then misogynistically linked to women. For example, this can be seen in the 1937 pamphlet, *The Arraignment of Paris*, published by Glover (in a satirical attack on the 'Bookman' G.A. Marris). *The Arraignment of Paris* contained verse that narrated a group of female poets picnicking in the countryside, looking for idealised Georgian landscapes of the rural idyll kind, but finding only the "harsh realities of agriculture: dung, noisy machinery, debt and the raising of animals for slaughter".\(^{405}\) Consequently, sentimentalism and the myth of the rural idyll was associated with women. The effect of this misogyny was noted by Baxter who explained how the associated pressure on women to conform to traditional family roles, rather than be professionally involved in the arts, was paralysing, enhancing their "sense of inferiority and isolation".\(^{406}\) Therefore, the misogyny of these leading cultural nationalist figures limited the democratic critique of culture by


\(^{403}\) Hilliard, *Bookmen’s*; Jones, *Traces*; Mills, "Dictatorship".

\(^{404}\) Jones, *Traces*, 96.

\(^{405}\) Ibid., 54.

\(^{406}\) Baxter, "Fire", 28.
constraining a critical engagement from the perspectives of women. However, this was not the only limit on the democratic development of Pakeha culture.

A problematic emphasis on nationalistic essentialism can be seen in much cultural nationalist work. This was tied to one of the most significant developments in New Zealand that aided the cultural nationalist movement: the establishment of several periodicals and a printing house between 1928 and 1934.\footnote{Periodical literature included journals such as \textit{Art in New Zealand}, \textit{The Phoenix} and \textit{Tomorrow}, published by the Caxton Press, which were concerned with the arts, literature and culture of New Zealand. Pound, \textit{Invention}, 1.} The critical mirror provided by periodical literature supposedly allowed similarities to be discovered between and amongst the work of artists in different regions, who were previously isolated from one another.\footnote{This can be seen in McCahon's early work such as \textit{The Green Plain} and \textit{The Listener}. See: Pound, \textit{Invention}, fig. 4 and fig. 1. Curnow also repetitively refers to the literary task of discovering 'beginnings'. Allen Curnow, "Introduction to \textit{A Book of New Zealand Verse, 1923-45}", in \textit{Look Back Harder: Critical Writings 1935-1984}, ed., Peter Simpson (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1987).} This purportedly meant that a New Zealand theme, truth, or expression of place, could be identified; especially in order to prove, as Pound explains: "difference from Europe – a proof all the more powerful because it was unconsciously achieved rather than deliberately sought".\footnote{Pound, \textit{Invention}, xv.}

The predominance of landscapes, native flora and Maori iconography during this time were seen as signs of the nation, alongside depictions emphasising the development of the land and the use of vernacular speech in literature.\footnote{Ibid; Palenski, \textit{Making}.} These elements were thus identified in the quest for essential New Zealand\footnote{For an example of work that employed an essentialist approach see: Monte Holcroft, \textit{Discovered Isles, A Trilogy: The Deepening Stream, the Waiting Hills, Encircling Seas} (Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1950).} that was used to justify the construction of a New Zealand canon. This seemingly essentialist process of canonisation was exemplified by Curnow when he stated that because discovered similarities were not intentional, it added "evidential value to any common characteristics" and that "here, where we are beginning, criticism is bound to interest itself in what we hold in common, and rightly does so".\footnote{"Introduction to \textit{A Book of New Zealand Verse"}, 44.} Although this process of discovery was more conscious than it was made out to be,\footnote{For an account of correspondence that reveals this fact, see: Jones, \textit{Traces}, 426.} it has been
critiqued for suggesting that the aspects of identity embraced by cultural nationalists naturalised the place of Pakeha in New Zealand in an uncritical manner, by ignoring the Eurocentric ideas and paradigms that contributed to such a process. For example, the predominance of painting landscapes was not unique to New Zealand; it was tied to ideas associated with the European Romantic Movement.\textsuperscript{414} Similarly, some cultural nationalists also expressed essentialist ideas in an explicitly Christian manner.

The essentialist idea of God in nature and the landscape as an expression of divine creativity is a Christian notion imported from Europe with colonial settlers. This idea meant that the role of some landscape painters was tied to this; as explained by Hodgkins, when he referred to the “mission of the landscape painter’ to appoint themselves to the priesthood of Nature’s Church”.\textsuperscript{415} One of the most essentialist cultural nationalist writers, Holcroft, also built on this idea, when he stated that: “Our kinship is not with the rocks and the trees and all the manifestations of nature: it is rather with the power that works through them”.\textsuperscript{416} These quotes highlight how cultural nationalism was sometimes rather conservative and looked back to a time when art and religion were intertwined. This was seen by some later critics as symptomatic of the anti-intellectualism that cultural nationalists were trying to overcome, because it failed to engage with more modern and critical interpretations of contemporary life.\textsuperscript{417} However, elements of the Christian tradition have also been used in an inherently critical manner by others, which will be interpreted in a radical, rather than conservative manner, in the final chapter, in order to show what relevance these traditional religious inspirational views of nature might have in secular society today.

**REGIONAL REAL**

In New Zealand, the way we view landscape has often tended to focus on the mountains as symbols of the sublime in the national imagination, with landscape the

\textsuperscript{414} Steel, “Problem”, 84.
\textsuperscript{415} Pound, *Invention*, 131.
\textsuperscript{416} Monte Holcroft, *Dance of the Seasons: An Autobiographical Essay* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1952), 54.
\textsuperscript{417} Pound, *Invention.*
focus of an aesthetic gaze. This gaze has been linked to the idea of colonial conquest, in a similar manner to the national branding discussed in Chapter Two, with regards to 100% Pure. However, Pound explains that there were others who emphasised the need to see New Zealand’s remote wilderness areas as more than the tourist picturesque, by attempting to discover:

...with a knowing love, the hidden truths of the non-touristic spaces between... that ordinariness which a tourist’s snap will ignore... It seeks a beauty less obvious, more difficult, more profound.

This process of looking to nature beyond sublime landscapes of mountain ranges meant that such scenes were critiqued as derivative of English painting, and too much associated with the tourist gaze. This led to an embrace of more intimate observations of life in rural areas, depicting shearing sheds and other signs of modern life amongst the scenic grandeur. However, the attempt to view the land in a manner that was more locally authenticated, or anti-colonial, can also be seen in a number of other ways.

In the cultural nationalist oeuvre, there was a commonality of painting old decaying churches, graveyards, burnt trees and so on. These depictions could be seen to critique, or balance the colonial Arcadian myth, by depicting landscapes of death and destruction, rather than only development and idyllic abundance – as well as symbolising a retreat of God from the modern world. Ursula Bethell’s poem Pause was deemed a key moment in defining Pakeha identity by the critic Cresswell in a similar manner, because it communicated a view of the sublime Southern Alps glimpsed briefly whilst working in her suburban garden. ‘Bethell’s glimpse’ was thus symbolic of the more localised, non-touristic view of landscape, because it came from a more holistic perspective, which embodied a landscape of work and

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418 Bell, Inventing; Ream, “Capturing”.
419 Evans, Forgetting.
421 For example, Rita Angus’ painting Cass (1936), depicting a railway station and lone figure in the landscape, epitomised the regional real style. See: Pound, Invention. Today some critics fail to note that there was an attempt to move away from the sublime in art, for example, Patrick Evans argues that this ‘aesthetic gaze’ was both reducing landscape “to the status of spectacle”, by bringing it within the realm of colonial conquest by some critics. Forgetting, 62. Also see: Bell, Inventing; Steel, “Problem”. This has occurred partly because of a focus on middlebrow culture by these critics, which has resulted in the attempt to move beyond such culture being somewhat eclipsed.
422 For example by W.A. Sutton in Nor’wester in the Cemetery (1950). See: Pound, Invention, fig. 53.
production, rather than only leisurely consumption. In a similar manner, the 'hard light theory' became a part of the cultural nationalist approach to viewing landscape in New Zealand, emphasising another contrast with England and its comparatively hazy skies.

The hard light theory tied in with the idea that isolation allowed the cultural nationalists, as internal exiles, to see more ‘clearly’, in both the figurative and the literal sense, than one might in more urbanised places such as large smoggy cities like London. Therefore, landscapes painted in the cultural imagination in a 'regional real' style: as a harsh and lonely wasteland, empty of people; as a backdrop to the life of isolated people such as high country pioneers, or prophetic people such as poets and artists; showing the effects of modernity; and in stark contrast, rather than a misty haze, were canonised by the literati. These aspects of viewing the land were seen as an act of resistance to foreign cosmopolitanism, softness and refinement. Landscape was viewed in association with the cold hard light, not as a motherly, fertile, or pastoral place, but as a cold lover, epitomised in these lines of Brasch’s 1945 poem, *The Silent Land*:

> Man must lie with the gaunt hills like a lover,
> Earning their intimacy in the calm sigh
> Of a century of quiet and assiduity,
> ........................................................................
> So relenting, earth will tame her tamer,
> And speak with her all her voices tenderly

Brasch’s emphasis on ‘earning’ the ‘intimacy’ of the land suggests an opposition to the idea that Pakeha might be entitled to the fruits of nature in New Zealand. Rather than the sense of entitlement colonialism employs in its mission of conquest and view of New Zealand as a new European pastoral idyll, it is suggested that a more realistic, intimate and local view of the New Zealand landscape might allow us to “speak with her” in a way that we have not been. However, such a focus on the land as lover has been critiqued for phallicism: the way cultural nationalists personified

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425 Pound argues accordingly that this was overemphasised. Pound, "Harsh".
426 Collini, *Absent*.
427 Pound, *Invention*.
their wilderness as as a cold lover meant that such a depiction was open to later feminist critiques.\textsuperscript{430} Similarly, the emphasis on empty landscapes in cultural nationalist canonical works also meant that the movement was described as part of the postcolonial justification for settler indigeneity, legitimising the colonial project by telling the story of settlement as one of a battle with \textit{terra nullius} and the elements, and ignoring the fact that there was a battle with Maori.\textsuperscript{431}

\textbf{MAN ALONE AND THE SOUTH ISLAND MYTH}

The cultural nationalist focus on the idea of New Zealand as an empty wasteland meant that there was also an emphasis on the fact that the islands were one of the last remnants of land to be settled in the world - with Maori arriving approximately 800 years ago according to archaeological evidence.\textsuperscript{432} This idea was summarised particularly in the work of Holcroft, when he stated that:

\begin{quote}
This, then, is the basic fact of our history—an age of silence. While the countries of Europe and Asia felt the movement of tribes and the growth of nations; while the classic civilizations were tumultuously taking their shape in the Mediterranean basin; while barbaric empires developed, with splendid [sic] of mythology and ritual, in the broad lands of South America; while the dream of spirit in nature was creating the colourful but passive culture of India: the islands of New Zealand were outside the mind of the world, intact and pure amid the flow of winds which brought only the sound and the distilled moisture of the sea.\textsuperscript{433}
\end{quote}

However, this emphasis on the land as empty and the way it was mythologised\textsuperscript{434} as a wasteland was problematic, because by imagining New Zealand to be in an almost primordial state when early European pioneers arrived, this could be seen to ignore the reality of the prior Maori population. Accordingly, the cultural nationalist empty landscape anti-myth has become known as the ‘South Island Myth’ of legitimising

\textsuperscript{430} Pound, "Words", 197. These feminist critiques will be discussed further in Chapter Six, particularly with regards to Rita Angus’ work.

\textsuperscript{431} King, \textit{History}, 381.

\textsuperscript{432} Ibid., 19.

\textsuperscript{433} Holcroft, \textit{Discovered Isles}, 147. This meant that unique flora and fauna from Gondwana were preserved in New Zealand, which had largely disappeared elsewhere, because New Zealand had been torn from Gondwana prior to the evolution of marsupials and other (predatory) mammals (other than some small bats). King, \textit{History}. These provided distinct symbols of national identity accordingly. Palenski, \textit{Making}.

\textsuperscript{434} For example Lady Barker confessed in her autobiographical novel that she envied the European pioneers who came to New Zealand before her. \textit{Station Life}. 

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colonialism in New Zealand.435 This interpretation has understandably arisen for several reasons: early cultural nationalists in particular tended to be from the South Island; cultural nationalism had government sponsored roots due to the Centenary436; and the reality for South Island pioneers was one of dealing more with nature and the elements, than with Maori, because the South Island was far less populated prior to colonisation compared to the North Island.437 Consequently, the anti-myth could be seen to favour views of New Zealand that were more associated with South Islanders than North Islanders, and with Pakeha rather than Maori, which distorted cultural nationalist narratives accordingly in their attempt to reflect the nation in its entirety.

Similar criticism that suggested such a turn away from society, towards nature, in the search for a unique identity, was increasingly irrelevant to modern New Zealand during the second half of the twentieth century will be explained. In particular, this Romantic and antimodern impulse meant cultural nationalists were criticised for looking to the past, and to isolation in nature, rather than to the present or future and the urban reality of most New Zealanders.

ROMANTICISM AND ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM

The cultural nationalist gaze towards harsh empty landscapes meant that there was an emphasis on the rural, ‘real’ and local, in opposition to the urban, theoretical and foreign. The resulting essentialism in cultural nationalism was critiqued accordingly for functioning therapeutically, rather than critically. In particular, the anti-myth was seen to be fostering a form of sentimental anti-intellectualism,438

436 Mills, "Dictatorship".
437 King, History Newton, “South”.
438 Roger Horrocks picked up on the realist aspect of anti-intellectualism as a theme for cultural critique in his 1984 landmark piece, "No Theory Permitted on These Premises", published in the journal And. Horrocks explained how a preference for pragmatism and realism in New Zealand’s populist politics were still based on the pragmatic nature of New Zealand’s pioneers and farming community, which Horrocks used in extension to explain what he saw as a “working class prejudice against theorizing and introspection”. Horrocks used conformism and pragmatism to explain how a turn away from political liberalism to neoliberal Rogernomics occurred, partly due to the lack of theoretical engagement with political alternatives to realism and pragmatism. For this reason Horrocks can be seen to link anti-intellectualism with the neoliberal political economy that underlies the current postnationalist branding of the nation. "No Theory", 120-121.
because it was not critically engaging with some aspects of modern Pakeha culture or the colonial history of New Zealand. Consequently, the anti-intellectualism associated with the myth of the rural idyll in the form of sentimentalism, paradoxically extended through to the anti-myth as the ‘realist’ and essentialist attempt to be free from intellectualism and theorising. The links between the foreign and the intellectual can provide further insight into how the anti-intellectualism associated with the myth of the rural idyll continued into the anti-myth.

The word ‘intellectual’ entered the English language from the French.\textsuperscript{439} This meant that the term took on associations of the foreign, as well as the urban, because intellectuals in France tended discuss their ideas in urban salons\textsuperscript{440}. Consequently, intellectuals became thought of as particularly opposed to the English idea of the rural idyll and wild nature popular in England at the time.\textsuperscript{441} The foreign and urban associations of intellectuals were imported into New Zealand and expressed particularly strongly in cultural nationalism. Consequently, this can still be seen amongst artists and intellectuals in New Zealand in the twenty-first century, with a preference for an ‘activist’ (emphasising practical action) label, rather than ‘intellectual’ (emphasising mental work), still common today.\textsuperscript{442} The associated distinction between high and low culture also continued to suffer from its traditional class based associations in New Zealand at the end of the twentieth century, which was exacerbated by the difficulty of some abstract Modernist art and open-form poetry,\textsuperscript{443} because it was seen to be pretentious and thus was rejected as

\textsuperscript{439} In particular, the way that the French term \textit{intellectual}, and Russian \textit{intelligentsia}, were established prior to use of the word ‘intellectual’ in English, meant that English use of the term was dogged by its association with foreign culture. The foreign connotations associated with the word meant that it was used in a figurative or ironic tone as it was experimentally introduced into the English language around the early-mid nineteenth century. These associations were exacerbated when the historical context regarding the ‘Reign of Terror’ in France, and doctrinaire application of Marxist policy in Europe, is compared to England’s Whiggish interpretation of history as eternal progress. Collini, \textit{Absent}. This meant that in England there is a strong tradition of anti-intellectualism, which is also linked to the distinction between continental theory and methodological collectivism, and British empiricism and methodological individualism. Horrocks, “A Short History”.

\textsuperscript{440} Collini, \textit{Absent}.

\textsuperscript{441} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{443} See footnote 376.
overly intellectual. As Chapman explains, some of the most Modernist Pakeha high
culture was rejected “as if it had been thrown down from the highest of ivory
towers”.444 A realist approach was more popular accordingly, as it was deemed
more suited to an egalitarian culture in its relative ease of interpretation, rather
than being more abstract - because abstraction and theory was deemed elitist.445

The tension between specialised academic criticism and what is sometimes deemed
to be a lack of personal experience has been critiqued by many intellectuals and
artists in New Zealand. This can be seen in a verse from Baxter’s 1968 poem Letter
to Sam Hunt, which encapsulates the ongoing effects of anti-intellectualism and
associated masculine and rural imagery, which many cultural nationalist poets
embraced:

Dear Sam, if you are twenty-two,
Why should I foist my gall on you?
The answer is that poets live
By a refusal to forgive
The mighty Bog of social shit
That has no use for sex or wit
Or art or hope, but simply is
Internally its own abyss;
At twenty-two or forty-one
You need your gumboots and a gun.446

Baxter’s opposition of “The mighty Bog of social shit” to key rural imagery
“gumboots and a gun” highlights the divide between rural versus urban, or anti-
intellectual versus intellectual, within Pakeha culture; as well as emphasising the
value to be found ‘outside’ of society. This anti-intellectual stance can still be seen
today - epitomised by the popular Romantic poet Sam Hunt.447 Therefore, one of the

444 Chapman, “Fiction”, 53.
445 Pound, Invention.
446 Baxter, Collected Poems, 429.
447 For example, see: Sam Hunt, Gary McCormick, and John McDermott, Roaring Forties (Auckland:
Hodder Moa Beckett, 1995). Similarly, as Helen Martin, in her review of the autobiographical film
Sam Hunt: Purple Balloon and Other Stories explains: “At the screening it was weird seeing Sam Hunt
seeing Dick Frizzell and C.K Stead and Brian Edwards and Colin Hogg et al. sitting in the audience,
watching themselves talk about/critique/celebrate him, his work, his antics. (We were at the back –
we could see them all). What was Stead thinking when Hunt says, ‘Academics are fuckwits who never
check their facts’? What was Hunt thinking during Stead’s carefully measured view of his work that,
while he’s ‘a natural lyricist’ he has ‘a narrow range’? ” Here, Hunt, an inherently Romantic poet, can
be seen as the antithesis to the academic critic C.K. Stead; as their differing approaches to literary
criticism in Martin’s review show. “Review of Sam Hunt: Purple Balloon and Other Stories”, accessed
ironic things about this anti-intellectualism is that its emphasis on realism was somewhat sentimental, in that it was rejecting, rather than engaging with, the urban realities most Pakeha experienced. However, it is important to note that the attempt to live and work in isolation and in ‘natural’ or rural, rather than urban areas, is not limited to sentimentalism and anti-intellectualism. Isolation takes on extra meaning when considered from a critical viewpoint.

One of the interesting things about the anti-intellectual emphasis on realism is that it is somewhat sentimental in its attempt to overcome the derivative Georgianism in literature and colonial sentimentalism in New Zealand society at the time. Consequently it is crucial to highlight the difference between what is often referred to interchangeably, as sentimentalism and Romanticism.

Romanticism is more critically reflexive than sentimentalism, which highlights how Romanticism is politically radical and revolutionary as opposed to the therapeutic nature of sentimentalism. Therefore, the way Romanticism embraces isolation, both in association with the idea of being isolated from modern society in space, (through ‘imagination in nature’), or isolated in time (through nostalgia), has been deemed both liberating and restricting for Pakeha depending on whether the antimodern themes of isolation and nostalgia are used as a means to reflect therapeutically or critically.

**ISOLATION IN NATURE AND CRITICAL RURALISM**

The antimodern embrace of isolation helps to explain why a contradiction between urban and rural views of landscape lies at the heart of regionalist debates within New Zealand culture. This tension is partly due to the way that both urban New Zealand citizens and foreign tourists often sentimentally expect the rural population to maintain the ideal of the rural idyll, by saving the environment from the worst

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448 Baxter, "Fire"; Ream, "Capturing"; Stafford and Williams, *Anthology*.

449 Blechman, *Revolutionary Romanticism*.

450 Smithies, “Imagining”.
aspects of modernity. However, the reality is that agriculture, as New Zealand’s largest industry, is usually the first to bear the impacts of the state’s progressively neoliberal economic policies. Farmers have had to adapt accordingly, often by industrialising and intensifying production, or by combining agriculture with tourism. The debt associated with borrowing to intensify or develop agricultural production, in order to maintain viability within competitive global markets, was interpreted by some cultural nationalists as exemplifying the effects of modern instrumental rationality in New Zealand. This instrumentally rational aspect of modernity, which the critical cultural nationalist themes of ruralism and anti-intellectualism reject, were summarised in Denis Glover’s 1941 poem The Magpies:

When Tom and Elizabeth took the farm
The bracken made their bed
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

Tom's hand was strong to the plough
and Elizabeth's lips were red
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

Year in year out they worked
while the pines grew overhead
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

But all the beautiful crops soon went
to the mortgage man instead
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

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452 King, History.
453 Bell, Inventing.
454 For example, the nature of the neoliberal global political economy, which the New Zealand agriculture industry competes in, was highlighted when the high profile Crafar Farms totalling 10,000 hectares were sold to Chinese investors in 2012, despite controversy over the deal: "Federated Farmers has backed the approval, with president Bruce Wills saying the investment is needed. 'The reality is we've got $47 billion of farm debt in New Zealand,' he told Radio New Zealand." "Crafar Farms Sold to Chinese", 3 News, accessed January 25, 2014, http://www.3news.co.nz/Crafar-farms-sold-to-Chinese/tabid/421/articleID/251172/Default.aspx#ixzz303AU0dHa.
Elizabeth is dead now (it's long ago)
Old Tom's gone light in the head
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said

The farms still there. Mortgage corporations
couldn't give it away
and Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies say.455

_The Magpies_ was discussed by Curnow as emphasising “the financial agencies
which dehumanize the relation between land and people”.456 Curnow's statement
accentuates the critical antimodern impulse of Pakeha high culture and associated
scepticism towards the idea of eternal progress. Similarly, in a 1941 review of
_Recent Poems_ by Curnow, Glover, Fairburn and Mason, David Hall stated that _The
Magpies_ was part of a collection of new poetry that “make us creatively aware of
ourselves, aware that being a New Zealander has in 1941 reality and meaning”.457
However, whilst this antimodernist stance can be seen as quite melancholy, it has
often had a place for hope; particularly with regards to nature. This is a hope that
has been resilient – a theme that continues in Pakeha work today.

The idea of hope in nature is epitomised in Owen Marshall’s _South Island Prayer:_

God
Don’t let me die in Auckland.
Rotting in the heat before your
eyes are closed: a greasy take
away after the soul is gone.
Jesus, no.

Let me go with the old Southerly
Buster: river stones in the grey
flecked sky and that white wind
to keep your chin up.
Christ, yes.458

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455 Denis Glover, _Enter without Knocking: Selected Poems_ (Christchurch: Pegasus Press, 1971), 34.
457 D.O.W. “Four New Zealand Poets”, _The Listener_ 1 August, vol. 5, no. 10 (1941), 15.
In this 1998 poem we see a combination of ‘man alone’ symbolism, Christianity and regionalism expressed in association with a Romantic rural anti-intellectualism. Auckland imagery, as a soulless and transitory “greasy take away”, is opposed to the South Island wilderness, symbolised by the Southerly Buster - as Marshall contemplates the South as a more appropriate place to experience the most lonely human experience - death. In 1948 Baxter wrote in a similar manner, with regards to the idea of isolation in nature as providing hope, in High Country Weather:

        Alone we are born
        And die alone;
        Yet see the red-gold cirrus
        Over snow mountain shine.

        Upon the upland road
        Ride easy, stranger:
        Surrender to the sky
        Your heart of anger.460

Here Baxter writes about death and alienation – dark themes – however they are presented in a way that suggests one might always find, beauty, hope and peace in nature. Such Romantic themes of imagination in nature were emphasised throughout Baxter's oeuvre, particularly in his earlier work.

Baxter’s use of place and natural imagery were symbolic in his poetry, because to Baxter, poetry was mythical, and addressed: “the crises, violations and reconciliations of the spiritual life in mythical form because this is the only way in which the conscious mind can assimilate them”.461 Baxter drew symbols from his experiences in natural landscapes around the South Island where he grew up, where he meditated upon “the testament of sand and the parables of rock – those very humble, very obscure communications from nature”.462 Here, Baxter can be seen to liken his role as a poet to that of a prophet, because the symbolic value of nature in Baxter’s work was used to create his poetic mythology in a spiritual,

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459 The ‘Southerly buster’ is a cold southerly front which hits the east coast of the South Island with sudden force.
462 Ibid., 26.
essentialist, manner. However, like other Romantics, he deemed the symbolism inherent in nature was being lost in “a materialist technological civilization”. The way Baxter focused on his experiences in nature, in a regional-real style, meant that his earliest work was associated with the anti-myth. However, Baxter moved away from his poetical engagement with nature and landscapes after he moved to Wellington, where a new mythology arose.

Baxter’s perspective changed after he moved to Wellington, because it became more focused on critiquing New Zealand society, by engaging with what he saw as social problems, rather than focusing on nature. As explained by Jones:

In the last years a new iconography and mythology arises from Jerusalem and to a lesser extent Wellington and Auckland. What turned out to be the last act in the mythic drama of self was acted out before a different landscape and different cityscapes and with different tribes, drug addicts and social drop-outs rather than his Gaelic ancestors or his bohemian drinking friends.

Although Baxter was still critical of society and urban life in his engagement with the natural world, the progression of the inspiration for Baxter’s poetry, from rural to more urban symbolism, alludes to why such Romantic antimodern approaches of the South Island Myth school were (and are still), seen to be in conflict with the reality of New Zealand’s increasingly urban society. The essentialist ‘Blood, Roots and Soil’ rhetoric – exemplified in Holcroft’s work, and when Fairburn stated that poetry “must always derive its nourishment from a particular patch of soil” became less relevant accordingly. This meant that the first generation of cultural nationalists who perpetuated this essentialist tone in Pakeha cultural development tended to be overridden by other later critics, who promoted a more existential engagement with place - as a foundation for ‘roots and soil’ in the cultural imagination, rather than in the land or blood. Even the idea that cultural

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465 Bell, Inventing; Grimshaw, “Antimodern Manifesto”; Pound, Invention; Steel, “Problem”.
466 For a thorough discussion of the ‘blood, roots and soil’ theme, see: Pound, Invention.
467 A.R.D. Fairburn, ”Poetry in New Zealand”, First Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand, (1945), 126.
nationalism first embraced, by focusing on life in New Zealand, through engaging with what it meant to experience living in the island nation, became a focus for critique. As Simpson explains, this meant that Curnow, as the preeminent cultural nationalist and the most eloquent and persuasive ‘empty landscape’ mythologiser, was attacked for promoting “a kind of vulgar and prescriptive nationalism”.469

**ISOLATION, IDENTITY UNDEASE AND GLOBALISATION**

During the 1950s, younger poets of Baxter’s generation, writing primarily from the North Island, began to question and critique the ideas and assertions of their primarily South Island predecessors.470 In particular, because the creation of the anti-myth focused precisely on the colonial myth in an anti-colonial and antimodern way, it was limiting for these new writers, alienating them from the increasingly globalised society they lived in.471 The anti-myth was countered accordingly, in a manner that paralleled the reaction of the early cultural nationalists against the Bookmen and the sentimental colonial myth of the rural idyll. However, critical opinions increasingly became more diverse, in line with the rise of postmodern theory and its scepticism of grand narratives.472

As early as 1951, one of the writers involved in the reaction to the anti-myth, Erik Schwimmer, wrote that Curnow’s ideas were out of date, because “consciousness of the internationalization of culture is too vivid in New Zealanders”.473 Here Schwimmer refers to the fact that New Zealand society was changing. The national population was becoming increasingly interconnected with global society and Pakeha were no longer as isolated as they had been previously from the outside world. This meant that the idea of the Pakeha experience as isolated and uneasy, set in the context of a harsh wasteland, was questioned, as was the antimodern stance of the cultural nationalist anti-myth. Schwimmer’s comment was particularly set in contrast to Curnow's stance as a critic.

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470 Jones, Traces; Mills, “Dictatorship”; Smithies, “Imagining”.
471 Jones, Traces, 184.
472 Lee, “Reinventing”.
Curnow had previously drawn attention to the work of a number of New Zealand poets, which emphasised the idea that European life in New Zealand was trivial in comparison to its pre-history, by stating that Pakeha poetry suggested a feeling of being “interlopers on an indifferent or hostile scene”\textsuperscript{474}. Although this phrase can be interpreted in a more universal manner (with regards to the way isolation in nature has been seen to offer a reflection of social life as trivial, in comparison with the natural world\textsuperscript{475}), similar criticism against the anti-myth deemed the focus on isolation in nature and ruralism decreasingly relevant, because most of the New Zealand population was urban.\textsuperscript{476} Additionally, the antimodern impulse in cultural nationalism was critiqued for both cynicism and sentimentalism, because it could be interpreted in a way that suggested a return to pre modern society was desirable.\textsuperscript{477} Therefore, the following chapter will further consider this criticism of the anti-myth with regards to the themes of isolation, ruralism and antimodernism. Accordingly, critiques of Pakeha as only turning to landscape mythology in a therapeutic manner (such as those in Chapter Two that situated this problem as definitive of Pakeha culture), will be refuted, by showing how an antimodern reaction to instrumental rationality has been part of a critical and creative Pakeha landscape mythology.

The existential, rather than essential aspect of hope seen in the New Zealand landscape was summarised by Jones: “The anti-myth seems to hold hope. A deep, organic relationship with the land is possible with a change of heart, a change in attitude”.\textsuperscript{478} Here, Jones highlights how there is hope seen in the land, but also, crucially, that this hope is inherently linked to our attitude towards nature and the way in which we reflect on it. The best work of the cultural nationalists embraced this idea by critically and creatively engaging with what it meant to live in New Zealand - in a way that attempted to bring nature and culture together, rather than separating them or deeming such a relationship as lost to the past. Consequently, their work had the aim of inspiring Pakeha about their possibilities in New Zealand; rather than only cynically critiquing or therapeutically distracting them. Notice how

\textsuperscript{474}“Introduction to A Book of New Zealand Verse”, 73.
\textsuperscript{475}This discussed further in Chapter Six, particularly with regards to the idea of wilderness.
\textsuperscript{476}Pound, “Words”; Stafford and Williams, \textit{Anthology}.
\textsuperscript{477}For example see: Broughton, “Three”; Pound, “Words”.
\textsuperscript{478}Jones, \textit{Traces}, 194.
Beaglehole writes in the following passage. The fact that Pakeha settlers burnt the native bush in order to clear land for farming is not ignored, yet the tone is not one of despondency:

...where on unscorched hills the bush perpetually and in silence renews its green, inviolate life, it may be that the spirit of man also will find renewal – not as a thing sought, not with travail nor born from an old despair, but quietly and unconsciously as the spring seeps from the moss, or the *rimu* roots itself in mould, or the fragile clematis appears starred over unattainable slopes.\(^{479}\)

CHAPTER SIX – ALCHEMY
FORGING THE SACRED FROM THE WILDERNESS

PART ONE: MEMORIES OF PLACE

The antimodern impulse of cultural nationalism is a dialectical response to modernity, which has been crucial to the development of Pakeha high culture. The associated tension between different kinds of prophesies and memories of place have been crucial to the creation of both a critical historical awareness, and a sincere hope for the future, amongst Pakeha. By opposing sentimentalism, cultural nationalism opened the cultural conversation to criticism, such as that with regards to the South Island Myth, misogyny and anti-intellectualism. This meant that cultural nationalism instigated the ongoing process of transformative critique, through which Pakeha landscape mythology has evolved. Therefore, the critical impulse in the cultural nationalist anti-myth of New Zealand as a wasteland, laid the foundations for, or created a tradition upon, which an increasingly diverse, critical and democratic landscape mythology was built.480

In this chapter, the critical ways landscape myths tie Pakeha to a collective memory of the past and hope for the future will be further discussed. This will be achieved by referring to the work of some key cultural nationalist figures to show how New Zealand has been imagined in association with the idea that spirituality, landscape and nationality are inherently tied - in an existential, rather than essential, manner.481 Firstly, the isolation and ‘man alone’ symbols of Pakeha culture will be discussed with regards to the Romantic themes of melancholia and nostalgia. This will provide insight into the way place has been crucial to critical Pakeha identities - especially a choice to see New Zealand as home over any other place and the associated critical consciousness regarding the ongoing negative effects of colonialism on Maori and the land.

480 For example, Eurocentric histories of New Zealand were also critiqued strongly by men of European descent, particularly since the 1980s, in journals such as And, which used post-structuralist theory in particular, as well as more recent postcolonial and postmodern criticism conducted increasingly by women and people of differing cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Smithies, "Imagining".

481 Smith, Chosen
MELANCHOLY AND NOSTALGIA

The anti-myth shows us the darker side of Pakeha history by telling of the social and environmental costs bound to the process of Europeans making New Zealand their home. This means that the anti-myth enables the landscape to carry “the freight of history”\(^{482}\) that the Arcadian myth does not bear. In this sense, the melancholy aspect of the anti-myth has been described by Bowring as a “cementing of attachment to place”,\(^{483}\) because a critical awareness of what has been lost in the transition to a modern New Zealand is crucial for memories of the past to be kept open. This critical historical awareness opposes and acts as a constructive remedy to the idea of collective amnesia, which postcolonial theory similarly addresses, by remembering extinct endemic species, the loss of traditional Maori knowledge and the destruction of native forests associated with colonialism and capitalist development.

Melancholy aspects of landscape mythology oppose compulsory nationalist, or colonial sentimental myths, that only support favourable views of the nation.\(^{484}\) In particular, they offer a challenge to the idea that pioneering attitudes were all positive, by highlighting how these versions of our history are reductionist. As Ream’s research highlighted, a more nuanced understanding of pioneer identities:

...makes way for a fluid and complicated pioneer and is a more suitable national origin narrative... a more holistic view of settler life, linking darkness, belonging and colonial venture.\(^{485}\)

Therefore, by acknowledging that the myth of New Zealand as Arcadia has not been truly reflective of Pakeha settler identities, the myth of New Zealand as a wasteland can be seen to dialectically balance this perspective, by alluding to the darker side of settler experiences and the failures of the colonial venture. This darker side will be discussed with regards to the subtle, yet crucial, differences between nostalgia and melancholy, as opposed to cynicism and sentimentalism.

\cite{482} Schama, *Landscape*, 5.
\cite{483} Bowring, *Et in Arcadia Ego*, 116.
\cite{484} Ream, “Capturing”.
\cite{485} Ibid., 88. For a further discussion of the cultural expression of such darker views of life in rural New Zealand, see: Sam Tyler-Smith, “Quardle Oodle Ardle Wardle Doodle: The Fear of Madness in the Face of the New Zealand Landscape”, *Landfall* 215, (2008).
SENTIMENTAL ANTIMODERNISM

Sentimental views of the past, tied to pre modern notions of landscape and Maori culture, were strongly critiqued by postnationalist and postcolonial critics such as Pound - particularly because these portrayals meant that Maori were often narrowly defined as “bearers of tradition and children of nature”.\textsuperscript{486} Here Pound shows how Maori represented a pre modern world for Pakeha, which cultural nationalists themselves wanted to be a part of when relating to antimodern symbols such as ‘man alone’. The failure to always critically reflect on the past means that nostalgia has been described as an attempt to separate Pakeha from their colonial history, in a way that uncritically relocates them into the position of the ‘noble (anti-colonial) savage’. For example, the word nostalgia is often used dismissively, particularly by historians, such as Kammen: “Nostalgia... is essentially history without guilt. Heritage is something that suffuses us with pride rather than shame”.\textsuperscript{487} Additionally, Patrick Evans has strongly critiqued this nostalgia in Pakeha culture as involving an:

...imaginative possession of the land through an imagined loss of it – a loss that in my view finally manoeuvres white-settler culture into its yearned-for position as indigenous, enabling the Pakeha – in a final, cruelly ironic act of imperialism – to ‘become Maori’ at last by dispossessing Maori even of their own dispossession.\textsuperscript{488}

This quote ties in with the views of Gray, Jaber and Anglem, who have argued that identifying as Pakeha rather than ‘European New Zealander’ might be an attempt to sentimentally separate oneself from what they refer to as white privilege.\textsuperscript{489} Therefore, although the sentimental antimodern view of Maori and landscape critically highlights something that Pakeha felt had been lost in modernity, the focus on essential homeland and noble savage rhetoric meant that the anti-myth was sometimes functioning therapeutically, by minimising the realities of the ongoing colonial project they were a part of – the criticism was not thoroughly self-critical or reflexive. Such antimodern aspects of cultural nationalism have thus been interpreted as hypocritical,\textsuperscript{490} when the modernising impulse of Pakeha in

\textsuperscript{486} Pound, “Words”, 198.
\textsuperscript{487} M. Kammen, Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture (New York: Knopf, 1991), 688.
\textsuperscript{488} Evans, “Originality”, 76.
\textsuperscript{489} Gray, Jaber and Anglem, “Pakeha Identity”.
\textsuperscript{490} Evans, “Originality”.

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colonising New Zealand is considered. However, these views of Pakeha nostalgia focus primarily on the sentimental, rather than critical, element of nostalgia. This means that such criticism tends to be overly cynical.

**CYNICAL ANTIMODERNISM**

The Romantic ideas associated with pre modern New Zealand have repeatedly been cynically contrasted with the idea of Pakeha as one dimensional and instrumentally rational actors - tied to a decadent Western civilisation. This is because the anti-myth sometimes opposed mass culture in a way that recognised New Zealand not as a sentimental utopian place that Western civilisation had recently blessed, but as a last remnant of land to be tainted by a doomed civilisation. The associated assumption that isolation from modern society is desirable was thus sometimes accompanied by a suggestion that Pakeha could be no more than the bearers of instrumental rationality. Such a view can be seen in critiques of Pakeha discussed in Chapter Two, with regards to how unexceptionalism and philistinism have been used to explain the therapeutic turn to landscape in Pakeha culture.

Cynical antimodernism is also seen in Findlayson’s *Our Life in This Land*, when he refers to Pakeha as: “strangers in a strange land”; carrying “the imported seeds of the old social decay”. This description emphasises the role of Pakeha in capitalist development, and instead privileges Maori culture, in a binary manner, for its supposed freedom from such modern decadence. Such a defeatist turn to Maori was critiqued for cynicism, as hope is placed either in pre modern, or Maori culture, with little faith in the ability for Pakeha to move beyond the worst aspects of their European heritage. This cynicism can still be seen in the work of some postnationalist critics. For example, Patrick Evans has argued that Pakeha fully appropriated Maori culture and homeland into the national imagination to the point

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491 Broughton, “Three”.
492 Ibid.
494 Ibid., 5.
495 Pound explains how Maori have often been seen as “Rousseau’s hiers” by Pakeha, who “never allowed Maori artists to become more than the bearers of tradition and children of nature”. Here Pound is referring to the Romantic notion of the ‘noble savage’, which is often associated with Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s philosophy. Pound, “Words”, 198.
that any belief in a sincere and critical Pakeha culture is effectively banished; by locating the emergence of true counter-narratives, such as those of a postcolonial or feminist nature, as marking the:

...triumph of the colonial sublime fifty years ago... at which the dominant culture revealed its domination... with everything won, fully Westernised European New Zealand could afford to become a little sentimental, could afford at last to allow a few other voices to be heard... All these are versions of the dominant culture’s inherent yearning to ‘become Maori’ in some way, to achieve some kind of originality by adopting victimhood.497

Here Evans alludes cynically to the Pakeha appropriation of Maori culture and land for purposes of instrumental rationality, by suggesting that the process of critique conducted throughout Pakeha history has been a farce. There is little hope in such a view. However, these cynical views of Pakeha engagement with Maori culture are reductionist.

Maori perspectives are crucial in reminding Pakeha of the reality of their becoming New Zealanders. For example, Newton highlights how attempts by some Pakeha to relate to Maori, epitomised by Baxter's founding of the Jerusalem commune, have represented a genuine reverence; seeking a relation based of Maori self-determination, rather than sentimentalism or Pakeha domination.498 The Pakeha value of Maori self-determination can also be seen in the following statement by Curnow:

It may be said here, in passing, that the pakeha (European) has generally felt his own New Zealand tradition to be enriched and dignified by association with those older Pacific navigators and colonists, his forerunners and fellow citizens – though the feeling has not always been happily or becomingly expressed. Distinct as they are, as we should all wish to see them, the Maori poems nevertheless represent a significant part of our commonly diffused consciousness of ourselves as New Zealanders.499

Here Curnow highlights how, rather than appropriating Maori culture, or wishing Maori to remain in the Pakeha imagination as an uncritically imagined pre modern ‘noble savage’, Pakeha have also appreciated that Maori have their own distinct discourses. Maori perspectives therefore become crucial to Pakeha identity in a

497 Evans, "Originality", 76.
498 The Jerusalem commune was founded by Baxter in 1969, near the Whanganui River settlement of the Jerusalem pā, or Maori meeting house, and the St Joseph’s Church. Newton, “Becoming”.
critically relational, rather than therapeutic manner, by offering a more diverse
cultural foundation for Pakeha to critically reflect on with regards to their place in
New Zealand. This idea is consequently tied to the way that Pakeha culture has
evolved to be more self-critical, because by engaging with postcolonial criticism that
highlights the negative effects of (post)colonialism on Maori, therapeutic aspects of
Pakeha culture can be located and transformed accordingly. This kind of sincere
and critical approach to Maori culture can similarly be seen in the work of Gordon
Walters, who possessed a great knowledge of Modernist art theory compared to
most other artists who were practicing during the mid-twentieth century in New
Zealand.  

Pound explains how Walters’ knowledge of Modernist art theory and research into
Maori rock art\textsuperscript{501} allowed him to interpret abstract Maori art, not as a failure of
naturalism, but as uncovering an exemplary past for Pakeha: by translating it into
“the last refuge left of the sacred in the Modernist, rationalist West – in the
prestigious space of high art”.\textsuperscript{502} This comment, with regards to Maori culture as
having a space for its own high art, alludes to the idea that cultural criticism was
conducted in an antimodern and anti-colonial way, which emphasised distance from
modern influences as desirable. This is because Maori civilisation, before European
contact, exemplified freedom from rationalisation (with the Maori imagination seen
to be able to meditate on nature in a creative way, untainted by the negative effects
of instrumental rationality on culture). However, more importantly, designating
Maori rock art as a sacred realm of high culture is significant because it suggests
that the distinction between high and low culture was imported into New Zealand in
a way that freed it from its conservative European, class based, colonial and elitist
culture (particularly when there was considered to be very little Pakeha high
culture earlier in the nation’s history).\textsuperscript{503} The egalitarianism suggested by such a

\textsuperscript{500} This is partly because cultural development was dominated by the literati early in the cultural
nationalist period. Pound, “Words”.
\textsuperscript{501} Particularly in South Canterbury with Theo Schoon. Pound, Invention.
\textsuperscript{502} Ibid., 60.
\textsuperscript{503} However, this was slow to occur – for example Walters’ art was rejected by early cultural
nationalist literati, who preferred ‘regional realist’ art such as that of Angus et al. which supported
the themes they were engaging with in literature at the time, rather than the more abstract
internationalist style of Walters. Pound, “Words”. Likewise, Lealand explains how most high culture
in New Zealand was “imported from Bloomsbury or Belgrave”. “Preface”, 63.
designation is therefore critical, sincere and hopeful for the future – rather than
cynical or sentimental. In order to better understand how nostalgia can be critical,
the term itself will be interrogated.

CRITICAL ANTIMODERNISM
The word ‘nostalgia’ comes from two Greek roots, nostos meaning ‘return home’ and
algia ‘longing’. This sense of longing is particularly relevant to Pakeha with regards
to second settler identity unease. This is because it not only refers to the idea of
longing for a homeland, loss, or displacement, but also to the modern sense of
alienation, tied to increasingly industrialised and modernised societies.
Accordingly, nostalgia embodies the coeval antimodern response to such feelings,
which rebel against more utopian, modern ideas of progress.\(^504\) As Boym explains,
nostalgia is, a:

...strategy for survival, a way of making sense of the impossibility of
homecoming... Modern nostalgia is paradoxical... Algia (or longing) is what
we share, yet nostos (or the return home) is what divides us. The promise to
rebuild the ideal home lies at the core of many powerful ideologies today,
tempting us to relinquish critical thinking for emotional bonding. The
danger of nostalgia is that it tends to confuse the actual home and the
imaginary one... Unreflective nostalgia can breed monsters... [but this]
mourning of displacement and temporal irreversibility, is at the very core of
the modern condition.\(^505\)

Here Boym highlights the modern conundrum of creating collective mythologies of
place, of homelands and of nations: if these mythologies are uncritically nostalgic,
they can be dangerous. However, if they are critically nostalgic they can be
liberating because they remind us of our shared history – as well as questioning
dominant colonial notions of progress. For example, this idea was clearly expressed
in these lines from Glover’s 1945 poem Centennial, critiquing the sentimental
colonial view of Pakeha history:

In the year of the centennial splendours
There were fireworks and decorated cars
And pungas drooping from the verandas

—But no one remembered our failures.\(^506\)

\(^506\) Glover, Enter, 41.
*Centennial* highlights the idea that the progress associated with colonialism and modernisation is balanced by a Romantic tendency in some aspects of Pakeha culture. By encompassing the darker aspects of national identity that do not fit the sentimental colonial agenda or popular nationalist rhetoric, this sort of work suggests a critical historical awareness – a key element of high culture. However, it is crucial to note that this critical antimodernism, or Romanticism, is quite hopeful: darker expressions of it tend towards melancholia, as opposed to ineffectual cynicism or despair.\(^{507}\) Nostalgic and melancholic elements of the anti-myth can therefore allude to how Pakeha are “the other of Maori”,\(^{508}\) by inherently situating Pakeha as second settlers in a way that other identifiers such as ‘New Zealander’ or ‘European New Zealander’ do not. This historical awareness with regards to colonialism is crucial to having a critical, rather than therapeutic New Zealand mythology of place. Accordingly, some other, more culturalist, commentators have emphasised this more critical historical awareness, particularly regarding the destruction of the environment and Maori culture,\(^{509}\) as a definitive part of Pakeha identity.

Taking the Maori name Pakeha can be interpreted to suggest an anti-colonial consideration or respect for Maori and their homeland, *which critically relocates Pakeha identities from Europe to Polynesia*. As Newton explains: “Nowhere else in the colonial or postcolonial world has a dominant settler culture adopted an identity conferred by a minority indigenous group”.\(^{510}\) This is because taking the name Pakeha inevitably involves tension - tension that would be removed if the acknowledgment of Maori homeland were less explicitly recognised, by taking a name such as ‘New Zealander’ instead - because this name does not so reflexively or problematically situate oneself as a second settler. Likewise, as explained by Calder when discussing Pakeha knowledge of Maori customs:

Knowing these things, knowing them as a kind of second nature... is what gives Pakeha turangawaewae here. The levels of shared cultural knowledge that I am talking about are not profound. Nor need they be... the role of

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\(^{507}\) Jones, *Traces*.

\(^{508}\) Bell, "Dilemmas"; Newton, "Becoming", 40.

\(^{509}\) Bowring, *Et in Arcadia Ego*.

\(^{510}\) Newton, "Becoming", 44.
manuhiri is relational, as much about where you are as who you are... Others took up the challenge before us, but there will be no once-and-for-all moment that puts the ceremony of arrival and the problems of settling behind us. We are the Pakeha: the dart of challenge is at our feet. We must pick it up and pick it up time after time.\textsuperscript{511}

Such an ongoing project of challenge and remembrance alludes to the experiences of Pakeha who have a sincere respect for both Maori culture and the land, even if this has not always been critically reflected upon.

This process of picking up ‘the dart of challenge’ time and time again has extra meaning when interpreted in association with elements of Pakeha culture that refer to the landscape myths of the ‘garden of contemplation’ and ‘wilderness of becoming’. In particular, these myths allude to how the nostalgia associated with the Romantic tradition also holds another important relevance for Pakeha: as the most secular nation in the world, nostalgia also refers to Pakeha as a “condition of modernity”\textsuperscript{512} through:

...mourning for the impossibility of mythical return, for the loss of an ‘enchanted world’ with clear borders and values. It could be a secular expression of a spiritual longing, a nostalgia for an absolute, for a home that is both physical and spiritual, for the edenic unity of time and space before entry into history. The nostalgic is looking for a spiritual addressee.\textsuperscript{513}

Here Boym is highlighting how the search for meaning and belief in modern society must be conducted in a secular manner: the nostalgic is looking for the sacred, for something to believe in, after the death of God.

**PART TWO: PROPHESIES OF PLACE**

By highlighting what is missing, namely the spiritual addressee, memories of place give us the opportunity to work towards reclaiming what might have been lost in the move to modernity. This highlights another crucial element of loss that Romantic nostalgia refers to, which Habermas has termed an awareness that

\textsuperscript{511} Calder, *Settlers*, 29-30. Turangewaewae means ‘a place to stand’. Manuhiri refers to visitors to a marae – the name for the maori meeting house. Calder is referring to the procedure for visitors whereby they must pick up a ‘challenge dart’ laid on the ground before them whilst maintaining eye contact – in order to signal that their visit is in peace.

\textsuperscript{512} Grimshaw, *Antimodern Manifesto*, 151.

\textsuperscript{513} Boym, *Nostalgia*, 12.
'something is missing' from modern secular society – namely belief.\textsuperscript{514} This belief is crucially tied to faith, or hope, for future social improvement, high culture and thus a sacred realm in secular society. Therefore, the way landscape has been a rich source of critical hope for the future will be the focus of this part of Chapter Six, particularly with regards to the diverse ideas associated with landscape. In order to understand the relevance of these myths to modern Pakeha, the notion of wilderness will be discussed, before linking this to the critical, or high cultural, mythologies Pakeha artists have created about wildernesses in New Zealand.

**POST-DUALISM AND WILDERNESS**

The value of wilderness landscapes to urban populations has been discussed by some critics as possibly counter-productive to conservation goals, particularly with regards to state designated national parks, because these areas can promote a nature culture dualism: “by teaching us to fetishize sublime places and wide open country”.\textsuperscript{515} This fetishisation of wild landscape has been deemed particularly problematic in an era where we need environmental ethics that teach people to see culture as part of nature rather than opposed to it.\textsuperscript{516} This is because the idea of national parks as wilderness areas is challenged by the fact that these parks are still sites of cultural authority: national parks are designated and controlled by the state. Consequently, in his historical study of the idea of wilderness in America - where the phenomenon of national parks arose - Cronon dismissed the idea of a pristine, untouched, wilderness for being a myth.\textsuperscript{517}

Although in reality national parks as wilderness areas are not perhaps as wild as they first seem, or might be deemed as somewhat counteractive to promoting conservation values; symbolically, they still are places which show our ability to withhold instrumentally rational domination. Through preserving places of

\textsuperscript{514} *Awareness*, 15.

\textsuperscript{515} William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature", *Environmental History* 1, no. 1 (1996), 27.

\textsuperscript{516} This is because, as explained in the Introduction, nature-culture dualism is seen as a key problem in Western societies with regards to environmental problems, their causes and their solutions. For example, see research in the field of environmental sociology, such as: Allon and Sofoulis, "Everyday"; Braun, "Environmental"; Cronon, "The Trouble"; Fine, "Naturework"; Gibbs, "Just Add Water"; Head, "Cultural Ecology"; Instone, "Situating Nature".

\textsuperscript{517} Cronon, "The Trouble".
primordial wilderness, these places function symbolically. This is crucial, because
by preserving such a physical manifestation of the idea of wilderness, this can
perform a reflexive function in modern societies, but only if we engage with
landscape sincerely and critically.

Reflecting sincerely and critically on landscape can highlight how nature and culture
are intertwined, or highlight the triviality of human life compared to natural history.
As Cronon explains:

The special power of the tree in the wilderness is to remind us... to teach us to
recognise the wildness we did not see in the tree we planted in our own
backyard. By seeing otherness in that which is most unfamiliar, we can learn
to see it too in that which at first seemed merely ordinary. If wilderness can
do this - if it can help us perceive and respect a nature we had forgotten to
recognize as natural - then it will become part of the solution to our
environmental dilemmas rather than part of the problem.518

Cronon goes on to explain how this reminder can emerge from national parks. In
particular, it requires an element of critical historical awareness and sincere
reflection that is usually required in the interpretation of high culture. This is
because the difference between high and low culture after the death of God is
relocated to the manner of our engagement with the world – whether we engage
sincerely and critically, or not. For example, Schama supports this idea by
describing the Yosemite Valley in America and how the: “dazzling meadow-floor of
the valley... actually looked the way it did because of the Indians’ repeated set-fires,
which cleared it of brush and opened the space for grazing”.519

By acknowledging how the reality of Yosemite Valley in America today meant not
only getting mining companies, but native Ahwahneechee Indians, to vacate the
area, Schama highlights how such a critical historical understanding of the
landscape means that the way wilderness had been mythologised by Western
colonists as Edenic or untouched is revealed. This is where the critical moment
emerges and landscape myth transforms, from performing a therapeutic, to a
critical function – the manner of reflection being crucial. Such a critical and non-
dualistic approach to interpreting nature means acknowledging the place of

518 Ibid., 24.
519 Schama, Landscape, 186.
indigenous populations in colonial landscapes. It also means an awareness of how nature and culture are intertwined. Therefore, for Pakeha, reflecting critically on the idea of wilderness means recognising that New Zealand’s most pristine landscapes, particularly those in our national parks, are socially constructed - it also means an awareness of our past and present grievances, against Maori and against the environment.

Although there is no doubt that the empty landscape view of New Zealand can be interpreted in an uncritical manner with regards to Pakeha colonial history, there were other more sincere and critical factors underlying the focus on an empty landscape that went beyond colonial conquest. These factors will be explained because they are relevant to understanding how such a critical awareness of cultural colonisation emerged amongst Pakeha. In particular, the focus on empty landscapes referred symbolically to the social isolation many cultural nationalists felt in what was a conformist Pakeha culture in the early to mid twentieth century. This is because Pakeha society was deemed to be, as McLaughlin describes:

...a racially and culturally homogenous group of people who have nurtured in isolation from the rest of the world a Victorian, lower-middle-class, Calvinist, village mentality, and brought it right through into the 1970s.520

Such a conformist social context led Stead to defend Holcroft’s ‘empty landscape’ mythologising. Stead argued that anyone aware of the social isolation intellectuals and artists experienced in New Zealand at the time could not blame Holcroft “for finding it necessary to discuss literary problems with hills rather than with human beings”.521 From this perspective, the empty South Island landscapes offered cultural nationalists a source of inspiration that they did not find in mainstream society or local culture at the time. It provided them with a source of creativity – in a similar manner to the way the Frankfurt School looked to the avant-garde in the face of mass culture.

Cultural nationalists focused on developing the local culture according to the only local cultural inspiration they knew – the natural one. This came to provide a

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521 Stead, “Hulk”, 84.
unique perspective on the modern condition. For example, Stead goes on to argue that:

...remoteness is not something our writers should deny or regret, but something to be acknowledged, and exploited as an analogue for the immovable tensions which are universal in human experience.\textsuperscript{522}

Here, Stead alludes to how the anti-myth of the wasteland has critical potential with regards to the fact that the human experience is one which can never be separated from isolation – the individual human will always only know their own perspective on reality. It similarly alludes to modern alienation. However, cultural nationalists found a rich source of hope, creativity and beauty in natural wildernesses that inspired them. This inspiration was directed into their cultural work, which developed the idea of wilderness beyond primordial forests and mountain landscapes.

In order to investigate the idea of wilderness further, I will refer to the critical essay by Baxter, \textit{The Fire and the Anvil}, that provides insight into why Baxter continued to refer to the wilderness, nature and landscape in his critique of New Zealand society. This will be supported by reference to the surrealist poetry of A.R.D. Fairburn, and the work of Colin McCahon. This is in order to show how wilderness \textit{symbolically represents} the reflexive, or sacred, value of nature, as well as how this reflexive function mirrors that of high culture. This will provide insight into why these artists have been canonised as representing the best of Pakeha high culture. The following extract from \textit{The Fire and the Anvil} offers a foundation for the discussion to be based:

...a sojourn in the Wilderness means a period of enforced temperance. And from this situation the City is seen in its true light, as the world of triviality and injustice. Were the City a just one, the significance of the Wilderness would still remain, as the mirror and symbol of the power of God which cannot be contained in human thought or human society.\textsuperscript{523}

Here Baxter highlights how wilderness offers a reflexive function, as a mirror of the power of God, by looking to a pre secular interpretation of nature. However, despite this pre secular context, and although the urban or cultural realms are not seen in

\textsuperscript{522} Ibid., 96.
\textsuperscript{523} Baxter, "Fire", 30.
this passage as potentially offering such a reflection, Baxter’s message is still highly relevant today if interpreted accordingly. This is because, as Stead highlighted, the cultural nationalists turned to nature for what they could not find in New Zealand society – freedom from conformism, materialism and secular puritanism – as seen in Baxter’s following discussion of the function of poetry:

Agonies, desires, and dilemmas which the housewifely mind has cast out on the rubbish-heap must be unearthed and exposed to the sun; with those sexual, aggressive, and anarchistic motives which enter uneasily the drawing-room of verse, being accustomed to darker and worse lodging, yet provide the power that makes the poem live.524

Although this passage can also be seen to somewhat embody one of the highly criticised elements of cultural nationalism - misogyny, with regards to the reference to the ‘housewifely mind’ - it does also usefully highlight how the symbolic value of wilderness refers to any place, both physical or in cultural imagination, that is not inhabited by the safe and accepted, the mainstream and mundane.

If we consider the idea of wilderness with regards to Baxter’s critical essays - particularly his explanation in The Criticism of Poetry that “The material of every good poem is in some sense forbidden” - we can further see how the value of wilderness is not only found in nature, but also in high culture. This is in line with the definition of wilderness as “an uncultivated, uninhabited, and inhospitable region”.525 Therefore, a secular reinterpretation of the idea of God in nature, suggests that even though man is no longer imago Dei - because instead being modern recognises the very opposite, that God was made in the image of man - wilderness still holds value as a sacred place. This is because it is the place, either physical or imaginary, urban or rural, where we are free from the mundane realities of social life. It is the place that cannot be appropriated into political economy. This is why Pound described high culture, secularly, as a sacred space when discussing Walter’s interpretation of Maori rock art, because he was referring to an aspect of culture that was free from the instrumental rationality characteristic of modern mass culture. Although many cultural nationalists turned to nature to find the

524 Ibid., 21.
525 Stevenson and Lindberg, Dictionary, 9021.
wilderness, there was much Pakeha work relating to wilderness that reflects this broader, symbolic, definition of wilderness.

The reflexive value of wilderness has not been limited to sublime, wild, or remote alpine areas and landscapes. Pakeha have also seen the value of wilderness in the ocean and suburban gardens. For example, Baxter spoke of the wilderness for Curnow as represented by the sea – “the marine desert which surrounds our island”. Similarly, the idea of the ocean as a wilderness was expressed by A.R.D. Fairburn, in his surrealist 1941 poem Full Fathom Five:

He was happy down there under the frothing ship-lanes
because nobody ever bothered him with statistics
or talk of yet another dimension of the mind.

And eventually and tragically finding he could not drown
he submitted himself to the judgment of the desert

Here Fairburn highlights the value of wilderness as a place where ‘nobody ever bothered him with statistics’ – a mathematical science – a science of instrumental rationality alone. However, the poem has extra significance because of the surrealist style Fairburn adopts in Full Fathom Five. As an avant-garde, twentieth century movement, surrealism “sought to release the creative potential of the unconscious mind, for example by the irrational juxtaposition of images” - in both art and literature. For this reason, Full Fathom Five can be seen to go beyond the regional real style of cultural nationalism proprement dit, by engaging with a style that is more closely related to the high culture of Europe at the time. Full Fathom Five thus represents an aspect of Pakeha high culture that is more difficult to interpret, because it is less literal, or realist in style, compared to most cultural nationalist work at the time – it is avant-garde.

The value of wilderness was also noticed in the idea of the garden – a more suburban phenomenon. The idea of the walled garden, expressed in Bethell’s poem Trance, is a device commonly used by seventeenth century poets, linking a walled garden to the concept of the passage of time:

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528 Stevenson and Lindberg, Dictionary, 7931.
...and so ultimately the garden became a locus for the meditation de contemptu mundi... offering a reflection on the cycles of nature, but more importantly on the transience of human life.\textsuperscript{529}

This idea of landscape as a walled garden of contemplation highlights the reflexive value of landscape mythology because landscape can be seen to offer us a perspective that highlights the triviality of social life, when compared to the permanence and beauty of the natural world that Bethell saw in landscape, through her suburban garden.

The reflexive value of gardens in towns and cities is one that goes back to England and the Romantic era discussed previously. Strong explains how the people who migrated to the cities during this time in England wanted to keep a link with the countryside they had left. One way of doing this was through suburban gardens, as well as events “which are quintessentially English: the fruit and flower shows, the open garden days in towns and villages, and the flower and harvest festivals in cathedrals and country churches”\textsuperscript{530}. This is because these brought the rural into the urban, along with the Romantic and antimodern values tied to the rural landscape. In New Zealand, the work of Colin McCahon can be seen to epitomise that of an artist who wanted to share these values with an urban population that he thought had lost them. His extension of the idea of wilderness went beyond the idea that it performed a reflexive function, because his work also symbolised what this reflexive function might mean to Pakeha.

\textbf{THE LAND AS SACRED}

McCaHon wanted to inspire a critical, rather than sentimental, appreciation for nature that he thought was not present amongst many New Zealanders. This can especially be noted in his \textit{Northland Panels} (1958), which has text referring to the New Zealand landscape imagery he paints as “a landscape with too few lovers”\textsuperscript{531}. For this reason Colin McCahon has been deemed the quintessential prophetic figure of cultural nationalism in the visual arts.\textsuperscript{532} Pound suggests that the Christian

\textsuperscript{529} Whiteford, “Ursula”, 100.
\textsuperscript{530} Strong, \textit{Visions}, 127.
\textsuperscript{531} See: Pound, \textit{Invention}, fig. 14.
\textsuperscript{532} Pound, \textit{Invention}.
stories provide insight into why Mc Cahon so often painted a lone suffering Jesus on the cross; because he saw himself in this ‘man alone’ stance, suffering poverty and ostracism in a philistine nation, in hope of showing us a way of living here that sees the land as sacred. This idea can be seen when Mc Cahon described what he saw as his prophetic role as an artist, because he explained how he wanted to show mainstream Pakeha society something that he saw as “belonging to the land and not yet to its people”. However, he also used another Christian story a few years later to further explain this role.

McCahon compared the artist’s role to that of Moses in the Christian tradition: “Moses was not permitted by God to reach the Promised Land – this is the place where the painter never arrives”. This idea is exemplified in his painting This Is The Promised Land (1948), where Mc Cahon paints himself in the iconic ‘kiwi’ symbol of the black singlet (thus representing solidarity), and looks over the empty landscape in the rest of the painting, which has an angel flying above it. This angel provides the reference to the Christian story of Moses journeying to the Promised Land and suggests that by following Mc Cahon’s prophetic vision over the landscape the viewer can also be guided on the journey to the Promised Land. However, because Moses never reached the Promised Land, Mc Cahon can be seen to highlight a never-ending process. Mc Cahon is alluding to the never-ending process of creating a homeland – because the Promised Land was the homeland that Moses was searching for in the desert, in the wilderness - the homeland that he died before reaching. This search can therefore be extended to symbolise the creation of a Pakeha homeland.

As explained by Pound, the predominance of cultural nationalist art and literature emphasising New Zealand as a Promised Land and artists and writers as prophets, emphasised through the idea of imagination in nature, also promotes the idea that one never truly arrives at the homeland. Pound suggests this is like the promise

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533 Ibid.
536 See: Pound, Invention, fig. 6.
537 Pound refers to Mc Cahon’s The Flight From Egypt (1980) to emphasise this point, because this work consists of six panels, each inscribed with text: “‘WHEN DO WE START’.” And ‘the Desert’.
of cultural nationalist art: “The promise, that is to say, is endless in its hope and its postponement; endless because it can never be fulfilled”.538 It is a process that will never be finalised, because it is an ongoing process of creating a spiritual addressee, which in secular terms can be seen to refer to the process of creating a collective identity or high culture – creating a sacred realm in a secular society.

By the very nature of our ongoing journey through the modern wilderness of ‘becoming’,539 we can work towards a Pakeha high culture. For Pakeha, this idea is crucial, because it acknowledges how we are Pakeha because we attempt to understand and engage with Maori, by first honouring the memory of our colonial history.540 Hence the emphasis on wilderness, journeying and ‘becoming’ recognises that the creation of Pakeha high culture, through remembering the colonisation of New Zealand, is something that has no end. This can be seen as an attempt at a more critical communication, rather than a sentimental or dominating one, because the wilderness of becoming suggests that the journey, and the critical conversation, is ongoing. However, although this promise cannot be fulfilled, this is not a cynical statement. Rather, the nature of the promise itself is one of ongoing engagement. Therefore, paradoxically, if the promise were fulfilled, this would break the promise. This is the burden and nature therefore of the cultural nationalist project – its “structural function”541 - which is set in contrast to both sentimentalism and cynicism, by infinitely projecting a hope, or belief, in the project to invent a cultural tradition that is of, by and for Pakeha.

McCahon imagined that we might be able to find what has been lost in modern society, not only in the past, but in a fleeting ephemeral place of becoming in the present. Therefore, rather than suggesting the spiritual addressee is hopelessly lost, or must be rationally grasped, the symbolic journey through the wilderness of becoming can provide hope. This is because wilderness shows us how to imagine a

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538 Pound, Invention, 25.
539 Grimshaw, "Believing".
540 Newton, "Becoming".
541 Pound, Invention, 25.
collective identity, in a way that cannot be appropriated or reified as mass culture or nationalist rhetoric, because the wilderness of becoming is a place of potentiality that lies in the cultural imagination. This helps us to understand an alternative, and more critical interpretation of why landscape was so often left symbolically empty in cultural nationalist work – because the land was seen to be sacred in the same manner as high culture. For example, this idea of the land as sacred is explicitly reiterated by Newton, who argues that:

...literary nationalism, at the same time as freezing out the Tangata Whenua, shut down other settler idioms which inhabited the landscape differently. As we pick through the ruins of the nationalist edifice, and look for what might be salvaged in the imagining of a bicultural future, we can ill afford not to attend with respect to any writer who reads tactfully the space between habitations.  

Here Newton is referring to writers, such as the poet Blanche Baughan, who wrote of the South Island mountain range, the Southern Alps, in a way that suggested they were not only empty due to a lack of habitation (either Maori or European), or as a representation of internal exile, but because they were sacred places. In turn, this implied that they should be free from habitation with regards to the colonial enterprise, in the same way that Maori designated Mt Cook (the largest mountain in New Zealand located in the Southern Alps) as a sacred place.

For Pakeha, these wilderness areas are sacred places because they perform a reflexive function - in the same way that high culture is critically and sincerely reflexive. Therefore, acknowledging the wilderness associated with national parks is a cultural construction does not negate its value; rather, this recognition upholds it. This is because knowing wilderness means that it can be brought into our daily lives all the more often, helping us to see the wilderness amongst the mundane, and preventing a nihilistic or ironic response to the cynicism of late capitalism. This means that the wilderness can be experienced anywhere, because it is a form of consciousness – an awareness of how humans and culture are a part of nature. As explained by the quintessential American ‘eco-philosopher’ Thoreau:

543 Due to the mountain being a part of Maori cosmology that sees it as an ancestor – the sacred part of the body of this ancestor being the pinnacle, or head – thus the pinnacle is deemed a place that one should not stand upon. Newton, “Colonialism”.

126
It is vain to dream of a wilderness distant from ourselves. There is none such. It is the bog in our brain and bowels, the primitive vigor of Nature in us, that inspires that dream.544

Protecting the wilderness in nature enables a physical manifestation of the idea, the symbol, of wilderness in culture to be protected. The melancholic, empty, harsh and nostalgic landscapes of the South Island Myth are persistent in the national imagination because they highlight the value of wilderness to a diversity of Pakeha - because this inherently traditional, modernist and dualistic pondering of our ‘other’ in nature, will in fact look back at us and reflect our ‘selves’, our place in society and our societies inherent intertwination with nature – as Curnow famously noted in verse:

Look hard at nature. It is in the nature
Of things to look, and look back, harder545

A CRITICAL RURAL IDYLL
The cultural nationalist worship of landscape tended to portray it as a wilderness, a wasteland or a ‘cold lover’. However, wilderness landscapes were not the only landscapes that epitomised a critical Pakeha culture. One artist in particular offered an alternative version to the patriarchal Christian interpretation, which can be seen to offer a feminist critique of such imagery – this was Rita Angus. Angus’ work balances the wilderness half of Arcadian mythology in the cultural nationalist oeuvre, with a new vision of the rural idyll. This is important because imagining a future landscape of hope involves prophesies of what might be. As the British art historian Schama explains in the following passage, the Arcadian prophesy of the wilderness is dialectically interrelated with the prophesy of the rural idyll - they rely on each other:

There have always been two kinds of arcadia: shaggy and smooth; dark and light; a place of bucolic leisure and a place of primitive panic... Arguably, both kinds of arcadia, the idyllic as well as the wild, are landscapes of the urban imagination, though clearly answering to different needs. It’s tempting to see the two arcadies perennially defined against each other; from the idea of the park (wilderness or pastoral) to the philosophy of the front lawn (industrially kempt or drifted with buttercups and clover); civility and

544 From Henry David Thoreau’s journal, 30 August 1856, cited in: Schama, Landscape, 578.
545 Curnow, Collected Poems, 236.
harmony or integrity and unruliness? The quarrel even persists at the heart of debates within the environmental movement... But as contentious as the battle often seems, and as irreconcilable as the two ideas of arcadia appear to be, their long history suggests that they are, in fact, mutually sustaining.\textsuperscript{546}  

Angus offered Pakeha an alternative view of the land as sacred by refusing the idea of a patriarchal Christianity. Her image of the spiritual significance of land was exemplified by her goddess paintings such as \textit{Rutu}.\textsuperscript{547} These goddess paintings offered a view of the land that suggested it could be spiritual in a Christian, feminist and Pacific oriented way, which had not been seen before in cultural nationalist art.\textsuperscript{548} She offered a vision of cultural nationalism that stretched its phallocentric view of the land as wilderness, or the land as lover: "To show to the present a peaceful way": a way of maternal embrace and domesticity.\textsuperscript{549} This is because her paintings incorporated: Christian imagery (such as the fish symbol); style and symmetry associated with the Asian-Pacific region; as well as hinting at the pre-Christian "Europe-wide cult of the goddess".\textsuperscript{550} This imagery, canonised by cultural nationalist critics, also speaks to the Maori mythology of Papatuanuku – the Earth mother.\textsuperscript{551} Although such a reversal of patriarchy and matriarchy, seen in transforming the land from lover to mother, does not deal with the underlying dualism inherent to the painting of the land as female, Angus' work does represent some of the first feminist work to become part of the cultural nationalist oeuvre.\textsuperscript{552} Pound also explains how Angus alludes to non-European cultures, because the skin tone of her goddesses are a light golden brown, suggesting an integration of cultures that does not fully assimilate Maori into European culture. This might also allude to the fact that New Zealand was increasingly becoming a multicultural nation around this time – with cultural mixing a common global phenomenon – challenging the traditional binary of Maori and Pakeha that many European settlers imagined New Zealand to be.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{546} Schama, \textit{Landsape}, 517-525.  
\textsuperscript{547} Pound, \textit{Invention}, fig. 32.  
\textsuperscript{548} Ibid., 152-153.  
\textsuperscript{549} Ibid., 161.  
\textsuperscript{550} Ibid., 154.  
\textsuperscript{552} Pound, "Words".}
Angus’ vision shows a new version of the rural idyll. Rather than painted in the English style, or the masculine and pioneering wasteland style, Angus mythologises a new way of being in New Zealand: Polynesian, peaceful, in harmony with, rather than fighting against, nature. This positive affirmation of new Pakeha identities, as belonging to the “largest Polynesian country in the world”, rather than a distant European colonial outpost, emphasising cultural mixing and multiculturalism, can be seen in a lot of later work. For example, in Keri Hulme’s novel, *The Bone People*, the lead protagonist is of both European and Maori descent (as is Hulme). This allows an examination of the implications of suggestions that “only Maoris can speak about Maoritanga... [or] that Pakeha representations of multi-culturalness are bound to be either oppressive or romanticized”. So, although the idea that both Maori and Pakeha cultures might learn from one another has cynically been critiqued for being sentimental, I suggest losing sight of such hope means the foundation for a critical Pakeha mythology is also lost, rendering us more fully into the cynical capitalist ideology of late modernity. This perspective is in line with the hopeful idea of the landscape, with regards to how a change of attitude might be the key to creating a home in New Zealand that does not so brutally colonise the land and Maori culture.

These more feminist views, and associated rise of Maori engagement with modern nationalist rhetoric, came near the end of the cultural nationalist movement, critiquing it and giving rise to what some deemed to be the end of cultural nationalism. These feminist views highlight how the critical engagement with landscape has been diverse, embodying ideas of New Zealand as a wasteland, as a wilderness and as a rural idyll - in a critical and reflexive manner akin to that of high culture. The meanings of landscape transformed accordingly, through an ongoing process of transformative critique, which involved borrowing, interpretation, reflection, creation, critique and counter-critique. For this reason, cultural

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553 Rod Edmond, "New Zealand and Pacific Literature", in *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*, eds., Martin Coyle et. al. (Hoboken: Routledge, 2002), 1193.
555 Parenthesis added. Edmond, "New Zealand", 1194. Also see: Wilcox, "Introduction”.
556 Pound, *Invention*. 

129
nationalism can be seen to instigate the ongoing process of developing Pakeha high culture.

Cultural nationalism was always in the process of becoming tradition – a high cultural, or sacred, Pakeha tradition – with landscape as the central motif. The value of this motif has been discussed, by engaging with criticism, in order to see what value landscape has held, and might continue to hold, for Pakeha. Accordingly, the value of landscape has been highlighted, by referring to prophesies and memories of place that show how landscape functions critically: as a postcolonial corrective to collective amnesia, relating to the ongoing negative effects of colonialism on Maori culture and the environment; by symbolising wilderness, as a place in the cultural imagination that cannot be appropriated for instrumentally rational purposes; and by representing the hopes and beliefs that crucially underlie conservation values for the future. Therefore, this discussion has shown how the establishment of the printing houses and periodicals not only allowed the cultural nationalist search for symbols of ‘essential New Zealand’ to take place – it also allowed an existential process of self-critique to be conducted dialectically over time.557

**DIALECTICAL CRITIQUE**

The ongoing construction of a Pakeha high culture, through the process of transformative critique, was achieved in a dialectical manner in the periodicals. Periodical literature meant that Pakeha had a mirror of their culture, raising both a critical consciousness and a foundation for a tradition to develop, through this recording function. The periodicals housed a discourse that organised, as Simmons explains: “everything from identity to nationhood and frontiers... caught in the paradox between literality and rhetoric”.558 Here Simmons provides some insight into how the process of ‘discovering’ similarities between the creative works of artists around the nation can be seen as a paradoxical mode of invention, which refers not only to essentialism, but to both vision or discovery - to create something new and find something already there. Cultural nationalism, rather than being only essentialist, oscillated between the essential and the existential, existing in that

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557 Mills, “Dictatorship”.
558 Laurence Simmons, "The Sea of Islands: Rethinking Eurocentrism in the Wake of the Oceanic", *Landfall* 218, (2009), 141.
space of the dialectic, that of *becoming*\(^\text{559}\) - which the wilderness in McAhon's work represented.

As it progressed over time cultural nationalism created a strong modern tradition for Pakeha to refer back to, by reflexively engaging with diverse forms of criticism that broadened the idea of what it meant to be a Pakeha. As Mills notes with regards to those who rejected Curnow’s central contribution to cultural nationalism:

...although Curnow’s anthologies established his critical judgements it was within the periodicals that they were contested or reinforced; throughout the ‘long fifties’ the journals illustrate a persistent engagement with the Curnovian discourse. The format of the periodical facilitates a conversation through the ability of the editor to site contrasting ideas between the pages.\(^\text{560}\)

Here Mills highlights how cultural nationalism was a humanistic movement that developed through the engagement of those who contributed to it. The people who participated in the discourse sometimes contradicted themselves or changed their minds. For example, even Curnow undermined his firm, realist stance, by quoting this passage from Blake’s *Jerusalem*:

Shadowy to those who dwell not in them, mere possibilities,  
But to those who dwell in them they seem the only substances\(^\text{561}\)

In addition to the idea that cultural nationalism was existentialist with regards to the debates in the periodicals, research into correspondence between cultural nationalists also highlights how they did in fact know that they were involved in a mythmaking process – albeit in an anti-myth guise.\(^\text{562}\) For example, the idea that Curnow was aware of his mythologising is supported by Murray, who argues that Curnow did have the: “understanding that, in fact, cultural nationalism was an intellectual undertaking”\(^\text{563}\) - even though he emphasised realism in a pragmatic way that suggested otherwise.

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\(^{559}\) Pound, *Invention*.


\(^{561}\) “Introduction to *A Book of New Zealand Verse*”, 63.

\(^{562}\) As Jones explains: “…the *Phoenix*-Caxton writers were at the centre of a coherent, conscious, revolutionary literary movement – how coherent and conscious their correspondence reveals clearly”. *Traces*, 426. Also, see: Mills, “Dictatorship”.

Part of the reason why Curnow's work has been so fiercely debated is because he never made his aims explicit publicly, with regards to the prescriptive element of his mythologising. This meant that there were differing views of exactly what Curnow's position was. Rather, it was the correspondence between cultural nationalists, and the research conducted by literary historians, which highlighted the way many cultural nationalists, such as Curnow, were consciously engaging with essentialist rhetoric. Accordingly, it is important to remember the roots of the cultural nationalist oeuvre and why their myth-making was translated into a supposedly essentialist anti-myth that was free from theory.\(^{564}\)

Essentialism was embraced by some cultural nationalists because this represented their search for a local anti-colonial culture. They embraced the popular culture of New Zealanders, as opposed to foreign high culture, because this was the language ‘ordinary’ Pakeha spoke and understood. It was the local vernacular – and it was an attempt to develop a democratic, as opposed to an aristocratic, high culture. However, this was not always clearly expressed. Therefore, the way later critics emphasised elements of prescriptive, or anti-intellectual, realism and essentialism in Curnow’s oeuvre, and as such the entire beginnings of cultural nationalism, can be understood partially as an effort to more effectively define themselves in opposition to this – in a similar way that cultural nationalism emphasised the philistinism of New Zealand society to increase the need, or importance, of their project.\(^{565}\) As Simpson explains:

> ...it is less important to describe in detail such shifts in critical discourse, than to make the point that Curnow’s criticism remains a continuing point of reference in the literary microcosm in relation to which all new arrivals inevitably locate themselves in the process of differentially defining their own critical positions.\(^{566}\)

Additionally, because the contributions of critics were open to interpretation (with some commentators choosing to emphasise certain aspects of other critics work to engage with and vice versa, partly in order to define their own fresh perspective, or

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\(^{564}\) Horrocks, "No Theory", 120.

\(^{565}\) Jones, Traces.

\(^{566}\) Simpson, "Introduction".
by engaging with new theories\textsuperscript{567}), I suggest that the prescriptive, realist and essentialist elements of cultural nationalism deemed to be anti-intellectual have been overemphasised in postnationalist discourse, in the same way that the anti-myth defined itself against the colonial myth. This idea supported by Jones’ literary history, which highlights how cultural nationalism, when considered in its historical context, was revolutionary:

While the movement was scarcely the beginning of New Zealand literature, as its makers were fond of proclaiming, it did bring about a profound change in New Zealand literature within a generation, a change that, whatever the movement’s blind spots, was clearly a change for the better.\textsuperscript{568}

Here Jones highlights how cultural nationalism paved the way in a conscious, and therefore existential manner, for later postcolonial and postnational perspectives to broaden the critical conversation in a reflexive and democratic way. This diversified the idea of what it means to be Pakeha. Consequently, I argue postcolonial criticism stands in the anti-colonial tradition of cultural nationalism; widening it, rather than depreciating it.\textsuperscript{569} Through the process of criticism and counter criticism the movement transformed dialectically, maintaining its relevance into the future. The meanings, values and beliefs in the New Zealand landscape transformed accordingly, oscillating between that of an Arcadia and a wasteland.

Although previous discussions have highlighted how cultural nationalism’s masculinist emphasis on essentialism and realism were problematic (with regards to fostering anti-intellectualism and extending its project to speak for all New Zealanders, whilst lacking the perspectives of Maori, women and others who did not fit the stereotypical pragmatic idea of who Pakeha were), cultural nationalism can still be understood as a sincere attempt by Pakeha to move away from the worst aspects of colonialism. Accordingly, cultural nationalism, despite its obvious flaws, has, over time, evolved. It has helped Pakeha own up to their colonial history by promoting the development of a self-critical Pakeha culture through an increasingly democratic engagement with diverse forms of criticism in the arts. This was

\textsuperscript{567} Collini explains how this process of definition and counter-critique is like the comparative method of telling history, because often some points are reductionistically emphasised, whilst contradictory elements are diminished, in order to more effectively define, distinguish, or identify, historical movements or school’s of thought. \textit{Absent.}

\textsuperscript{568} Jones, \textit{Traces}, 426.

\textsuperscript{569} Prieto, \textit{Literature}.
achieved over time in a dialectical way, by engaging with what were deemed to be the best aspects of European culture suited to the future of Pakeha in New Zealand - even though these were not always explicitly expressed. Cultural nationalists drew on their traditional European heritage, such as Romanticism and Christianity. By engaging with these traditions and using critical reason, cultural nationalism meant being modern in New Zealand.

LANDSCAPE AS DEMOCRATIC HIGH CULTURE OR ELITIST?
The anti-myth provided a foundation for a more critical consciousness to emerge, by creating a critical discourse surrounding the meaning of place to Pakeha, and attempting to explicate a myth that was more critical than the colonial sentimental myth of the rural idyll. This meant that the critical conversation was opened to more diverse critical perspectives over time.

The creation of a Pakeha culture gradually became more intersubjective and democratic, in line with Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action. The creation of a Pakeha high culture was at times achieved accordingly. This is because it had an increasingly democratic perspective on Pakeha history, which allowed cultural symbols such as landscape to be gradually refined in a dialectical manner: the colonial myth of Arcadia was transformed accordingly, through engagement with the critical anti-myth of the wasteland, as embodied in the myth of New Zealand as a wilderness of becoming. Horrocks referred to Curnow in this manner as an alchemist – “transforming Earth into gold”. But if we interpret this with regards to how Curnow privately acknowledged that he was a mythmaker, rather than transforming earth, or nature, we can see that what he was actually doing was transforming the myth of landscape – he was transforming culture - into gold. Cultural nationalists began to transform low culture into high culture, by creating a foundation for the sacred to emerge through dialectical critique. Therefore, a critical and sincere belief in landscape is a belief in Pakeha high culture, a belief in a secular sacred realm, and especially, a belief that the central motif of cultural nationalism - landscape - is sacred. Nevertheless, this Modernist distinction

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between high and low culture was critiqued for perpetuating elitism by postnationalist critics.\footnote{For example, see: Horrocks, “Invention”. Similarly, Jones' literary history refers to Kai Jenson and Peter Simpson as sharing this view. \textit{Traces}.}

In order to consider why some critics were still deriding cultural nationalism, as a modern project of developing Pakeha high culture, or a Pakeha avant-garde, as elitist in the final decades of the twentieth century, a consideration of what the reaction to this modern project embodied is crucial. A citation from Habermas provides insight into what might be usefully referred to as ‘the postmodern turn’, at the end of cultural nationalist era in New Zealand, by explaining how:

The work of Peter Bürger has since taught us to speak of ‘post-avant-garde’ art; this term is chosen to indicate the failure of the surrealist rebellion. But, what is the meaning of this failure? Does it signal a farewell to modernity? Thinking more generally, does the existence of a post-avant-garde mean there is a transition to that broader phenomenon called postmodernity?\footnote{Peter Bürger was a German literary critic. Jürgen Habermas, ”Modernity Versus Postmodernity”, \textit{New German Critique} Special Issue on Modernism, Winter, no. 22 (1981), 6.}
CHAPTER SEVEN:
POSTMODERNISM AND HIGH CULTURE

During the 1980s, postmodernism "challenged modernism as the reigning paradigm of world development".573 In New Zealand at the time, the postmodern influence meant that critics were engaging with an increasingly wide range of theories related to cultural studies, postcolonialism, feminism, deconstruction and poststructuralism.574 These different perspectives were counter-critiqued by an increasing number of critics who entered the critical conversation that was stoked by cultural nationalists. The discourse went well beyond that of the anti-myth and its binary opposition against the colonial myth through its emphasis on isolation and critical transcendence.575 However, the postmodern turn was crucially different to the way the second generation of cultural nationalists reacted against the first, and the first generation against the Bookmen. Accordingly, as Jones explains, these new debates were different to those that ensued throughout the cultural nationalist era:

...writers such as Baxter and Louis Johnson modified the consensus history to make room for their generation and questioned some of its exclusively nationalist emphases, but they did not question its basic assumption that the writer existed in a critical relation with New Zealand society. In the 1980s, however, a new generation began to question the consensus view more radically, and the major literary histories since 1990 have been written from various revisionist positions, often feminist, structuralist, poststructuralist, and postcolonial (in various combinations).576

Here Jones highlights how the postmodern turn saw a change in the role of the critic: the debate turned away from Modernist ideas, such as the critics attempt to achieve transcendence above mass culture embodied in the Romantic idea of imagination in nature, towards notions of pastiche and irony. As Evans explains, this new style of debate signified the “great given of the postmodern era that we started to become aware of about thirty years ago is its banishment of the

573 Lee “Reinventing”, 355.
574 Jones, Traces. Especially in the journal And which Roger Horrocks was heavily involved with, which represented the changes to social theory being embraced in New Zealand at the time due to increasing globalisation. James Smithies, “Post-War New Zealand Literary Critique”, Thesis Eleven 92, no. 1 (2008).
575 Jones, Traces.
576 Ibid.
authentic".\textsuperscript{577} In particular, by viewing the world as a performance of differences, that suggested society was no more than a text subject to endlessly relative interpretations, the effect of this postmodern worldview could be seen as nihilistic.\textsuperscript{578} This meant that the focus on developing a Pakeha high culture, and an associated reflection of collective identity, was upset.

In New Zealand, the postmodern era saw the effective deconstruction of the realist anti-myth of the cultural nationalist œuvre, and an increasingly internationalist, rather than nationalist focus - in line with the increasing effects of globalisation on local communities.\textsuperscript{579} This meant that the idea that Pakeha society could work toward some sort of authenticity in the search for a collective identity was consequently abandoned. In particular, the way the cultural nationalist project was attacked can be seen in how later revisionist histories, amongst critics taking a more social constructionist or postmodern stance, especially contested Curnow's ontology regarding objective consideration of the New Zealand experience. For example Stead refers to Curnow's obsession with the New Zealand 'reuterent', particularly because this was in contrast to postmodern scepticism regarding the ability to objectively distinguish between a poem's language, or text, and its subject.\textsuperscript{580} This postmodern scepticism, regarding the ability to reflect upon 'reality' in a manner detached from the language used to describe it, meant that, as Temple explains: it was “post-modernly uncool to see mountains over malls, to weigh forests more than French fries, to hear the louder sounds of rivers under te reo [the Maori language]”.\textsuperscript{581} Here Temple highlights how the value of reflecting on mountains, forests and rivers - the idea of imagination in nature - was out of date. I suggest that this fashion may have been another contributing factor to the call by some deconstructionsists in New Zealand to banish landscape from the cultural imagination.\textsuperscript{582}

\textsuperscript{577} Evans, "Originality", 68.
\textsuperscript{578} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{579} Smithies, “Imagining”, 264.
\textsuperscript{582} Bell, \textit{Inventing; Steel, "Problem"}. 
Postmodern scepticism regarding the value of reflecting critically on nature, as that which represents the ‘other’ to culture, meant that an engagement with more urban cultural texts was more popular accordingly. For example, this scepticism was seen in the increasing focus of English departments in New Zealand universities on cultural studies, which abandoned the attempt to distinguish between high and low culture, by turning away from literary analysis. This ‘banishment of the authentic’, turn away from engaging with themes of nature in social analysis, and move away from Modernist ideas of creative originality through isolation from mass culture (seen in the postmodern embrace of irony and pastiche), meant that the idea that some sort of coherent progress towards a collective high culture might be achieved through the rational critique of culture was abandoned. As Smithies puts it: “the commitment to social responsibility in art in New Zealand – ended with minimal debate”. However, today this is problematic, because the scepticism or lack of belief, seen in the predominance of postmodern theory, came to mirror the current cynicism of late capitalist society – the cynicism at the core of Žižek’s theory of late capitalist ideology.

DECONSTRUCTION AND CYNICISM

In Chapter One I discussed the process of identification and the phenomena of culture, myth, religion and ideology in modern societies. In particular, the way theorists had turned away from notions of collectivity and towards the idea of the imagined community, which sees collective identities as both sharing an element of comradeship, whilst allowing individuals, in a tolerant and inclusive manner that embraces diversity, to interpret how they might identify with such a community. However, I also noted how both Habermas and Žižek emphasised the way the imagined community lacks cohesion. In particular, the imagined community has been seen to be problematic in the context of ideological cynicism, as it is limited with regards to motivating action – through the fostering of sincere belief in the

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583 Smithies, “Post-War New Zealand”, 103-104.
584 Ibid., 103.
585 Anderson, Imagined Communities.
586 Connor, “Beyond Reason”.
587 Habermas, Awareness; Žižek, Puppet.
power of the democratic process - a process crucial in the solving of collective problems related to environmental and social injustice.\textsuperscript{588} This is an important point, because one of the main tenets of critical theory is to engage with the capitalist ideology – and especially the way this ideology teaches people to “accept the world ‘as it is,’ thus... perpetuating it”\textsuperscript{589} – in order to stimulate change. However, although such an engagement with the question of collective values has been avoided in late modernity out of a fear for strengthening (post)colonial and neonationalist agendas\textsuperscript{590} tied to modern, rather than postmodern, theory, I argue that the postmodern deconstruction of collective myths must embrace reconstruction in the current context of capitalist cynicism, in order to motivate action in the solving of collective problems. As explained by Horning, with regards to postmodern culture, the cultural relativism deconstruction perpetrates through demolishing collective mythologies, represents the: “embodiment of postmodernism as a spent force, revealing what happens when pastiche and irony exhaust themselves as aesthetics”.\textsuperscript{591}

Deconstruction has effectively revealed the destructive nature of Pakeha landscape mythologies, particularly with regards to the colonial myth of Arcadia and its most recent, neo-nationalist, 100% Pure form, but also with regards to the cultural nationalist anti-myth. However, by rejecting the stories that have been told to build a sense of community we reject the very possibility of a foundation for collective society that all members can relate to as a part of their personal identity.\textsuperscript{592} More importantly, we also destroy the collective foundation for cultural criticism to engage with. For this reason, deconstruction alone is ineffective in the face of a cynical capitalist ideology, because such critiques are unable to provide alternatives that might similarly capture the imagination of Pakeha the way landscape mythology has.

\textsuperscript{588} Habermas, \textit{Awareness; Žižek, Puppet.}
\textsuperscript{589} Peukert, "Enlightenment and Theology", 109.
\textsuperscript{590} Smithies, “Imagining”.
\textsuperscript{592} Strong, \textit{Visions}. 

139
Žižek explains that the tendency for deconstructionists to resist reconstruction, in favour of textual pastiche, irony, and cultural relativism, is tied to the idea that collective identities are often reified in a totalitarian manner:

Deconstructionists draw the conclusion that the principle ethico-political duty is to maintain in the gap between the Void of the central impossibility and every positive content giving body to it—that is, never fully to succumb to the enthusiasm of hasty identification of a positive Event with the redemptive promise that is always 'to come'. In this deconstructionist stance, admiration for the revolution in its utopian enthusiastic aspect goes hand in hand with the conservative melancholic insight that enthusiasm inevitably turns into its opposite, into the worst terror, the moment we endeavour to transpose it into the positive structuring principle of social reality.\(^5\)

In this quote, Žižek highlights how, although the reification of collective identity seen in instrumentally rational forms of mass culture tends towards a perversion of reason, this does not reduce the need to continuously attempt such definition and identification.

The deconstructionists’ stance posits that there must always be maintained some sort of distance from the hope of redemption from instrumental rationality, in order to avoid totalitarianism.\(^6\) However, as discussed previously, myth cannot be erased from society, and attempts to do so tend to result in anti-myths emerging with perverse results, with \textit{100% Pure} as an excellent example of this. Therefore, although landscape as the dominant subject of New Zealand culture has been critiqued and deconstructed over the years, many Pakeha still show a sincere identification with nature. Similarly, the urban reality that most New Zealanders experience today is still permeated with landscape — \textit{a consumer landscape in the hyperreal}. This shows how a range of both critical and sincere landscape values seen in Pakeha culture are locally authenticated and part of everyday New Zealanders’ lives. Nevertheless, sentimental and cynical values relating to nature still dominate the national imagination.

\(^{5}\) Slavoj Žižek, "Towards a Materialist Theology", \textit{Angelaki: Journal of Theoretical Humanities} 12, no. 1 (2007), 80.
\(^{6}\) Ibid., 81.
Accordingly, the legacy of the cultural nationalist anti-myth can continue to provide a dialectical balance to the myth of the wilderness seen in 100% Pure and the ongoing colonial myth of New Zealand as an egalitarian rural idyll, which still dominate the national imagination today. This is because it provides a high cultural version of landscape mythology that is more critical that sentimental landscape myths and more sincere than cynical landscape myths. As summarised by Pound:

One strong objection to the assertion that the Nationalist period came to an end around 1970 might seem to be that several of the great Nationalist themes still survive, even if sometimes under new names. The vegetable theology, for instance, of the dead tree theme, with its green crucifixions and resurrections, and its rites of mourning and of hope, endures today under the name of conservationism.\textsuperscript{595}

However, although the cultural nationalist oeuvre can be seen to inform a conservationist ethic, in its embrace of a critical consciousness that can dialectically balance belief, or hope, in the Arcadian myth; currently the capitalist ideology is negotiating criticism regarding the gap between the mass cultural version of the myth and the high cultural version, rendering critique ineffective.

The diversity of Pakeha values, beliefs and meanings tied to landscape, as well as the range of criticism and increasing body of scientific knowledge related to these, are increasingly ineffectual in the cynical late capitalist context. We value landscape, and critique the hypocrisy of the 100% Pure brand accordingly.\textsuperscript{596} Yet, collectively, we still go along with it, by prioritising economics over sincere cultural reflexivity. Because the economy is dependant on this therapeutic landscape imagery in New Zealand, we collectively, as Key suggested, take it with a “pinch of salt”.\textsuperscript{597} This is why 100% Pure is such an excellent example of how late capitalist ideology has negated high culture, because the 100% Pure brand represents, in a realist manner, precisely that which many Pakeha value about the New Zealand landscape – a spiritual place that should be protected from environmental degradation\textsuperscript{598} and a place free from the negative effects of instrumental rationality. Yet the brand remains functional because cynicism – a cynical acceptance of

\textsuperscript{595} Pound, \textit{Invention}, 361.
\textsuperscript{596} Bell, “Dilemmas”; Coyle and Fairweather, “Challenging”; Davison, “Pm Dismisses”; Gendall, et. al., \textit{New Zealanders and the Environment}.
\textsuperscript{597} Davison, “Pm Dismisses”.
\textsuperscript{598} Ream, “Capturing”.

141
criticism, rather than a rejection of criticism - is the new form of ideology. This 
ideological cynicism suggests that the materiality, the mundane realities of social 
life that is political economy, is a necessary priority. The value of landscape thus 
cynically lies in its value as an image, a brand, a commodity\textsuperscript{599} - because those things 
democratically deemed sacred are immaterial, and thus secondary, or only exist in 
reliance on the operation of the material. In other words when we collectively 
accept that diverse identities, high culture and spirituality comes second to 
economics, critique has been made defunct, because there is no sincere belief in the 
sacredness of critical reflection.

This raises the question as to how a sincere belief in landscape is reconcilable with a 
cynical, negated, form of belief - highlighting the value of a dialectical approach to 
cultural analysis. A dialectical approach is useful when addressing such 
contradictory elements within culture, because it raises the question as to how 
these might both meaningfully be true. In particular, ‘How can landscape mythology 
be both mass and high culture?’ and ‘How can a sincere belief in culture be 
developed into a critical belief in the face of capitalist cynicism?’ Therefore, in order 
to suggest how we might be free to critically, rather than therapeutically believe in 
landscape, a different kind of sincerity of belief must be theorised. In order to 
critique the new cynical form of ideology, we need to work towards a new form of 
sincerity, belief and critical theory.

The Frankfurt School identified the need for a negative dialectical response, in order 
to negate the negated form of myth inherent to mass culture. The methodology for 
critiquing culture, in an intersubjective, democratic and hermeneutic manner, was 
developed accordingly through Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action. 
However, although this developed a method for ‘knowing’ the sacred in a secular 
world, it did not fully negate the dialectic of reason and faith. It only negated one 
half of the dialectic, the half which dealt with reason through hermeneutics, rather 
than the half that dealt with belief. Therefore, the new form of cynical belief that is 
inherent to late capitalist ideology has meant that this secular, democratic and

\textsuperscript{599} Bell, *Inventing*; Coyle and Fairweather, “Challenging”; Egoz and Bowring, “Beyond the Romantic”; 
Steel, “Problem”.

142
interpretive critique is being accepted in a cynical manner, which allows high culture to continue to be subjugated to political economy.
CHAPTER EIGHT – ATHEISTIC BELIEF: AN INFINITE NEGATION

In Chapter Four I discussed how the democratic construction of a modern critical mythology, or high culture, could be achieved using Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action. By using theology’s main method of hermeneutics, in an intersubjectively rational manner, this provided a methodology for creating a secular sacred realm – a modern high culture. However, participation in the democratic myth-making process is inherently linked to an accompanying belief in the value of using intersubjective reason, or democracy, to achieve positive social change. Reason is thus linked to faith - in the ability of individuals to critically reflect on hermeneutic knowledge, including cultural values, meanings and beliefs. This means that critical reason is an act of potentiality, it is not scientifically verifiable, nor does it nihilistically relinquish all cultural meanings as relative.600

The nature of belief inherent to the successful application of Habermas’ Theory of Communicative action has become increasingly apparent due to the way cynicism has rendered such critique defunct. This situation has highlighted how the negative dialectic of culture and critique in the secular realm also needs an element of belief in order to effectively operate.601 In particular, the cynical form of belief inherent to late capitalist ideology (with regards to inevitability of free-market economics as the predominant socio-economic model), makes understanding how to not only critique myth to create a high culture and a secular sacred realm, but also how to believe in modern mythology, all the more important.602 In order to truly negate the sacred realm into secular modernity, we not only need a negative dialectical methodology for creating and critiqing the sacred, we also need a negative dialectical form of belief.

600 Habermas, Awareness.
601 For a discussion of the failure of state democracies, due to a lack of popular belief in solidarity, see: Habermas, Awareness, 37-38.
602 Midgley, The Myths, 1.
MODERNITY, DEATH OF GOD THEOLOGY AND HIGH CULTURE

As explained in the Introduction, Žižek sums up the cynical attitude towards capitalist ideology as a new formulation of Marx’s conceptualisation of ideology, so rather than “they do not know it, but they are doing it”,603 today, “they know that, in their activity, they are following an illusion, but still, they are doing it”604 is the true formulation of capitalist ideology today. In this sense, the new form of ideology is not sincerely believed - it is cynically believed. Clive Martin refers to the lack of belief inherent to postmodern mass culture when he explains how the ever increasing speed that youth subcultures are being appropriated means that it is: “hard to really believe in anything when it’s being sold back to you six months later in some kind of diluted form”.605

A negative dialectical theory for belief is particularly pertinent in the case of 100% Pure mythology, because of the way this brand imagery mirrors that of Pakeha high culture, particularly with regards to wilderness. Such appropriation of culture highlights how we need to know how to believe in it all the more, by showing how a distinction is possible between mass and high culture, or between therapeutic and critical mythologies, in a way that goes beyond postmodern irony and cynicism - because these act as a shelter,606 functioning therapeutically rather than critically, by suggesting that sincere belief is outdated. Consequently in late capitalism, Žižek explains how: “‘culture’ is the name for all those things we practice without really believing in them, without ‘taking them seriously’ ”.607

Žižek explains how capitalist cynicism, as represented in this discussion in New Zealand by the 100% Pure brand, is a kind of negated belief. This is because it effectively negates the democratic critique of capitalism, by cynically accepting it in a totalitarian manner: “its rule is not secured by its truth-value but by simple extra-

603 Marx, Capital, cited in and translated by Žižek, Sublime, 27.
604 Tony Myers, Slavoj Žižek (New York: Routledge, 2003), 79.
606 Brighton, “Crowsourced”.
607 Žižek, Puppet, 7.
ideological violence [i.e. the law] and promise of gain [i.e. political economy]”. Therefore, the cynical belief inherent to late capitalist ideology is a negated form of belief, because, even though it is not sincerely believed, it is still lived within and responded to, as if it was sincerely believed. This has relegated both the function of rational critique and intersubjectively rational democracy ineffective, because mass culture in late capitalism is better characterised as lacking sincerity - a lack of belief in the value of reflexivity, which is necessary for effective critique - rather than a lack of rational criticism alone.

A response has emerged through the work of Žižek, to counter this cynicism and resituate the value of belief explicitly into the negative dialectic of critique. This involves reinterpreting the Christian tradition (in association with the Book of Job), to historicise modern secular society, and, in doing so, provide a theory for a form of belief suited to Western modernity - rather than only a method for critiquing and constructing critical myths through intersubjective rationality. The question therefore becomes one of secular belief in the creativity of culture, and especially the sacredness of high culture, through the rational democratic process. As summarized by Žižek:

What we are getting today is a kind of ‘suspended’ belief, a belief that can thrive only as not fully (publicly) admitted, as a private obscene secret. Against this attitude, one should insist even more emphatically that the ‘vulgar’ question ‘Do you really believe or not?’ matters-more than ever perhaps.

Žižek maintains that the Christian experience is crucial to the successful application of historical materialism in late capitalism. This is because: “In Christianity, as the ‘only consequent monotheism’” God momentarily reveals himself as an atheist in the Book of Job, by revealing his amazement at creation and the

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608 Parenthesis added. Ibid. Turner also talks about this cynicism in the New Zealand context in: “The Public Intellectual”.
609 Habermas, Awareness. Versluys also describes this turn to postnational solutions, as a reaction to the bureaucratisation and corporatisation associated with modernity, and as such as representing a loss of faith in the democratic nation state as the best means for politically achieving democratic action. “Antimodernism”.
610 Brighton, “Crowsourced”.
611 Žižek, Puppet, 3.
612 Ibid., 3.
meaninglessness of the universe. For example, God says “`Hath the rain a father? Out of whose womb came the ice?’”

614 Because the Christian God is here seemingly astonished at creation, this has been interpreted to suggest that he does not control all of creation and that history does not have a purpose according to Him, allowing a reinterpretation of Christianity as an atheistic religion, whose God has died. This offers a theory for an infinite negative dialectic, which is capable of negating the negation of cynical belief inherent to instrumental rationality. As such, atheistic, or secular, Christians can be seen to be the only true believers, by practicing faith in the absence of God. 615

As Žižek further explains:

... what if the affinity between monotheism and atheism demonstrates not that atheism depends on monotheism, but that monotheism itself prefigures atheism within the field of religion – its God is from the very (Jewish) beginning a dead one... Insofar as the truly materialist axiom is the assertion of primordial multiplicity, the One which precedes this multiplicity can only be Zero itself. No wonder, then, that only in Christianity – as the only consequent monotheism – god himself turns momentarily into an atheist. 616

Here Žižek highlights a kind of secular belief that is an infinite negation of the belief in God. So, rather than not believing in God, atheistic Christians can, and must, believe without God: “Belief must be a leap of faith. If you have direct proof, you no longer have the existential engagement. Authentic faith doesn’t need proof”. 617

This provides a theory for an infinite negation of the belief in God, as well as a suggestion for a kind of belief that might accompany high culture, rather than the cynical form of belief that dominates today.

Rather than simply providing a methodology (à la Habermas), for critiquing and choosing myth in a secular world, Žižek maintains that the modern secular Western world itself has emerged in the wake of an atheistic religion. This means that the secular world we live in today actually follows on from a belief in an atheistic religion: the secular is thus a negation of atheism. Our secular, cynical form of belief, must also be negated accordingly. So, rather than secularism operating as ‘I don’t believe in God’, or ‘I don’t believe that high culture is sacred, I only cynically

614 Ibid., 23.
615 Ibid., 25.
believe in that which can be proven’, secularism becomes ‘I sincerely believe without God in the sacredness of high culture, because it cannot be proven’. This point is crucial, because if we continue to cynically require proof in order to believe, we will never move beyond the instrumental rationality of capitalist political economy and its negated mythologies, such as 100% Pure.

This kind of atheistic belief in the democratic construction of high culture relies dialectically on a sincere investment, belief, or faith, in the ability for the democratic process of cultural criticism to prevent the perversion of reason.\textsuperscript{618} It has thus been described as a kind of (un)belief,\textsuperscript{619} not only in the ability, but the necessity, for a continuous process of reflexively and democratically constructing and critiquing myth from within a secular abyss – from within a wilderness. Believing in mythology therefore does not rely on any instrumentally rational verification or external validation. Consequently, Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action, with regards to collectively choosing mythology in a democratic and secular public space, or dialectically creating high culture, is redeemed. However, it is not redeemed because it presumes we will be able to meet some sort of absolute truth,\textsuperscript{620} but rather that the construction and critique of culture must be continuous, in a dialectical manner. This is because an atheistic belief in intersubjective rationality acknowledges that our symbolic or mythic mode of understanding reality will never perfectly mirror reality - promoting the ongoing dialectical process of transformative critique.\textsuperscript{621}

**RECONSTRUCTION?**

One recent deconstruction of nature mythology, conducted by Win, has successfully incorporated a more reconstructive element into the critique of hyperreal landscape imagery. Because we live in an era when “they know that, in their activity, they are following an illusion, but still, they are doing it”\textsuperscript{622} has been described as the true form of ideology, this can help us to interpret the way Win reviews *Naive Melody*, by

\textsuperscript{618} Habermas, *Awareness.*

\textsuperscript{619} Žižek, “Towards”.

\textsuperscript{620} Žižek, *Sublime.*

\textsuperscript{621} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{622} Myers, Žižek, 79.
Nathan Pohio.\textsuperscript{623} Win suggests how the hyperreal imagery of native birds within the airport terminal functions to disrupt the hegemony of compulsory nationalism. This is because the key aspect of Win’s review, with regards to the lesson it offers its viewers, is how Pohio’s images of hei hei leave the identification tags attached to the birds in place, rather than photo-shopping out these marks of the state;\textsuperscript{624}

That they also, simultaneously (and one might say mesmerizingly so), allude to this othered ontological realm, one in which birds and humans equally overlap is the real lesson in pragmatics \textit{Naïve Melody} ultimately provokes.\textsuperscript{625}

Here we can see this state funded public artwork offers us a \textit{sincere reflection} of how nature is so inherently tied to our culture in New Zealand today - how nature and culture are intertwined. In contrast, \textit{100% Pure} imagery offers no such marks of culture - all traces of New Zealand’s tourist and agriculture industries are removed from the frame. Therefore, \textit{100% Pure} does not show such a sincere reflection of our culture, compared to Pohio’s hyperreal imagery - it lacks sincerity with regards to belief in the value of critical reflection.

\textit{100% Pure} reflects the symbol of Pakeha high culture - wilderness - in an uncritical and cynical manner. For this reason, it can be seen to negate the value of wilderness, because it is functioning in precisely the opposite manner as the wilderness embraced by cultural nationalists such as McCahon and Baxter. Rather than offering us a sincere reflection of our society, it is distracting us from critical reflection through a cynical and instrumentally rational rejection of criticism, whilst being deployed as a national brand. In contrast, Pohio’s work highlights how, in order to negate this negation, a negative dialectical approach is required. A critical atheist belief in landscape as high culture can thus salvage the more sincere and diverse meanings wilderness represents. Such an atheist belief in wilderness must also be deployed to critique the cynical form of belief embodied in \textit{100% Pure}; in order negate this negated mythology - to reverse its appropriation from the sacred to the profane - back to the sacred again. Pakeha must reclaim their sacred realm, not only through democratic critique and hermeneutics, because this alone is

\textsuperscript{623} A public art installation at Wellington Airport, 2012-2013. Win, "At the Border".
\textsuperscript{624} Ibid., 13.
\textsuperscript{625} Ibid., 13.
not effective in the face of capitalist cynicism, but through a sincere atheistic form of belief.

CONCLUSION: A POST-DUALIST BELIEF IN NATURE IS A BELIEF IN CULTURE

In order to better understand how capitalist cynicism functions in the national imagination today, Chapters One and Two discussed the phenomenon of mass culture in New Zealand. The 100% Pure landscape myth was located accordingly as a form of mass culture because it lacks sincere reflexivity; functioning as a form of therapy by cynically ignoring negative aspects of Pakeha history tied to colonialism, and the present cultural challenges related to this including social inequality and environmental destruction.  

However, following chapters considered other elements of landscape mythology, which suggest a more sincere and critical engagement with place has been achieved at times: Pakeha have both sincerely and critically believed in New Zealand.

By drawing on elements of European culture deemed most suited to the modern New Zealand context, the sentimental colonial myth of the rural idyll was challenged by the cultural nationalists. Although their anti-myth of New Zealand as a wasteland was critiqued for a number of reasons, the increasingly democratic process of dialectical critique which emerged in the wake of cultural nationalism allowed the Arcadian landscape myth to be transformed. Landscape emerged with a new relevance for the twenty-first century. The wilderness myth emerged because it embodied a critical counterpoint to the instrumental rationality of modernity and the loss of the sacred realm in secular society. Through the process of dialectical critique, landscape came to represent the values of conservationism and suggest that the construction of a Pakeha high culture is ongoing.

Landscape has been shown to be as much a part of Pakeha high culture, as Pakeha low and mass culture. This means that turning to landscape can provide us with a sincere and critical reflection of our culture, depending on which version of the

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626 Bell, Inventing; Steel, “Problem”.
627 Pound, Invention.
myth we reflect on and how we choose reflect on it. The work of figures such as Ursula Bethell, James K. Baxter, Allen Curnow, Rita Angus, and Colin McCahon, has been engaged with to show how the myth of New Zealand as a wilderness embodies a sense of ‘becoming’ that can continue to provide Pakeha with a symbol of hope, without falling into complacency or cynicism. This is because the wilderness myth looks critically to our colonial history and problems associated with modern rationalisation. By employing the Romantic ideas of imagination in nature and nostalgia, Pakeha artists and critics emphasised the reflexive value of landscape. The myth of New Zealand as a wilderness is therefore critical, as well as therapeutic.

New Zealand can be both a wasteland or a rural idyll. The myth that becomes our future is dependent on how we act. By engaging with recent developments in critical theory, in particular Žižek’s theory of secular (un)belief, our most democratic and critical cultural values are relocated in a negative dialectical manner to the only realm of the sacred left in modern society - that which we create. By providing a theory for secular belief, for a way modern citizens might believe in high culture, Žižek offers the cynics in society a suggestion that lies inherently in the critical theory tradition - which aims not only to explain the world, but to change it. This is because Žižek shows how cynicism is an outdated and ineffective critical response: a hangover from pre modern plebian kynicism. Instead, for critics today, a sincerity of belief is suggested - a sincerity crucial to the effectiveness of a modern critical stance. For Pakeha living in a cynical age, a sincere belief in our most critical landscape myths has become crucial to the radical critique of our most conservative and therapeutic ones.
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