

**‘Like Iron Filings to a Magnet’: A
Reappraisal of Michael King’s
Approach to New Zealand History**

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Abstract

This thesis outlines the development of New Zealand historian Michael King's writing career through an analysis of his main texts. King's texts have never been examined as a whole. This thesis endeavours to assess his place within the historiographical discourse of national histories in more depth than previously attempted. King's prolific career as a self-sustained writer brought a degree of success. He became an authority for a generation of New Zealanders wanting to understand their past. Nonetheless, academic historians have been critical of his work. This thesis examines their criticisms and re-evaluates King's contribution. This reassessment of King's works discusses the differing literary devices he used to construct his observations on New Zealand history. Commentators have focused on King's affirmation of being Pākehā: an indigenisation of European identity in New Zealand. Yet, this was not the only device King used to explain New Zealand history. He also focused on a sense of belonging to the landscape and the writing of life histories as personal expressions of his observations of New Zealand history. King's combinations of new and old stylistic conventions were showcased in his last work *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (2003). In this as in earlier work, King demonstrated that the framework of the nation for writing histories was not redundant but could be a tool for including the individual in their own history and provided them with a familiar construction of place and belonging.

Introduction

Michael King: History Man¹

The corpus of New Zealand's most well known and widely read social historian of the past forty years has never been assessed as a whole. Michael King (b.1945-d.2004) wrote 34 works which covered a gamut of issues he felt faced New Zealanders and their place within the national historical consciousness.² His proficiency for writing New Zealand history was not restricted to books; he was also a well known social commentator who provided his observations about New Zealand and its people for magazines, newspapers, radio and television. King's constant contribution to explaining current concerns in New Zealand by providing an understanding of what had occurred in the past caused him to be looked upon as an authority on their history by the New Zealand public.³ An indication of how trusted and revered King's account of the past was to the New Zealand public was seen in breaking of sale records for a non-fiction book following the publication of his last work *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (2003).⁴ Shortly after its publication, its success was overshadowed by the outpouring of grief at his untimely death.⁵ Consequently, his writings, books and historical ideals are still widely read and discussed by both by a public and an academic audience.⁶ Because a study of his career as a whole has never been attempted, it is important to analyse the trajectory of King's self-sustained and successful writing career.

¹ cf. Colin Hogg and John Carlaw's biographical documentary *History Man* (Auckland, 2004) for the title of this introduction.

² Two books that King collaborated on that were published posthumously include *Splendours of Civilisation: The John Money Collection at the Eastern Southland Gallery* (Dunedin, 2006) and *Chatham Islands: Heritage and Conservation* (Christchurch, 2008).

³ King's literary awards include the Feltex Television Writers' Award, Winston Churchill Fellowship 1980, Fulbright Visiting Writers' Fellowship 1988, OBE 1988, NZ Literary Fund 1987 and 1989, Wattie Book of the Year 1984, 1990, NZ Book Award (non-fiction) 1978, Burns Fellow Otago University 1998-99, Prime Minister's Literary Award 2003 [Arnold Pickmere, 'Obituary: Michael King', *The New Zealand Herald*, 1 April 2004, accessed from the New Zealand Herald Website, 5 March 2010].

⁴ Penguin Books NZ [press release], 24 October 2003, accessed from the Scoop: Independent News Website 8 December 2009.

⁵ Tim Watkins, 'Herald New Zealander of the Year', *New Zealand Herald*, 20 December 2003, accessed from the New Zealand Herald Website 8 December 2009 and Pickmere, 'Michael King: Obituary' (2004).

⁶ *Moko: Māori Tattooing the Twentieth Century* (1st ed. 1979) has recently been republished in 2008 (4th ed.). The success of the *Penguin History of New Zealand* saw a second edition in 2007 that incorporated pictures and captions researched by David Filer [Michael King, *The Penguin Illustrated History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2007).

This will be attempted in an objective manner that is removed from the ‘peoples’ historian’ persona that was constructed largely during his career, but also posthumously.⁷ In order to assess the development of his intellectual framework for explaining New Zealand history, his ideas are charted from his earliest work *Moko: Māori Tattooing in the Twentieth Century* (1972) to *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (2003).⁸ The aim of this preliminary study is to identify correctly King’s historiographical position within the discourse of New Zealand national histories.

In terms of New Zealand historiography commentators have firmly identified King’s contribution within a long line of European New Zealand historians wanting to cement a legitimate feeling of belonging. The framework of European settlers expressing their identity in history texts has been used since the very first history written about the country in a colonial area of writing: William Pember Reeves’ *The Long White Cloud: Aotearoa* (1898). Since the publication of this work there has been a host of other histories written by other European New Zealanders as an expression of their place within the country and its past.⁹ King’s predecessor Keith Sinclair, also seen as a historical commentator for his generation, wrote *A History of New Zealand* (1959) which would be the benchmark for general histories written from a European perspective. This work, reprinted in various forms until 2000, dominated the landscape of general histories of New Zealand.¹⁰ Sinclair sought to show New Zealanders that they had a national history, not one that was centred on the Imperial metropolis, but one built around New Zealand places and events. In this way they could feel a sense of belonging by considering themselves to be ‘native’.¹¹ Contemporary historians place King’s contribution to the field of New Zealand general histories, and his whole career, directly alongside Sinclair because of King’s aim to ensure that European New Zealanders better understood their past and therefore well

⁷ Watkins, ‘Herald New Zealander of the Year’ (2003).

⁸ n.b. From this point on Michael King’s *Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003) will be referred to by the abbreviation *History*.

⁹ i.e. A.W. Shrimpton and A. Mulgan, *Māori and Pākehā: A History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 1922); J.C. Beaglehole, *New Zealand: A Short History* (London, 1936); and F.L. Wood, *New Zealand in the World* (Wellington, 1940).

¹⁰ cf. Keith Sinclair with Raewyn Dalziel, *A History of New Zealand* (rev.ed.) (Auckland, 2000).

¹¹ W.H. Oliver, ‘A Destiny At Home’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol.19, no.1 (April, 1985), pp.9-10.

informed about the present.¹² Moreover, like Sinclair, King achieved this goal by writing from his own indigenous perspective of ‘New Zealandness’ which was from a male Pākehā perspective.¹³

While critics of King’s approach to New Zealand history argue that his attempt to indigenise Europeans within the historical consciousness continued to reinforce traditional notions of cultural dominance and colonisation,¹⁴ King developed his framework for writing history from both new and traditional waves of thought. King’s generation of baby-boomers grew-up in a ‘golden age’ of prosperity following the depression of the interwar period and Second World War. As they matured into adulthood they had a sense of optimism about New Zealand’s progress and future. As a young adult King was further influenced by the counter-culture movement and its effects on music, literature, food and fashion, among other things that changed New Zealand’s inward looking perspective of its self to focus more on the world stage.¹⁵ In historiographical terms King’s approach was largely shaped by decolonisation literature which was inspired by colonised peoples of the British Empire whose voices had seldom been acknowledged. In fact, King’s writing career began as journalist for the *Waikato Times* in 1967 where his mandate was to report on Māori affairs.¹⁶ From engaging with the iwi and hapu of the Waikato region King developed a greater understanding of Māori life that fed into a greater knowledge of New Zealand’s past. He continued to write on Māori subjects for the early part of his history career as a means of better understanding Māori place in the historical narrative. From this knowledge base of mātauranga Māori (Māori cosmology) King formed his ideas on Pākehā identity through comparing the similarities of their cultural traditions and indigenous status in New Zealand.¹⁷ Much of the critique of King’s contribution to New Zealand history has been focused on this part of his career and his

¹² cf. Chris Hilliard, ‘New Sinclair’, *Landfall*, no.208 (2004), pp.176-180.

¹³ cf. Michael King, *Being Pākehā: An Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (Auckland, 1985) and Michael King, *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland, 1999).

¹⁴ Jacob Pollock, ‘Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism: James Belich and Michael King’s General Histories of New Zealand’, *NZJH*, vol.41, no.2 (October, 2007), pp.180-198.

¹⁵ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.69.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.85.

¹⁷ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: ‘Mātauranga Pākehā: King’s Construction of a New Zealand Identity’.

attention to Pākehā identity in what he saw as a bicultural New Zealand.

However, this thesis demonstrates that King's contribution to New Zealand history was more than simply one that was written in a bicultural way by a self-proclaimed Pākehā historian.

Further discussion and critique needs to be offered on King's contribution to New Zealand historiography. Over his career the response to King's declaration of an indigenous Pākehā identity has met much criticism and opposition.¹⁸ Māori rights advocates saw his underpinning of his identity from autochthonous elements, including Māori culture, as an affront to their own indigenous status in New Zealand. King, however, never believed his indigenous identity was in opposition to Māori or their position in New Zealand as tangata whenua. He saw the relationship between Māori and Pākehā culture as symbiotic: one in which Māori were the first settlers or an older sibling to their juvenile Pākehā sibling.¹⁹ King did not intend his affirmation of Pākehā identity to be dominant over Māori culture.²⁰ Nevertheless, history written with the intention to elevate Māori and Pākehā voices to an equal status in New Zealand has been interpreted by later historians as conventional, a continuation of traditional models of national history including colonising methodologies.²¹

In part, the stylistic conventions of King's historical narratives were more traditional because he used the framework of the building of a nation to explain how New Zealand and its people had developed over time.²² Although the intention of his bicultural national narrative was to praise the progress of New Zealand from a British centred outpost to an independent nation with stories of its own to tell, King did not shake the critics' negative conceptions of his generational approach to the past.²³ Conversely, King's expression of Pākehā

¹⁸ cf. Stephen Webster, 'Book Review: Michael King: Māori: A Photographic and Social History', *The Republican*, no.48 (December, 1983), pp.13-19.

¹⁹ Michael King, 'Being Pākehā', *Pākehā: The Quest for New Zealand Identity* (Auckland, 1991), p.20.

²⁰ Michael King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu: 1000 Years of Māori History* (Auckland, 1997), p.5.

²¹ Caroline Daley, 'Review: The Penguin History of New Zealand', *NZJH*, vol.38, no.1 (April, 2004), pp.77-79.

²² Giselle Byrnes, 'Introduction: Reframing New Zealand History', *The New Oxford History of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2009), pp.1-2.

²³ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism', p.195.

identity was not restricted to a national framework. King developed many other devices for writing New Zealand history that have had little focus or discussion within the discipline thus far. This thesis looks in more in depth at King's literary devices for constructing his histories than has hitherto been attempted. The following chapters not only discuss the King's place within New Zealand historiography and development of mātauranga Pākehā as a framework for understanding his identity,²⁴ they also define the importance for King of landscape and biography. In regard to the device of landscape, King once again used traditional conventions alongside new and more innovative ways to express a sense of belonging to the New Zealand landscape. While conclusions of dominance and colonisation can be drawn from his many pictorial histories which boast regional development and European re-naming and settlement,²⁵ King brought a more personal contribution to the landscapes of New Zealand. Through explaining his own experiences of growing up and living in New Zealand, King engaged the reader of his works to feel like a part of their own history through their personal experiences of place.²⁶ Similarly, in the writing of life histories of New Zealanders, King explained more deeply the human elements of national history. Through biography, literary biography and memoir King used others' experiences as a tool for the reader to think of their own place in New Zealand history.²⁷ This helped to close the gap between the readers' conception of the past and academic constructions which can seem to be outside the readers' comprehension of historical events because of dense academic arguments and jargon that can often exclude rather than include a general audience.²⁸

King's *History*, his last work, was testament to the framework he developed throughout his entire career. The work which is over 500 pages in length, incorporated both his easy style of storytelling that included the reader within the

²⁴ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: 'Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity' in which I have coined the phrase 'Mātauranga Pākehā' to describe King's development of an indigenous way of thinking for European New Zealanders in relation to Māori culture.

²⁵ cf. Giselle Byrnes, "'A dead sheet covered with meaningless words?'" Place Names and Cultural Colonization of Tauranga', *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1, (April, 2002), pp.18-35.

²⁶ cf. King's memoirs: King, *Being Pākehā* (1985); Michael King, *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* (Auckland, 1992); and King, *Being Pākehā Now*, (1999).

²⁷ Kerry Howe, 'Foreword', *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native*, (2nd ed.) (Auckland, 2004), p.vi.

²⁸ King, *History*, p.11.

national narrative, as well as his generational approach to the story of New Zealand which was much like his predecessors.²⁹ The accumulation of all his thoughts on New Zealand history, the landscape and its people was showcased in this work. King showed again that his audience was Pākehā New Zealanders who believed in an optimistic progressive nationalism driven by the mechanism of biculturalism.³⁰ However, he still strove to maintain a balance of Māori and Pākehā stories within his histories. The extent to which he achieved this balance has been strongly debated by current academics and this thesis seeks to examine these issues. King used the nation as a tool for individuals to feel like a part of their own history through a better understanding of past events.³¹ While his target audience were those he viewed to be like himself, Pākehā, he endeavoured to make his narrative inclusive of all New Zealanders.³² In part this was achieved because King's lack of academic conventions made his work more accessible than any other historian of his generation.³³ The impact of his approach, positive and negative, still resonates to the present day with both the public and academics alike.

King was a prolific writer over his forty year career. This can be a blessing or a curse when trying to present a sense of a person's approach to not only how they wrote history, but why they wrote history in such a way. So while this thesis attempts to gain a better idea of King's approach to writing history it does not use all his works. Primarily, this thesis focuses on King's books. These texts are then used for a base to contextualise King's ideas and conclusions with contemporary and current secondary historiographical sources. The task of including all of King's journal, newspaper and magazine articles and radio and or television interviews was too large for the parameters of a Masters thesis. However, this is a preliminary study. I would be flattered if someone felt they could expand on or critique this historiographical study.

²⁹ Hilliard, p.177.

³⁰ cf. Chapter One of this thesis: 'Being Pākehā' in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand'.

³¹ i.e. King's reference to the components of his identity being like 'iron fillings to a magnet': King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

³² Michael King, *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (Auckland, 1983), p.i.

³³ Hilliard, p.177.

Personally, I feel lucky that King wrote so fruitfully, for so long. It is an inspiring process to read so closely one author and to feel like you are a part of their creative development of ideas. It has made me think about my own place in writing New Zealand history and indeed how prominent my voice is as an appraiser of King's approach to writing history. King often wrote at the beginning of his works about the view he could see from his window of his writing retreat in the Coromandel and the many historical imprints that embedded themselves in the landscape as well as the people before whose 'psychic residue' still resonated and filled the air with their spirit.³⁴ As I look out of my window on the campus of Canterbury University I get the same sort of feeling, but the psychic residue is from those scholars who have gone before and have paved the way for this thesis to be written. To borrow from Michael Reilly, I am content in my 'intellectual whakapapa' that allows me to make valid and informed arguments.³⁵

Intellectually, King and I are separated by our generational interpretations of historical events. Hence, many of our conflicts about New Zealand history reside in our differing definitions of identity. While I am quite comfortable with the label Pākehā, which for me is a part of a multicultural rather than bicultural nation, I feel my own identity is much more centred on my gender than any other component. As this thesis will show, understanding one's history to gain a greater understanding of identity is ultimately an individual pursuit. Collective understandings of identity are a foundation for further self knowledge. However, the individual decides how they do or do not fit the popular model for identity, be that a framework of nationalism, culture or gender. Each generation of historians endeavours to challenge these popular frameworks in order to discover how new understandings of the past give us a richer and more in depth understanding of the past and ourselves. Hence, historians that continue to use the nation as the central placeholder for identity do so because it is the most recognisable and tangible marker for understanding the past. Because of its central position in the minds of most New Zealanders the validity of the historical narrative surrounding its construction past and present must always be critiqued and reassessed generation

³⁴ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, pp.240-241.

³⁵ Michael Reilly, 'An Ambiguous Past: Representing Māori History', *NZJH*, vol.29, no.1, (April, 1992), pp.38-39.

by generation. It is time to critique the body of King's work from my own age group's perceptions about New Zealand history as a member of the new generation of historians.

Chapter One

‘Being Pākehā’ in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand

The national historian’s framework for writing a country’s history as the development of the nation-state and its identity is a longstanding approach within the modern historical discipline.¹ In New Zealand the historiographical discussion about belonging to New Zealand has occurred broadly through three stages: an Imperial identity through nation building in the period of 1880-1930, an autochthonous nationalism from 1930-1960s and, in the mid-late twentieth century, a challenge to the legitimacy of the nation as a main identifier, with the recognition of new individual categories of belonging such as race, gender or class. Each stage of historiographical discussion caused New Zealand historians to rethink and recast their associations with the nation and role it played in historical writing. In the twenty-first century this has extended to a complete removal of the nation from the construction of a country’s histories because of its discursive relationship with other historical themes and identifiers.² The most recent example of New Zealand historians successfully diverting attention away from the nation towards other categories of historical analysis was in the multi-authored *New Oxford History of New Zealand* (2009).³ In this work the authors debunk previous categories of the articulation of the colony to nation thesis in the sections labelled ‘Biculturalism(s)’, ‘Nation(s)-making?’, ‘A Social Laboratory?’ and ‘State experiments?’⁴ This questioning of the intentions of national historians and their narratives has prompted current New Zealand historians to critique or contextualise Michael King’s work within New Zealand historiography as

¹ cf. Leopold von Ranke was one of the first modern historians to write about the nation as a historical entity. He believed the progress of the nation had a predisposed teleological destiny: *History of the Latin and Teutonic Nations, 1494-1514* (London, 1909).

² cf. Antoinette Burton (ed.), *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation* (Washington DC, 2003) and Ann Curthoys, ‘Does Australian History Have a Future?’, *Australian Historical Studies*, vol.33, no.118, (2002), pp.140-152.

³ Giselle Byrnes (ed.) *The New Oxford History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2009).

⁴ *Ibid.*, ‘Part Two: Biculturalism(s)?’, pp.71-146, cf. Judith Binney ‘History and Memory: The Wood of the Whau Tree, 1766-2005’, pp.73-98 and Tony Ballantyne ‘The State, Politics and Power, 1769-1893’, pp.99-124; ‘Part Four: Nation(s)-Making?’, pp.243-320, cf. Charlotte MacDonald, ‘Ways of Belonging: Sporting Spaces in New Zealand History’, pp.269-296 and Philippa Mein Smith, ‘The Tasman World’, pp.297-320; ‘Part Five: A Social Laboratory?’, pp.321-510, cf. Caroline Daley, ‘Modernity, Consumption and Leisure’, pp.423-446 and Angela Wanhalla, ‘Family, Community and Gender’, pp.447-464; ‘Part Six: State Experiments?’, pp.511-598, cf. Geoff Bertram, ‘The New Zealand Economy, 1900-2000’, pp.537-572 and David Capie, ‘New Zealand and the World: Imperial, International and Global Relations’, pp.573-598.

narrowly focused on traditional modes of historical writing.⁵ Both Caroline Daley and Chris Hilliard have compared his approach to that of the historians of autochthonous identity whose works were most predominant during New Zealand's centennial in the 1940s and popularised in the 1950s and which focused on an autonomous nation building narrative.⁶

Although King's writing career began during the 1970s and his early works focused on the oral accounts of previously subordinated Māori voices,⁷ his position as a Pākehā national historian meant his historical approach has been portrayed as outdated and generational.⁸ In part this is because he grew up during the autochthonous period of history writing and his morals and values reflected a strong idealism about belonging to an independent New Zealand nation distinctive from the British Empire.⁹ To achieve this sense of 'New Zealandness', King explored what it meant to be an indigenous white New Zealander in juxtaposition with 'unique' national elements: its tangata whenua and landscape.¹⁰ Furthermore, his approach was to write history in a bicultural framework which endeavoured to elevate the histories of Māori to the same importance in the nation as that of non-Māori;¹¹ however, his well intended style was perceived by Māori¹² as well as Pākehā to be colonising.¹³ This critical assessment of King's approach to New Zealand history is only the skeleton on which a much more inclusive and rich contribution to New Zealand history was based. Fleshing out King's historiographical skeleton is the line of enquiry for this thesis as a whole. This chapter aims to examine King's placement within New Zealand history by his

⁵ cf. Caroline Daley, 'Review: The Penguin History of New Zealand', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol.38, no.1, (April, 2004), pp.77-79 and Chris Hilliard, 'New Sinclair' in 'The Landfall Review', *Landfall*, no.208 (2004), pp.176-180.

⁶ Daley, pp.77 and 79; Hilliard, 'New Sinclair', pp.177-179.

⁷ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis 'Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity'.

⁸ n.b. This criticism of King has only been examined in depth in relation to his general history: *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003). The most well known critique is Jacob Pollock's 'Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism: James Belich and Michael King's General Histories of New Zealand', *NZJH*, vol.41, no.2 (2007), pp.180-198.

⁹ Michael King, *Being Pākehā: An Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (Auckland, 1985), pp.182-186.

¹⁰ cf. King, *Being Pākehā* and *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland, 1999).

¹¹ King, *Being Pākehā*, 'Being Pākehā', pp.177-186.

¹² Na Vapi Kupenga, 'The Feminist Eye: Te Puea', *Broadsheet*, no.55, (December, 1977), p.37.

¹³ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism', pp.182, 186-187, 190 and 193-195.

academic peers. Explaining the bare bones of King's approach to New Zealand history, and how he has been placed within broad historiographical developments, enables further discussion in later chapters about how this placement can be rethought and revised in light of the new approaches to the role of the nation within the historical discipline.

The nation as a historiographical framework was and is still used by historians because of its easily identifiable parameters of place and stories of the people from that place.¹⁴ It is a formula that produces a shared sense of belonging and identity for the majority culture of a country. Conversely, for the minority cultures within the nation the shared sense of belonging can feel contrived and unrepresentative of their situations.¹⁵ National histories, therefore, can reinforce shared values and experiences that are real, but often these memories are constructed by the historian and in turn imagined by the reader as historical truth.¹⁶ Hence, understanding the historian's agenda and consequent framework for writing about the nation is an important foundation for further discussion and critique about its role and usefulness within New Zealand history.

King's framework for constructing his histories of New Zealand was formed through life circumstances that shaped his way of thinking. The foundation of his thoughts on New Zealand history lay in the generation in which he grew up. He was born 1945 in Wellington to two Irish Catholic parents.¹⁷ This generation of New Zealanders had seen and experienced the difficult emotional and economic hardships of the first and second world wars and the interwar period. The offspring of this generation, the baby boomers, were brought up during the rebuilding period and made to understand and respect what their parents had endured for their futures.¹⁸ In many cases, the baby boomer generation in New Zealand grew up with optimism about the progress of the nation and its endurance

¹⁴ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth and Reality* (Cambridge, 1990), pp.1-13.

¹⁵ David Pearson, 'Reframing Majoritarian National Identities Within an Antipodean Perspective', *Thesis Eleven*, vol.95, no.48 (2008), p.51.

¹⁶ q.v. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).

¹⁷ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.37.

¹⁸ Michael King, 'Michael King: Being Pākehā', *The Writing of New Zealand: Inventions of Identities* (ed.) Alex Calder (Auckland, 1993), p.233.

into the next decades.¹⁹ This optimism was reflected in the romantic way King recounted his childhood being filled with exploration and understanding of his geographical surroundings.²⁰ The memories of family trips to the seaside, scrambling through the estuaries at Paremata and his solo fishing expeditions translated later in life to an affinity with the landscape and a positive generational outlook about New Zealand society as a whole.²¹ In addition, these children's parents engrained in them the older generational principle of hard work for continued progress. Accordingly, the baby boomer generation saw the nation state as always moving forward toward greater things. For them this meant being able to combine the luxury of leisure with work.²² This generation could also feel secure in the national myths reinforced by politicians and historians about the nation such as its harmonious race relations and its egalitarian classless society.²³

As these children proceeded into adulthood, their optimism, encouraged by a feeling of belonging to New Zealand, was enthusiastically channelled into the new waves of thought that were facilitated by the counter-culture developing in Britain and America.²⁴ In the 1960s and 1970s New Zealand's counter culture blossomed among young academics who questioned the norms of society as represented by:²⁵ the country's involvement in war (especially Vietnam),²⁶ race relations between Māori and Pākehā (as seen by the beginning of the Māori protest movements),²⁷ freer sexual mores²⁸ (challenging earlier social norms represented in the Mazengarb Report),²⁹ the women's rights movement,³⁰ the

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ cf. Chapter Three of this thesis: 'Identity and the Landscape: Imagining New Zealand Through Michael King's Personal Experience of Place'.

²¹ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.49-52.

²² Graham Hutchins, *The Swinging Sixties: When New Zealand Changed Forever* (Auckland, 2008), pp.9-24.

²³ King, 'Michael King: Being Pākehā', pp.230-233.

²⁴ Hutchins, pp.88-98; pp.131-150; pp.174-181, pp.203-211 and pp.238-250.

²⁵ Tom Brooking and Paul Enright, *Milestones: Turning Points in New Zealand History* (Wellington, 1988), p.184.

²⁶ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.71-72.

²⁷ cf. Aroha Harris, *Hīkoi: Forty Years of Māori Protest* (Wellington, 2004).

²⁸ cf. Susan Jane Kedgley and Sharyn Cederman (eds.), *Sexist Society* (Wellington, 1972); Wendy James and Susan Jane Kedgley, *The Mistress* (London, 1973) and Susan Jane Kedgley, *The Sexual Wilderness: Men and Women in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1985).

²⁹ Oswald Chettle Mazengarb, 'Report of the Special Committee on Moral Delinquency in Children and Adolescents', *AJHR*, H-47 (1954).

³⁰ Brooking and Enright, pp.185-186.

experimentation with drugs and a youth subculture driven by pop music and consumerism.³¹

While in personal terms King's approach is not easily placed within the feminist movement (he did not directly identify with women's rights), he was sympathetic to their cause.³² His later work *One of the Boys?: Changing Views of Masculinity in New Zealand* (1988) explored male stereotypes that reflected the impact and influence of the women's movement on culture at the time.³³ He was also influenced at University by the popular subculture of rock n roll, alcohol and marijuana.³⁴ By the time of filming the *Tangata Whenua* series in 1974 his personal appearance can be described as anti-establishment because it reflected an influence from the counterculture movement. His long hair, bushy beard and casual attire – which he retained into adulthood – were all contrary to the clean cut look that a young journalist of his age was expected to resemble.³⁵ Such physical and personal representations of the counterculture movement highlighted for many New Zealanders a changing sense of identity and belonging between the generations. In effect, King's histories were influenced by the cultural change he lived through. He witnessed a strong sentiment of belonging to Britain evolve into something independent from its previous dominion status.³⁶ This evolution of identity was the framework he tried to apply throughout his career.

Additionally, King's upbringing was instilled with the values of Catholic theology and an outsider's identity of the New Zealand Catholic Irish whose sense of oppression by the English had been brought by his ancestors to the Southern Hemisphere.³⁷ This feeling of subjugation was reinforced not just by the nuns and their anti-English sermons at school, but also by his grandmother who told him

³¹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.69.

³² i.e. in *New Zealanders at War* (Auckland, 1981), p.4 where King explains that this work on war has a regrettable and embedded male emphasis because of the way in which wars are fought. He wrote: 'This massive gap in the country's social history awaits the energetic attention of future researches, preferably female.' Hence, while King sympathises with the need for more female voices within the historical discipline, but does nothing to address the imbalance himself.

³³ Michael King, *One of the Boys?: Changing Views of Masculinity in New Zealand* (ed.) (Auckland, 1988), p.viii.

³⁴ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.69.

³⁵ cf. Michael King and Barry Barclay, *Tangata Whenua* (1974), 320 mins and King, *Being Pākehā*, p.108; p.111 and p.113.

³⁶ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.182-186.

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp.182-183.

stories and songs of the ‘home’ country.³⁸ In comparison, within New Zealand society, the majority culture was that of European citizens of English and Scottish descent which helped to retain over the generations a strong sentiment to keep a connection to Britain culturally, economically and politically.³⁹ This historical relationship between England and New Zealand heightened for King that he was not a part of the perceived dominant national identity.⁴⁰ His lack of identification led him to rethink what it meant to him to be a part of New Zealand society. It was not until his career began as a journalist with the *Waikato Times* on the Māori round that King began to construct for himself an indigenous identity.⁴¹ What he termed ‘being Pākehā’ was developed during this period from knowing and understanding Māori culture. As his career developed this knowledge of Māori tikanga and life ways was used as a device by King to juxtapose the indigenous status of Māori with the same status for Europeans in New Zealand. This relationship between Māori and Pākehā and the influence especially of Māori culture on Pākehā culture was the continuing and dominant theme of King’s histories of New Zealand.⁴²

The streamlining of King’s approach to an indigenous perception of European identity in New Zealand lends itself to the interpretation that King’s histories are dismissive of other types of identity that do not constitute a Pākehā belonging to New Zealand. In this respect critiques have seen King’s approach to writing national history as Eurocentric and therefore purposefully culturally dominant.⁴³ While this evaluation has been the favoured interpretation of King’s histories, his approach to the nation and its stories was much more complex. While the influences of all three broad historiographical phases, that are to be discussed below, are represented within King’s historical career, the complexity of his approach has meant that his position cannot be confined to one category or the

³⁸ *Ibid*, pp.46-50.

³⁹ Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800-1945* (Auckland, 2008), pp.14-15.

⁴⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.46-48.

⁴¹ n.b. At university King comments that he could see ‘gaps in the spectrum’ in regard to how the curriculum was taught. King believed that what they learned at tertiary level was not adequate for understanding ‘encounters in our own country’. What he meant by this was that the curriculum was Eurocentric and lacked a Māori culture dimension [King, *Being Pākehā*, p.68].

⁴² cf. Chapter Two of this thesis ‘Mātauranga Pākehā: King’s Construction of a New Zealand Identity’.

⁴³ Pollock, ‘Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism’, p.195.

other. King's approach actually resides mostly between the last two categories of autochthonous nationalism and of new areas of inquiry which recognised the need to include subordinated voices within national histories. This bi-focal approach in a sense represented a dualism of ideas. King balanced his traditional progressive national narrative that was based on his own perceived indigenous status of being Pākehā, with a more inclusive look at the peripheries of the nation including Māori histories, the life histories of individuals and personal experiences. The following paragraphs outline the three broad stages in New Zealand historiography – Imperial nationalism, autochthonous nationalism and the rethinking of nation as a historical category – in order to understand why King is labelled, essentially, as a progressive nationalist, Pākehā-bicultural historian.

To label a historian's approach with so many differing traits it is important to establish what exactly is meant by the labels – optimistic, progressive and bicultural – in relation to history writing. Firstly, unpacking the term 'progressive history' is important because it is the foundation from which the other two labels of 'optimistic' and 'bicultural' can be better explained. This is because 'progressive histories' has more than one meaning. An author of a progressive history sees society moving forward, or in other words, being able to build on the past towards the future.⁴⁴ This forward motion which is envisioned by the progressive historian is directed by change within society.⁴⁵ The change perpetuates a move towards something better than had previously existed.⁴⁶ Hence, to describe a progressive historian's narrative as optimistic might be an overstatement. However, this criticism of such an approach is negated by the way that progressive narratives can still look towards the future without glossing over the adversity or negative outcomes of progress through using those events in their narrative as building blocks of their national narrative.⁴⁷ The most popular example of a larger undercurrent in New Zealand historiography is the critique of European narratives of progress as dominant over Māori histories and

⁴⁴ Hobsbawm, pp.14-41.

⁴⁵ King, 'Michael King: Being Pākehā', pp.232-233.

⁴⁶ n.b. The most famous model of this historical approach was Karl Marx's 'modes of production' in which he foresaw three epochs of human history each proceeded by the next developmentally superior stage. q.v. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of the Political Economy*, vol.1 Book 1: 'The Process of Production of Capital' (Moscow, 1887).

⁴⁷ Tara Brabazon, *Tracking the Jack: A Retracing of the Antipodes* (Sydney, 2000), pp.57-69.

development.⁴⁸ As Tara Brabazon explained in relation to New Zealand and Australian histories ‘[t]he aim of the Whitefella Antipodeans is not to wallow in the shame and guilt for the past – The key is to recognise that those past injustices are still living in present indigenous politics.’⁴⁹

Approaching history from an optimistic progressive angle does lend itself to much criticism, especially as such an approach can be seen by some historians as history having a final outcome: a goal to be reached or worked towards. For King this end result was a nation of Māori and Pākehā who were moving towards shared integration and understanding.⁵⁰ This agenda has been coined biculturalism by social commentators. It implies that both cultures learn and understand each others values, social conventions, language and customs. However, in the New Zealand situation it can be argued that biculturalism has yet to be achieved. While Māori have moved toward being bicultural by speaking English and integrating to the European way of life, many Europeans in New Zealand have not done the same in regard to Māori culture.⁵¹ While King very rarely used the term bicultural to describe his own histories,⁵² he acknowledged a need on the part of Europeans to understand and learn Māori histories and culture in order to better understand their place within New Zealand as a nation.⁵³ By including the histories of both cultures within his national narrative King can, by default, be assumed to be writing a bicultural narrative. While this will be discussed further in the later part of this chapter in relation to other ‘bicultural’ histories King’s intention in writing optimistic-progressive-bicultural-national narratives was to engage readers, who were mostly Pākehā, to better understand themselves in relation to their past, present and future.

⁴⁸ Paul Spoonley, ‘Constructing Ourselves: The Post-Colonial Politics of Pākehā’, *Justice and Identity: Antipodean Practices*, Margaret Wilson and Anna Yeatman (eds.) (Wellington, 1995), pp.96-99.

⁴⁹ Brabazon, p.69.

⁵⁰ Michael King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu: A Thousand Years of Māori History* (Auckland, 1997), p.118.

⁵¹ Michael King, *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (Auckland, 1983), p.i.

⁵² i.e. King used the term multicultural instead of bicultural to describe national progress in regard to Māori and policy making decisions in New Zealand [Michael King (ed.), *Tihe Māori Ora: Aspects of Māoritanga* (Wellington, 1978), p.8.].

⁵³ King, *Māori*, p.i.

The first histories of New Zealand were written by authors from the British Empire who wanted to emphasise the success of the fledgling colony due to Imperial influence and control.⁵⁴ In other words, their agenda for writing histories was to reflect the greatness of the British Empire as perceived through a colonial association of belonging and allegiance.⁵⁵ Historian Peter Gibbons, who has outlined four periods of writing literature in New Zealand, has called the period between 1840-1890 the ‘Literature of Invasion’ because the Imperial writers who lived in New Zealand (often only for short periods of time) were mostly politicians whose aim was to reinforce the propaganda of Empire through colonial ideology.⁵⁶ *The Long White Cloud Aotearoa* (1898) written by William Pember Reeves, the Agent-General for New Zealand in London (1896-1908),⁵⁷ reflected the colonial attitude towards Britain’s fledgling territory during its early colonial development. His concerns were with the progress of New Zealand politically and economically under the influence of the institutions of Empire. He wrote in the *The Long White Cloud* that he hoped that this work would ‘[...d]ispel ignorance of New Zealand [in Britain], and create an atmosphere favourable to investment.’⁵⁸ This need by Imperial advocates to expand and promote progress was reinforced in Reeves’s history by the examples used. Thus, he explained that during the war with Māori, the origins of which were exacerbated by burgeoning European land settlement and a misunderstanding by both settlers and Māori of the terms of occupation, that the leadership of Governor George Grey was considered visionary to the success of the Imperial military campaigns.⁵⁹ ‘Good Governor Grey’, the gubernatorial authority for Britain in New Zealand [1845-1853 and 1860-1868], was described by Reeves as a saviour of New Zealand who brought about the building blocks for democracy in the new state.⁶⁰ In this sense then, this work was produced for a British audience. He believed that ‘[the ...]

⁵⁴ Giselle Byrnes, ‘Introduction: Reframing New Zealand History’, *NOHNZ* (2009), pp.5-6.

⁵⁵ Antoinette Burton, ‘On the Inadequacy and the Indispensability of the Nation’, *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation* (Washington DC, 2003), pp.5-9.

⁵⁶ Peter Gibbons, ‘Non-fiction’, *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature*, Terry Strum, (Auckland, 1991), p.34.

⁵⁷ Keith Sinclair, *William Pember Reeves New Zealand Fabian* (London, 1965), pp.246-268.

⁵⁸ John Child, ‘Introduction’ in *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand* vol.1 3rd edn. (Victoria, 1968), p.xiv.

⁵⁹ William Pember Reeves, *The Long White Cloud: Aotearoa* (London, 1898), pp. 217-230.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.229.

daughter nations of Britain are not unworthy of English study and English pride.’⁶¹

Reeves was a native-born New Zealander from Christchurch.⁶² He belonged to one of the first New Zealand born generations to explore a dual sense of belonging to Empire and colony. While he would ultimately live out his days in England as an expatriate (as would many of the next generation of New Zealand writers and academics),⁶³ what his histories showed was a strong sentiment of belonging to New Zealand through national progress wrought by British colonisation.⁶⁴ In his second most known work, the two volume *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand* (1902), he reinforced his pride of belonging to a developing politically savvy nation which had moved from a gubernatorial system of control, to provincial style of government that was abolished in 1875 and replaced by one national democratically elected government which saw the advent a liberal government headed by John Ballance in 1891.⁶⁵ Furthermore, this government strove to better the social and welfare conditions of its people. Reeves was sympathetic to the regulation and reform of conditions for labourers, maritime workers, trade unionists and through the influence of his wife, he took an interest in the women’s suffrage movement.⁶⁶ Having worked as cadet on a sheep farm in Ashburton himself, Reeves knew the hardships that were endured by labourers and strove to build up the infrastructure of the colony to gain prosperity from the bottom up.⁶⁷ As he wrote in the socialist magazine *Pharos*:

The socialist may be wrong; may be deluded; may be a blind leader of the blind. But at least he has something to offer, something to suggest. He does not mock us by bidding us be content with a society with which no thinking man can be content. There lies his strength.⁶⁸

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p.v.

⁶² Sinclair, *William Pember Reeves New Zealand Fabian*, p.8.

⁶³ Peter Gibbons, ‘The Climate of Opinion’, *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, W.H. Oliver and B.R. Williams (eds.) (Wellington, 1981), p.308.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, pp.308-309.

⁶⁵ Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), pp.231-234.

⁶⁶ Sinclair, *William Pember Reeves New Zealand Fabian*, p.180.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp.41-46.

⁶⁸ Child, viii.

Reeves wrote passionately of the success of the policies implemented by the Liberal government over an eight year period.⁶⁹ The most notable of these ‘state experiments’ included the Land for Settlement Act (1894),⁷⁰ the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (1894) and the Old Age Pension Act (1898).⁷¹

This sense of belonging to New Zealand was deliberately affirmed by Reeves throughout his works. The most definitive statement of nationalism was in the preface of *The Long White Cloud*: ‘I have lived in New Zealand, have seen it and studied it from end to end, and have had to do with its affairs: it is my country.’⁷² Many New Zealand writers of this period 1890s-1930s, which Gibbons called the ‘Literature of Occupation’, felt a strong belonging to New Zealand while simultaneously feeling an equally strong attachment to Britain.⁷³

This same period has now been described by contemporary historical scholars as the ‘Māoriland’ period because of the term’s use by the *Bulletin* school. This period 1872-1914 as discussed by Jane Stafford and Mark Williams represented simultaneously the ideology of the Victorian era of the nineteenth century and the burgeoning influences of the modern era of the nineteenth century.⁷⁴ It achieved this contradiction by using indigenous imagery of Māori culture and the native flora and fauna of New Zealand as cultural identifiers for European New Zealanders through appropriation and colonising ideology. This use of imagery in print, art, photography, decoration, literature and poetry was to construct an identity that was not foreign or unsettling to its European occupants, but something that was familiar and distinctive to their colonial situation.⁷⁵ This generational pattern of thinking was reinforced by the numbers of native born European New Zealanders rising to be the majority of the population in 1886.⁷⁶ The numbers of native born Europeans in conjunction with the encouragement

⁶⁹ cf. William Pember Reeves, *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, vols. 1 & 2 (London, 1902).

⁷⁰ Reeves, *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, vol.1, p.276 and p.279.

⁷¹ Reeves, *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, vol.2, pp.85-106 and pp.242-249.

⁷² Reeves, *The Long White Cloud*, p.vi.

⁷³ Gibbons, ‘Non-fiction’, pp.52-68.

⁷⁴ Jane Stafford and Mark Williams, *Māoriland: New Zealand Literature 1872-1914* (Wellington, 2006), p.11.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Peter Gibbons, ‘Non-Fiction’, p.55.

from institutions such as the New Zealand Natives Association (1890)⁷⁷ and the New Zealand Literary and Historical Association (1899)⁷⁸ reinforced a shared sense togetherness generated by a reorientation of their traditional cultural identifiers.

The ‘Māoriland’ identity movement is best understood as a part of the larger trend within the colony to make Europeans feel indigenous in their new surroundings. When placing Reeves’s feeling of belonging to New Zealand within this framework his works can be seen to be obviously influenced by ‘Māoriland’ imagery and rhetoric which is both colonising and a foundation for a heightened awareness of an identity developing outside of Britain and Empire.⁷⁹ In *The Long White Cloud* Reeves tries to grapple with this changing dynamic within the New Zealand population. In one of his early chapters he stated ‘[t]he first colonists of New Zealand were brown men from the South Seas’.⁸⁰ Reeves then goes on to call Māori ‘the New Zealanders’.⁸¹ During this period from 1880s to 1910, it was common practice to call Māori ‘New Zealanders’, while European settlers were yet to develop an indigenous taxonomy for themselves. Conversely, by the end of the first edition in 1898 Reeves used the term New Zealanders to describe the newly emerging European, New Zealand born population: ‘[t]he New Zealanders are a British race[...] they consist of English, Scotch and Irish, living together, meeting daily, intermarrying, and having children whose blood with each generation becomes more completely blended and mingled’.⁸² This showed an attempt by Reeves to reconcile the dual colonial and national identities of Europeans at this time as a means of fashioning an identity separate to Britain.⁸³

While there are current debates as to whether or not the ‘Māoriland’ period of literature can be called the first movement of autochthonous identity, it is still

⁷⁷ Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand’s Search for National Identity* (Wellington, 1986), pp.31-33.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p.47.

⁷⁹ Stafford and Williams, p.11.

⁸⁰ Reeves, *The Land of the Long White Cloud*, pp.33.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, pp.33-34.

⁸² *Ibid*, p.399.

⁸³ Donald Denoon, Philippa Mein Smith with Marivic Wyndham, ‘Foundations of Contemporary Identities’, *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific* (Oxford, 2000), pp.3-4 and p.12.

largely accepted that the period of the 1930s to the 1950s is a much more appropriate starting point.⁸⁴ However, like all broad historiographical categories there is some overlap of ideas that percolate through to new understandings of culture and identity. For example the histories that followed Reeves's texts into the beginning of twentieth century continued to express the success of New Zealand as a colonial territory. This progress was expressed with pride by such texts as A.W. Shrimpton and A. Mulgan's *Māori and Pākehā: A History of New Zealand* (1922); J.B Condliffe and Willis T.G. Airey's *A Short History of New Zealand* (1938) and J.C. Beaglehole's *New Zealand: A Short History* (1936).⁸⁵ While, each work focused on slightly different areas of national development, all of the works saw New Zealand as a part of a wider British experience. This included similarities of belonging to the metropolis for colonial countries like New Zealand, including a belief in the good race relations between British and indigenous cultures, the influences of foreign markets on trade and commerce within the Empire, as well as being a part of the larger colonial political ideologies and systems.⁸⁶ For this reason even though Gibbons regards the period of the 1930s-1980s as 'the literature of national identity', he argues nonetheless that the discursive colonisation themes of 'the literature of occupation' period were still present in the later epoch.⁸⁷ A growing interest in how New Zealand could be seen as a separate entity from Britain was reflected in histories that focused on the role of the nation- state. The centennial histories, mostly commissioned by the Historical branch of the Department of Internal Affairs,⁸⁸ were good examples of this change in direction for history writing in the forties.⁸⁹ While these histories often focused on the settler origins of New Zealand, it was in fiction writing, not non-fiction, that numerous personal assertions of national

⁸⁴ Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, p.53.

⁸⁵ cf. Giselle Byrnes, 'Writing "New Zealand"', 'Introduction: Reframing New Zealand History', *NOHNZ* (2009), pp.2-7 [Byrnes compiled the most current and comprehensive list of New Zealand national histories, single and multi-authored, to date.]

⁸⁶ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.70.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.68.

⁸⁸ cf. William Renwick (ed.), *Creating a National Spirit: Celebrating New Zealand's Centennial* (Wellington, 2004).

⁸⁹ cf. James Cowan, *Settlers and Pioneers* (Wellington, 1940); Eric McCormick, *Letters and Art in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1940); and F.L.W. Wood, *New Zealand in the World* (Wellington, 1940).

identity were being expressed.⁹⁰ John Mulgan's *Man Alone* (1939) is often cited as the exemplar of this national movement in fiction.⁹¹ His description of growing up as part of the generation between the wars portrayed how, he felt like an outsider in his own country and tried to reconcile not being British with not quite feeling like a New Zealander.⁹²

New Zealand historians were much slower at producing histories that reflected the same amount of passion for an autochthonous national identity. It can be argued that although the authors previously discussed began to rethink their histories in relation to comparisons with America, Australia and the Pacific, much of their understanding of New Zealand as a nation related to its being a part of Britain.⁹³ This Imperial framework for histories was aided by the predilection of New Zealand historians to complete their academic qualifications in England rather than at home and proceed in many cases to stay and lecture abroad.⁹⁴ While historian William Oliver did study overseas he came back to New Zealand to teach. Oliver, who had completed his PhD at Oxford in 1953, focused the study of his first national history *The Story of New Zealand* (1960) on the parameters of its European origins and development.⁹⁵ Though Oliver dealt with the narrative of Māori in New Zealand, it is done not in an inclusive way that encompasses both European and Māori understandings of an evolving New Zealand identity. The narrative instead focused on race relations and national institutions that assisted Māori as the minority peoples.⁹⁶ In this role within the narrative, Māori are marginalised as a secondary thought to the 'British experience' of New Zealand.⁹⁷ Oliver's conclusion showed this reluctance to completely let go of Imperial certainties of identity and assert confidently an indigenous identity:

Men engaged upon this [historical] profession have felt impelled to explore and identify their own country as a step in the process of self-knowledge[...] The imperatives of the habitat are no longer ignored; the heritage of England and

⁹⁰ cf. Keith Sinclair, 'The Singers of Loneliness', *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity* (Wellington, 1986), pp.239-254.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.251.

⁹² Gibbons, 'Climate of Opinion', p.327.

⁹³ Byrnes, 'Reframing New Zealand History', p.4.

⁹⁴ W.H. Oliver, 'A Destiny at Home', *NZJH*, vol.19, no.1 (April, 1985), p.9.

⁹⁵ W.H. Oliver, *The Story of New Zealand* (London, 1960), p.11.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 'The Two Races', pp.246-267.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 'Like and Unlike', pp.268-288.

Europe has ceased to be an overpowering substitute for independent thought [...] The spiritual pioneer is beginning to populate the land; he is restless because he knows himself to be part-stranger, part-intimate; he is demanding, not security, but understanding.⁹⁸

This lack of understanding by New Zealanders of how to feel indigenous was addressed for the first time in non-fiction by historian Keith Sinclair in his work *A History of New Zealand* (1959). Sinclair's *History*, like Oliver's *Story*, became popular as a single authored general history of New Zealand in the 'post-colonial era'.⁹⁹ As a result, these works helped to legitimise the writing of New Zealand history as an area worthy of academic study.¹⁰⁰ However, it was Sinclair's fervour for expressing his identification with New Zealand and not to Britain that set him apart from his contemporaries. He was one of the first New Zealand historians to do his PhD in New Zealand on a New Zealand topic and never had the urge like many of his contemporaries to move overseas to continue his scholarship.¹⁰¹ At the time of its first publication of Sinclair's *History* replaced Reeves' history as the popular text. Consequently, its life was extended beyond the text (as King's *History* has also achieved)¹⁰² to become a cultural phenomenon – a spiritual text that held the true meaning of what it meant to be a New Zealander.¹⁰³ As a result, *History* has been continuously republished and revised right up to the present day.¹⁰⁴

Sinclair's approach to writing his histories was as a 'native' born New Zealander, whose ambition to write New Zealand history was not a second choice.¹⁰⁵ Sinclair evoked the voice of a new approach to New Zealand history, one that was focused on the nation as a sovereign entity. Sinclair set out to achieve this with two main theses. The first was that New Zealand did not, though it could have, become an

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p.288.

⁹⁹ W.H. Oliver's *The Story of New Zealand* (1960) was published a year after Sinclair's *History* (1959).

¹⁰⁰ Byrnes, 'Rewriting New Zealand History', p.6.

¹⁰¹ Oliver, 'A Destiny at Home', p.9.

¹⁰² Jacob Pollock, *From Colony to Culture: A Historiographical Discourse and Historical Identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand* in partial fulfilment of a Master of Arts at the University of Auckland (Auckland, 2005), p.9

¹⁰³ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.71.

¹⁰⁴ Sinclair's *History* has been reprinted and revised right up to the new millennium when the rev.ed. with Raewyn Dalziel [Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2000)].

¹⁰⁵ Oliver, 'A Destiny at Home', p.9.

Australian colony.¹⁰⁶ Instead, New Zealand was able to be annexed through the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840.¹⁰⁷ Hence, Sinclair established the Treaty as the founding document of New Zealand as a sovereign nation. His second thesis reinforced this idea by assuring New Zealanders of their independent identity distinctive from other dominion countries through their efforts, relationships and actions during WWI and WWII; and how they began to see themselves as something other than British. Sinclair attested that there was no real drive for autochthonous identity until the politics and literature of the 1930s.¹⁰⁸

It is also important to consider Sinclair's portrayal of Māori within his national histories. The way in which New Zealand historians have incorporated Māori or Māori culture/imagery into their histories has been an indicator of how they perceive their own identity in relation to another culture. As previously discussed with regard to the 'Māoriland' period, European nationalism in New Zealand was developed by the appropriation of Māori through a Victorian gaze, in which '[...]archaism cohabits with and compensates for the colony's sense of its own modernity'.¹⁰⁹ Sinclair conversely, did not want to use Māori culture as a means of having some sort of pre-existing identifier of belonging to New Zealand. Instead, he believed that European identity in New Zealand was autochthonous because it developed over the generations of New Zealand born Europeans through a belonging to the landscape.¹¹⁰ These Europeans established a national government and implemented infrastructures through policy that impacted on its people. Thus, Māori were included within his narrative in relation to how they related to public policy and state interaction.¹¹¹ Māori were not passive actors within Sinclair's histories. In his *History* Sinclair recounts Kupe's discovery of New Zealand and Māori consequent settlement thereafter.¹¹² While this can be seen as an acknowledgement of Reeves' construction of his narrative, Sinclair's intention was to show Māori migration to New Zealand and their consequent interaction with Europeans. Sinclair's inclusion of Māori focused mainly on

¹⁰⁶ Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, pp.29-49.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, pp.70-90.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p.233.

¹⁰⁹ Stafford and Williams, p.11.

¹¹⁰ Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, pp.6-7 and pp.31-109.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, pp.18-19; pp.204-208 and pp.262-263.

¹¹² Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, pp.13-25.

nineteenth century interaction – including European contact, the ‘Māori wars’, the consequent land confiscations and Māori land court proceedings – however the participation of Māori in twentieth century New Zealand seems to all but disappear in the narrative.¹¹³ This reflected Sinclair’s view that there was no racial problem in New Zealand, because Māori and Pākehā lived apart before the 1950s. Sinclair explained that though Māori were, as a result of European interaction a landless, rural labour force, which did not make them equal to Pākehā, the institutions of the state did not restrict Māori development in anyway.¹¹⁴ He acknowledged that both races had different social patterns and values, but his main concern was with an indigenous European identity. To sum up this structure of his account of New Zealand identity in his *History* he wrote:

If we ignore the Māoris [sic], customs differ little from one locality to another. This homogeneity is due partly to the predominantly British origins of New Zealanders, partly to the rapid development of communications in the past century, partly to the state education of the vast majority of the population of the nation.¹¹⁵

Again the progress of the nation through the state was main indicator of the development of identity. The role of Māori within the narrative as a point of juxtaposition to European identity was a continued device for understanding a budding ‘New Zealandness’.¹¹⁶

Sinclair looked to the future of New Zealand as a nation-state. This change of focus from New Zealand as a colonial entity to a sovereign nation was the solution of how to progress from viewing New Zealand in a colonial manner. As he explained in his 1986 *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand’s Search for Identity* ‘[t]he Empire belonged to an official rhetoric, to newspaper editors, to school

¹¹³ n.b. Sinclair’s narrative was based largely on European interaction during the New Zealand Wars; the resistance implemented by the King movement in the Waikato region during this time and the consequent confiscation of Māori land after the conflict [*Ibid*, pp.109-116 and pp.138-143].

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.289.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.277.

¹¹⁶ n.b. the term ‘New Zealandness’ has been appropriated from the terminology of the postcolonial historical movement in Britain to question the changing Imperial identity within their historical tradition. Famously, J.G.A. Pocock’s paper ‘British History: a Plea for a New Subject’, *NZJH*, vol. 8, no.1 (April, 1974) was the first to address the idea of expanding national histories to include more than one historical consciousness. This paper was especially important from a New Zealand postcolonial stand point because Pocock first gave the paper to the New Zealand Historical Association, University of Canterbury, in May 1973. His objective was to persuade national historians that their Imperial past was not something that could be forgotten, but should be embraced as a pivotal part of their histories construction.

teachers, to politicians, to Governors and Governors-General. “The Empire” was for most people no more than an abstraction’.¹¹⁷ In this work Sinclair attempted to answer the questions he laid out in his previous works, but could not answer: was there a national consciousness? The conclusion he seemed to come to was that the national consciousness was a male Pākehā perception. Sinclair’s assembly of his chapters within this work highlighted this point. He omitted from the main narrative Māori, women and children to whom he gives their own separate chapters at the end of the book.¹¹⁸ His omission of other historical players that were not Pākehā males from the main narrative made the narrative more exclusive than inclusive. Yet, in hindsight this approach was justifiable because it was a reflection of his own place within the New Zealand historical dialogue of autochthonous identity – that was not inclusive of minor modes of belonging to New Zealand. It was from the dominant perspective of the male European historian. His omission of any discussion of history past 1940 in *A Destiny Apart* continued self-reflective narrative.¹¹⁹ Sinclair avoided any complex discussion about new expressions of nationalism forming through counter-culture movements in the sixties as well as from the ‘peripheries’ of Māori and women’s groups in the following decades. As Sinclair was trying to shake New Zealand free from its colonial ties and write a history of a New Zealand that was changing from an ex-colonial dominion to a newly emerging independent state it was understandable that he focused on this change from his own point of view.¹²⁰ He was not comfortable discussing the challenges to traditional modes of identity that began to be manifested in the younger generation’s actions and opposition to societal norms in New Zealand in the following decades.

National historians that used autochthonous development as a framework for writing histories had established a legacy for New Zealanders that seemed organic and original. This was a legacy that placed more emphasis than had previous generations on the arrival of Māori from Polynesia in New Zealand as the starting point of the history of a new nation, followed by the European colonists who then

¹¹⁷ Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, p.173.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, ‘Part VI: The Peripheral Majority’ ‘Māoris’, ‘Women’ and ‘Children’, pp.197-207; pp.207-221; and pp.221-238.

¹¹⁹ Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, p.257. He asked the reader (who he identified as over forty) to make alternative ends to the book with their own memories.

¹²⁰ Oliver, ‘A Destiny at Home’, p.15.

became the dominant culture of the narrative. This focus on race relations was seen as a keystone of the nation-state rather than a consequence of colonial expansion and progress.¹²¹ Europeans in New Zealand felt assured that this cultural dynamic coupled with the institutions of the state encouraged a tangible indigenous identity and self reflection. Security in European perceptions of autochthonous identity was to be disrupted by those citizens of the nation who did not feel a part of the mainstream. Influenced by new waves of thought from overseas the generation of baby boomers questioned the dominance of a European indigeneity within a national framework. From the 1970s onwards in New Zealand another broad framework for history writing was being developed and has continued to grow and change into many new avenues of belonging.¹²² In current historiography, the historical narrative of a country engages in a larger variety of topics that broaden the frameworks for discussing history beyond national boundaries.¹²³ Most of all however, the development of anti-establishment thought in New Zealand questioned an identity shaped by majority notions of identity. There was much more to New Zealand identity than a European white male perspective.

The challenges to old ideas and ideals in New Zealand historiography were influenced by the counter culture movement and were reflected by the events taking place within the nation-state.¹²⁴ The European assertions of an indigenous belonging were reinforced in 1973 when Britain joined the European Economic Community. This ended the guarantee of importing New Zealand produce into the United Kingdom and continued to loosen New Zealand's relationship with Britain. The oil shocks of 1974 and 1979 reminded New Zealanders of their vulnerable place as an independent nation in the global market.¹²⁵ On a national level the 1961 Hunn Report had promoted integration of Māori into cities and

¹²¹ cf. Keith Sinclair's rebuttal to this historical myth [Sinclair, 'Why Are Race Relations in New Zealand Better Than in South Africa, South Australia or South Dakota?', *NZJH*, vol. vol.5, no.2, (October, 1971), pp.121-127].

¹²² n.b. This historical trend is often called the 'Linguistic' or 'Imperial Turn' cf. Chris Hilliard's assessment of its contribution to New Zealand scholarship [Hilliard, 'Colonial Culture and the Province of Cultural History', *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1 (April, 2002), pp.82-96].

¹²³ Byrnes, 'Reframing New Zealand History', pp.7-18.

¹²⁴ Brooking and Enright, pp.184-188.

¹²⁵ Philippa Mein Smith, 'Golden Weather', *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2005), pp.176-200.

towns and by the seventies there were more Māori living in urban areas than traditional marae environments.¹²⁶ In addition, influenced by the global trend of more open borders, there was increased migration of Pacific Island and Asian immigrants to New Zealand which physically changed the make-up of New Zealand society away from its dominant European descent.¹²⁷ As a consequence of the changes to New Zealand's social fabric, many commentators were forced to ask where New Zealand stood on the global stage as it was no longer linked as closely to Britain.¹²⁸ It was the new generation of historians like King, and fellow Victoria University graduate Jock Phillips, who were influenced by the change in climate to ask new questions of New Zealand history.¹²⁹ The older generation of historians felt that examining the evolution of the nation since 1940 was a job for the new generation of writers. As Sinclair explained in 1986, '[a] national identity is not a permanent and static possession; rather, the nation has from time to time to be reinvented.'¹³⁰ New questions about citizenship had to be addressed: what did it mean to be a New Zealand Woman?;¹³¹ what did it mean to be an ex-serviceman of the New Zealand Army?;¹³² what did it mean to be a Māori or Asian New Zealander?¹³³ What did it mean to be a citizen of New Zealand?

By the 1970s social histories were being challenged in New Zealand by cultural histories.¹³⁴ Cultural histories not only dealt with the social issues of the period but also considered more seriously non-traditional primary sources such as oral

¹²⁶ King, *Māori*, pp.249-253.

¹²⁷ cf. James Lui, Tim McCreanor, Tracey McIntosh and Teresia Teaiwa (eds.) *New Zealand Identities: Departures and Destinations* (Wellington, 2005).

¹²⁸ cf. Denoon, Mein Smith with Wyndham, 'Representations of Regional, National and "Ethnic" Identities', *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific*, pp.9-36.

¹²⁹ Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pākehā Male: A History* (Auckland, 1987) and 'Of Verandahs and Fish and Chips and Chips and Footie on Saturday Afternoon', *NZJH*, vol.24, no.2 (October, 2000), pp.118-134.

¹³⁰ Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, p.257.

¹³¹ cf. Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (eds.) *Women in History: Essays on European Women in New Zealand*, vol.1 (Wellington, 1986) & vol. 2 (Wellington, 1992) and Charlotte Macdonald (ed.) *The Vote, the Pill and the Demon Drink: A History of Feminist Writing in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1993).

¹³² cf. Nicholas Boyack and Jane Tolerton (eds.), *In the Shadow of War: New Zealand Soldiers Talk About World War One and their Lives* (Auckland, 1990); Apirana Ngata, *The Price of Citizenship: Ngarimu V.C.* (Wellington, 1946); and Wira Gardner, *Te Mura o te Ahi: The Story of the Māori Battalion* (Auckland, 1992).

¹³³ cf. John Rangihau, 'Being Māori', *Te Ao Hurihuri*, pp.221-233; Ranginui Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End* (Auckland, 1990) and Manying Ip, *Dragons on the Long White Cloud: The Making of Chinese New Zealanders* (Auckland, 1996).

¹³⁴ Hilliard, 'Colonial Culture and the Province of Cultural History', p.82.

traditions, diaries, cultural objects and language which produced new and exciting approaches to histories. This challenge to social histories was argued by historians in the variety of topics pursued the *New Zealand Journal of History*. First established in 1967, the *NZJH* continued to confront traditional approaches to New Zealand history throughout the 1970s and 1980s.¹³⁵ This trend was also reflected by the need to produce the first multi authored history of New Zealand: *The Oxford History of New Zealand* (1981).¹³⁶ Oliver's editorial input in *The Oxford History* caused King to later cited this work as one of the three great headlands that dominate the terrain of New Zealand general history.¹³⁷ To King, 'Mount Oliver' or the first edition of the *OHNZ* was revolutionary for its time. Oliver's vision for such a work was to showcase the different approaches that had been made by New Zealand scholars since the 1950s: '*The Oxford History of New Zealand*, in turn, shows something of the mood, the tone, and the questioning about the course of social change, and of impatience with traditional answers.'¹³⁸ Unashamedly, the emphasis of the *OHNZ* was that it was inward looking. Giselle Byrnes has noted this edition as 'self-consciously introspective'.¹³⁹ The second edition of the *OHNZ* (1992) edited by Geoffrey Rice was not much different to the first edition. It still followed the same structure of: 'Beginnings', 'Growth and Conflict', 'A Time of Transition' and 'Precious Maturity' and had slightly expanded the chapters in each section from 16 to 22.¹⁴⁰ Rice acknowledged that this work was a revision and not 'The New Oxford History' on the grounds that it

¹³⁵ Erik Olssen, 'The Working Class in New Zealand' in *NZJH*, vol.8, no.1 (April, 1974), pp.44-60; Miles Fairburn, 'The Rural Myth and the New Urban Frontier: An Approach to New Zealand Social History, 1870-1940 in *NZJH*, vol.9, no.1 (April, 1975), pp.3-21; Raewyn Dalziel, 'The Colonial Helpmeet. Women's Role and the Vote in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand' in *NZJH*, vol.11, no.2 (October, 1977); Michael King, 'New Zealand Oral History: Some Cultural and Methodological Considerations' in *NZJH*, vol.12, no.2 (October, 1978), pp.104-123; Barbara Brookes, 'Housewives' Depression' in *NZJH*, vol.15, no.2 (October, 1981), pp.115-134; Jock Phillips, 'Rugby, War and the Mythology of the New Zealand Male' in *NZJH*, vol.18, no.2 (October, 1984), pp.83-103; Judith Binney, 'Māori Oral Narratives, Pākehā Written Texts: Two Forms of Telling History' in *NZJH*, vol.21, no.1 (April, 1987), pp.16-28.

n.b. many of these journal articles and others that span the period of the 1970s to the 1990s were brought together because of their significance in the collection *The Shaping of History: Essays From the New Zealand Journal of History* Judith Binney (ed.) (Wellington, 2001).

¹³⁶ Giselle Byrnes, 'Preface', *NOHNZ* (Melbourne, 2009), p.xi.

¹³⁷ King, *History*, p.519.

¹³⁸ W.H. Oliver, 'Introduction', *The Oxford History of New Zealand* (Wellington, 1981), p.viii.

¹³⁹ Byrnes, 'Preface', p.xi.

¹⁴⁰ cf. [Geoffrey Rice (ed.), *The Oxford History of New Zealand* (2nd edn.) (Auckland, 1992)]: 'Part One: Beginnings', pp.3-56; 'Part Two: Growth and Conflict', pp.57-200; 'Part Three: A Time of Transition', pp.201-350; and 'Part Four: Precarious Maturity', pp.351-585.

was the next generation of historian's job to complete such a book.¹⁴¹ It was not until 2009 when the *New Oxford History of New Zealand* was compiled under the editorial guidance of Byrnes that Rice's suggestion was made reality.

In New Zealand historiographical terms King has been seen by his academic peers to be the most influential at the end of the 1970s and the 1980s. King's emphasis in the early part of his career on writing Māori histories was a reflection of the influence of current historical trends as well as his journalistic intuition to include debate about current events. With 'history from below' becoming a popular focus in New Zealand social histories,¹⁴² another school of thought, that was also a part of the cultural history tradition, was the literature of decolonisation. The decolonisation approach to history writing was based on the idea that the dominions of the British Empire had after the Second World War begun a process of becoming their own nation-states separate from the influence of British political and institutional domination.¹⁴³ Unsurprisingly, this was not just a phenomenon that occurred at a state level but it also affected the peoples of the nation at a grass-roots level. Historians can be seen as the intermediaries between what was happening within state institutions and how it affected the peoples of the nation. As a result of a need to explain the changes occurring in society caused by decolonisation, there was a considerable rise in nationalistic histories by the 1950s in decolonised countries.¹⁴⁴ Having been encapsulated by the British Empire, the colonised country's histories had hitherto been subject to Eurocentric views.¹⁴⁵ Europeans had replaced indigenous populations not only in numbers, but also through historical writing by dictating the way in which they viewed their new environments and its indigenous people. Decolonisation histories endeavoured to include more voices within national histories than had been heard before. For New Zealand historians this meant the restructuring of the national narrative to include different storylines than simply the role of the Empire in the

¹⁴¹ Geoffrey Rice, 'Preface to the Second Edition', *The Oxford History of New Zealand* 2nd edn., (Auckland, 1992), p.vii.

¹⁴² cf. E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth, 1968).

¹⁴³ Pransanjit Duara (ed.), 'Introduction: The Decolonisation of Asia and Africa in the Twentieth Century' in *Decolonisation: Perspectives From Now and Then* (London, 2004), pp.1-2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp.16-17.

¹⁴⁵ cf. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1979).

making of a fledgling Pacific nation.¹⁴⁶ As Indian historian Prasenjit Duara writes ‘[f]rom a historian’s perspective, decolonisation was one of the most important political developments of the twentieth century because it turned the world into a stage of history’.¹⁴⁷

King’s histories reflected the influence of decolonisation literature. Indeed, his histories showed that he understood New Zealand to be a sovereign nation independent of the British Empire. From this position he was able to explore other modes of identity which at the beginning of his career showed his great concern with the neglect of Māori voices within the New Zealand discipline.¹⁴⁸ Unlike his predecessors such as Sinclair, King was far less interested in the race relations aspect of European and Māori contact. His main concern was not to speak on behalf of Māori, but let them speak for themselves.¹⁴⁹ To achieve this King took great care to interview Māori for their life histories and study their diaries, letters and whakapapa as a means to reveal their stories as they would have them be told.¹⁵⁰ His most successful works in this area were *Moko: Māori Tattooing in the Twentieth Century* (1974) and *Te Puea: A Life* (1977) because of his use of interviewing and oral traditions. What King developed professionally from this intensive study of Māori subjects from a Māori perspective was a knowledge of Māori history that laid a foundation for further studies on New Zealand identity.¹⁵¹ This understanding of a New Zealand national identity was formed by King not only on a collective level, but also he formed for himself an understanding of his own personal position within the historical dialogue as an Irish Catholic male.¹⁵² King’s understanding and use of the conventions of mātauranga Māori alongside his own understandings of belonging to New Zealand was best explained in *Being Pākehā: The Reflections and Recollections of a White Male* (1985). This work explained the main point of difference

¹⁴⁶ Lyndon Fraser, ‘Editorial Introduction: Migration Histories and Writing the Nation’, *NZJH*, vol.43, no.2 (October, 2009), pp.119-121.

¹⁴⁷ Duara, p.1.

¹⁴⁸ Michael King, ‘Allegiance to One’s Origins: The Consequence of Belief’, *Tread Softly: For you Tread on my Life* (Auckland, 2001), p.118.

¹⁴⁹ King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu*, p.5.

¹⁵⁰ cf. King, ‘New Zealand Oral History’, pp.104-123.

¹⁵¹ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: ‘Mātauranga Pākehā: King’s Construction of a New Zealand Identity’.

¹⁵² King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

between the earlier national historians and his perspective of New Zealand history. King believed in two cultural strands of thought: one European and one Māori. These two cultures did not necessarily compete against each other to be the dominant cultural force in New Zealand but were compatible as working partners in the makeup of New Zealand identity.¹⁵³ He saw what he perceived as his indigenous identity as Pākehā to have been formed because of the influences of Māori culture and thought. Though separate in their own right, King perceived European and Māori strands of culture as the basis for a shared notion of identity that was both progressive and bicultural.

King's framework for his histories was undoubtedly bicultural in its construction of two main historical players interacting on the geographical space of New Zealand. King's perception of biculturalism was developed through a largely positive association of Māori and Pākehā existing together and their relationship unfolding everyday through living and working in the nation.¹⁵⁴ A comparison here can be made with James Belich's general histories of New Zealand because he too wrote history which included two strands of culture. King saw Belich's histories as influential enough for King to term them the twin peaks that resided next to 'Mount Oliver'.¹⁵⁵ In *Making Peoples: A History of New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the end of the Nineteenth Century* (1996) Belich charted the development of two peoples' cultures after their immigration to New Zealand.¹⁵⁶ Belich weighted equally the narrative of both Māori and European histories to produce a bicultural narrative.¹⁵⁷ However, in the second volume *Paradise Reforged: A History of New Zealanders From the 1880s to 2000* (2001) Belich pursued a study of Pākehā identity construction that underwent change during three processes: 'progressive colonisation', 'recolonisation' and 'decolonisation'.¹⁵⁸ This framework has been accused of not being as biculturally

¹⁵³ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.11.

¹⁵⁴ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.182.

¹⁵⁵ King, *History*, p.519.

¹⁵⁶ cf. James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the end of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland, 1996).

¹⁵⁷ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonization and Textual Biculturalism', p.183.

¹⁵⁸ James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of New Zealanders From the 1880s to 2000* (Auckland, 2001), pp.11-13; pp.53-86; pp.547-549; and pp.426-460.

balanced as his previous work because his focus shifted to a predominantly Pākehā narrative.¹⁵⁹

Belich's approach to his bicultural narrative in *Making Peoples* was reliant on the impact of colonisation on both Māori and Pākehā cultural development. Unlike King who was unconcerned with many of the processes of colonisation, Belich's narrative relies on their impact and influences to shape how New Zealanders now view their identity.¹⁶⁰ His narrative does this by his inclusion of global historical trends and his recognition of the continuing role of Empire. In *Making Peoples*, at the beginning of the section 'The European Discovery of New Zealand', he placed the expansion of Britain into the New Zealand historical narrative: 'In the eighteenth century, now motivated by science as well as short cuts, Europeans found an even newer world, the Pacific, which Spanish galleons had hitherto seen as a mere vacuum to be crossed.'¹⁶¹ Belich maintained that through a process of 'progressive colonisation' by Europeans Māori culture was resilient and adapted to its impact.¹⁶² As he wrote, 'Empire, by definition, did involve the subordination of non-Europeans, though it did not necessarily deprive them of cultural autonomy or identity'.¹⁶³ For Pākehā on the other hand, Belich saw, in *Paradise Reforged*, the late 1880s through to the 1960s as a period of 'recolonisation' or a tightening of New Zealand's link with the metropolis largely through the protein industry.¹⁶⁴ Belich insisted that the reason that Pākehā felt that they were a people 'without songs' was because they were not ready to confront the impact that 'recolonisation' had and still has on their economy, technology, politics, conceptual geography, history and ideology.¹⁶⁵

Belich took his framework of biculturalism further than King by not disregarding the impact of outside influences on New Zealand history, but incorporating them into his historical narrative. Belich was typical of the next generation of late

¹⁵⁹ Peter Gibbons, 'Review: Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealand From the 1880s to the Year 2000', *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1 (April, 2002), pp.98-100.

¹⁶⁰ Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.115.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, p.117.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, p.154.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, p.115.

¹⁶⁴ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, pp.54-75.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, pp.322-325 and p.29.

twentieth century historians who rewrote national histories that were no longer insular, but incorporated larger spheres of influence within the global arena.¹⁶⁶ Hence, historians concerned with the nation and its identity have recently subscribed to a trans-national approach to history which illuminates the links between nations caused by migration, trade, technology, diasporas and other interactions that link the world and its people.¹⁶⁷ This transnational approach was first famously applied to what it meant to be British and considered the impact of colonisation on national histories.¹⁶⁸ The approach was transposed by other national historians to the former colonised countries of the British Empire that received the diasporas of Scots, Celts and ‘invisible peoples’ in their corner of the empire.¹⁶⁹ New Zealand historiography was no different. What is different in recent historiography is the way in which these immigrants helped to develop a national identity that is seen as very much ‘Antipodean’ in its conception and perceptions.¹⁷⁰ J.G.A. Pocock’s work on political and historical thought has opened up a dialogue for historians worldwide to think about national history in a more inclusive way.¹⁷¹ His work on recasting the role of the nation was a precursor to trans-national history writing. This Pocockian approach to history writing was an undertone of Belich’s histories as well as other New Zealand historians. An example of this was in William and Stafford’s *Māoriland* in which they concluded:

In banishing Māoriland from memory they [New Zealand literary historians] run the danger of repeating its appropriations of Māori to their own purposes; in seeking to expunge the embarrassments of their colonial past, they continue to invent a history for themselves rather than encounter an actual one.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁶ cf. Peter Gibbons’ critique of New Zealand historians’ approach to New Zealand history and identity that was insular and how historiographically it could be rethought and rewritten by the next generation [Gibbons, ‘The Far Side of the Search of Identity: Reconsidering New Zealand History’, *NZJH*, vol.37, no.1 (April, 2003), pp.38-49].

¹⁶⁷ cf. from a New Zealand perspective: Philippa Mein Smith, Peter Hempenstall and Shaun Goldfinch, *Remaking the Tasman World* (Christchurch, 2008) and from a global perspective: Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* (Basingstoke, 2009).

¹⁶⁸ Pocock, ‘British History’, pp.3-21.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p.19.

¹⁷⁰ Pearson, pp.52-53.

¹⁷¹ Pocock, ‘British History’, p.19.

¹⁷² William and Stafford, p.275.

For many recent New Zealand historians the acknowledgement of the influence of the colonial past on the development of their histories was imperative to a complete understanding of the past. The understanding and acceptance of this colonial past, good and bad, was to be preferred over those histories, like King's, that were seen as promoting overly positive progressive historical narratives,¹⁷³ for example in regard to race relations through an emphasis on harmonious biculturalism, instead of more balanced accounts.¹⁷⁴

King always maintained that he wrote history for all peoples of New Zealand and he was always forthright about his approach to writing history as a Pākehā with a view of a progressive national history.¹⁷⁵ This indigenisation of his own identity was accumulated from his own experiences among the people and landscape of New Zealand. For him the idea of 'New Zealand' was amassed through experiences and observations about New Zealand life.¹⁷⁶ However, because of the development away from writing New Zealand history in a national framework for a preference of writing histories from the voices of individuals within the nation, the narrative was perceived to be more inclusive and multilayered. Single authors who compiled histories on behalf of the nation as a whole were now viewed as outdated.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, critiques of those historians who failed to acknowledge the role of colonisation within New Zealand history ran the risk of perpetuating the discursive practise of continuing colonisation through their texts (as will be examined shortly). King perceived his approach to writing New Zealand history as elevating the two cultures of his nation, Māori and Pākehā, to an equal level of historical expression.¹⁷⁸ King fell subject to the assumption of his critics that he wrote a Eurocentric narrative because, like Belich his works leaned towards a predominantly Pākehā narrative, it reflected his goal to write mostly for a Pākehā

¹⁷³ Webster, pp.15-19.

¹⁷⁴ Daley, p.77.

¹⁷⁵ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.9.

¹⁷⁶ cf. Chapter Three and Four of this thesis: 'Identity and the Landscape: Imagining New Zealand Through King's Personal Experience of Place' and 'King's People: The Life Histories of New Zealanders'.

¹⁷⁷ Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.8.

¹⁷⁸ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: 'Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity'.

audience. This audience was an audience that King believed needed addressing because as a group Pākehā did not understand their own identity.¹⁷⁹

The main revisionist critiques directed at political and cultural histories of national maturation such as King's *Penguin History of New Zealand* (2003) have followed Peter Gibbon's popular approach to deconstructing the nation as the focus for New Zealand histories.¹⁸⁰ Gibbons' thesis on cultural colonisation through texts and the production of knowledge proclaims that colonisation is not a process that finished when New Zealand became an independent nation, but continues to the present day, being perpetuated by national historians who choose a progressive narrative over a critical analysis of continuing colonial practices.¹⁸¹ These practices include the indigenisation of Europeans through the conquest of the landscape and appropriation of Māori culture in texts.¹⁸² Gibbons explains that for Māori, '[t]heir material culture was taxonomized, their myths and legends turned into history, with genealogies converted into chronological markers, their religious beliefs and rituals classified according to current European anthropological fashions, their legends loosened from landscape and tribe to become 'New Zealand' legends [...].'¹⁸³ While Gibbons' cultural colonisation thesis was originally intended to explain histories of national identity up to the mid twentieth century, this approach has been extended by Jacob Pollock to a critique of Belich and King's general histories written in the late twentieth century.

Historians who wrote bicultural progressive narratives, like King and Belich, were now critiqued for perpetuating colonisation through knowledge obtained by writing from the majority point of view for both Māori and Pākehā. As Byrnes has explained, national identity is an artificial construct and colonising tool because the construction of 'nation' implies an 'oneness' through a shared identity.¹⁸⁴ She demonstrated this statement in her study of cultural colonisation in

¹⁷⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.170-172.

¹⁸⁰ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism', (2007).

¹⁸¹ Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization and National Identity', pp.5-9.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, pp.9-13.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, p.13.

¹⁸⁴ Byrnes, 'Rethinking National Identity in New Zealand's History', (2007).

the place names of Tauranga.¹⁸⁵ However, it was the work of Pollock that challenged the work of bicultural historians King and Belich not as stories of equivalent relationships between Māori and Pākehā, but ‘[...]they both seek, in various ways, to erase the act of settlement and colonization of Māori[...]that make the newly conceived Aotearoa/New Zealand.’¹⁸⁶ Pollock argued that in *Making Peoples*, Belich’s new framework for New Zealand history appeared ground breaking, but all he had achieved was a whole work that was structured like a Māori ‘prehistory’ section to a general work.¹⁸⁷ Pollock further explained, ‘[b]y prioritizing the culture of Māori, and the means by which that culture developed, Belich is able to make claims [later] for a distinct Pākehā culture.’¹⁸⁸ Accordingly Pollock concluded, in his comparison of both Belich and King’s general histories, that through such a structure they continued the process of colonising Māori through text.¹⁸⁹

A newly conceived or ‘imagined’ New Zealand/Aotearoa that was seen to be created by progressive bicultural historians did not explain for its critics the realities of the burgeoning assertion of Māori rights through protests and political lobbying that unbalanced national myths of togetherness and national identity. This inconsistency was seen by non-Māori in the implementation of bicultural policy that aimed to promote equality by focusing on Māori development.¹⁹⁰ However, non-Māori saw such legislation as a form of ‘special treatment’ or was government approved discrimination that took away from others their democratic rights to be treated the same as all others within the nation.¹⁹¹ This tension between minority and majority rights was highlighted in the recent decade by the then National Party opposition leader Don Brash during his ‘Nationhood’ speech at Orewa in 2004. Brash called to the end of ‘Māori privilege’ on the grounds that the Treaty claims process did not create cooperation between Māori and Pākehā, but facilitated a racially divided nation, with two separate laws and two standards

¹⁸⁵ cf. Giselle Byrnes, “‘A dead sheet covered with meaningless words?’ Place Names and Cultural Colonization of Tauranga’, *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1, (April, 2002), pp.18-36.

¹⁸⁶ Pollock, ‘Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism’, p.184.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.189.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu*, p.118.

¹⁹¹ Spoonley, p.111.

of citizenship.¹⁹² Furthermore, the National party election campaign from the same year challenged the ‘bicultural formation of New Zealand that had been orthodoxy for nearly two decades’.¹⁹³ The National party used billboards that were divided literally by blocks of red and blue colour and metaphorically by two words to emphasise the difference between right-wing and left-wing politics in New Zealand. The foreshore and seabed billboard was headed by the title ‘Beaches’ and the red side read ‘Iwi’ while the blue side proclaimed ‘Kiwi’. This tension perceived to be inherent in the bicultural relationship between Māori and European mores is continually played out, because of the dualistic nature of New Zealand’s historical consciousness, between the coloniser and the colonised.

Within national histories there is a multiplicity of experiences that is often masked by a singular experience of the dominant culture of a country. Current historians are now trying to debunk this tradition through expanding the narrative beyond a single or double historical consciousness. The long standing tradition in New Zealand history that race relations are harmonious between Māori and Pākehā have not reflected the reality of New Zealand’s past and present social interactions and are perceived by current historians as highly problematic.¹⁹⁴ This is especially true in relation to King’s approach in seeing history as optimistic and progressive. The problem being that a historians objective when writing history is to give the fullest account of the past possible, therefore when progress is at the forefront of the narrative often those details trump those that counter progress. However, a historian who is optimistic about his or her history’s future does not necessarily dismiss the tumultuous events that has shaped their past, present and future. King often recognises the political struggles of Māori in his works, but is reluctant to become too involved. For example in *Māori: A Social and Photographic History* (1983) King revealed to the reader that he was in two minds about ending the work with photographs from the 1980s Māori protest

¹⁹² Don Brash, ‘Nationhood’, a speech given at the Owera Rotary Club, 26 March 2006, accessed from the National Party Website 8 December 2008.

¹⁹³ Pollock, p.184.

¹⁹⁴ Sinclair, ‘Why are Race Relations in New Zealand Better Than in South Africa, South Australia or South Dakota?’, pp.121-127.

movements because he believed that there were far more positive and cooperative nature to race relations than the photographs showed.¹⁹⁵

Critics of national histories want to deconstruct this implied narrative of ‘togetherness’¹⁹⁶ in order to present a much more varied and inclusive account of history. The most recent example of this is *The New Oxford History of New Zealand* (2009), edited by Giselle Byrnes, in which she explains ‘[...t]hat history and identity are more likely to have been made (and remade) along the lines of culture, community, family, class, religion, sexuality, and gender, among other factors, and that these are and have been more important than ideas of evolving nationhood and appeals to national exceptionality.’¹⁹⁷ The *NOHNZ* sets out to set straight the assumptions of a national centred historical consciousness by rethinking the main themes – of biculturalism, national identity and state experiments – that have dominated New Zealand history.¹⁹⁸ By seeing these themes as ideologies instead of historical truths these authors are able to deconstruct the nation and rewrite New Zealand history according to the alternate histories of people, trends and other outside influences. These histories do not assume that the dominant narrative of a Pākehā experience of history was ‘normal, natural and innate’,¹⁹⁹ but that by removing the nation from the historical narrative the alternate readings from the peripheries are much clearer.

King’s place within the historiographical dialogue of identity in New Zealand lies on the cusp of a traditional progressive autochthonous identity and the revisionist history inspired by social change and varying points of view. King’s purpose for writing a progressive national narrative was in the hope that the reader gained insight into their own experiences of history. Indeed, King himself wrote his histories emotively and from his own experiences to aid this purpose. His self aware narrative, in all his works,²⁰⁰ especially his memoirs in which the first

¹⁹⁵ King, *Māori*, p.ii.

¹⁹⁶ Phillips, ‘Of Verandahs and Fish and Chips and Footie on Saturday Afternoon’, pp.335-336.

¹⁹⁷ Giselle Byrnes, ‘Reframing New Zealand History’, p.2.

¹⁹⁸ qv. The chapter divisions from the *NOHNZ* (2009): ‘People, Land and Sea’, pp.19-70; ‘Two Biculturalism(s)?’, pp.71-146; ‘Settlement and Unsettling’, pp.147-242; ‘Nation(s)-Making?’, pp.243-320; ‘A Social Laboratory?’, pp.321-510; and ‘State Experiments’, pp.511-598.

¹⁹⁹ Byrnes, ‘Reframing New Zealand History’, p.7.

²⁰⁰ n.b. King often used the first person pronoun in his works to establish his position on subjects. i.e. in *Māori* (1983), p.i he wrote: ‘I trust that this book will help to preserve evidence of the Māori

person pronoun was the most prevalent,²⁰¹ was to help equip the reader with the tools to assess and understand events, past and present, caused by the tensions of bicultural interaction.²⁰² King's bicultural element to the progressive narrative was not, as Pollock attests, a way for King to erase the settlement of Māori and forget about colonisation to make way for the dominant Pākehā nation to succeed.²⁰³ King did not see Māori as a backdrop to European arrival and settlement, but as an equal partner in New Zealand history. He believed that if European New Zealanders understood historically the grievances associated with biculturalism, and therefore colonisation, by learning about Māori history, there was no need to dwell for too long on the negative aspects of the bicultural relationship.²⁰⁴ This does not mean that he wanted to erase colonisation from the historical narrative; instead he wanted New Zealanders to honour their social contract with one another. He wrote the Māori narrative into New Zealand history to gain back their voice from the Westernised discipline of history. While this has been seen as continuing cultural colonisation through text, because of the critics' association of King with a position of power both in knowledge and culture,²⁰⁵ what King actually achieved was a distinctive framework for writing history. This approach incorporated Māori culture, myth and traditions with his own point of view of his culture and identity. Over his career this developed into what he referred to as being Pākehā.²⁰⁶

This personal construction of indigenous identity was for King only one of multiple elements of belonging to the nation. In the following chapters the discussion of King's approach to New Zealand history will be widened to assess the other modes of identity that King developed over his writing career. King also

experience for Māori prosperity [...]. Similarly in *The Death of the Rainbow Warrior* (Auckland, 1986), p.iii he explained about the terrorist attack on the Greenpeace vessel 'The Rainbow Warrior: '[...]I wanted to put the explosion in perspective and show that it was not an isolated and momentary diverting act of destruction.'

²⁰¹ cf. King, *Being Pākehā*, (1985); King, *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* (Auckland, 1992); King, *Being Pākehā Now*, (1999); and Michael King, *At the Edge of Memory: A Family Story* (Auckland, 2002).

²⁰² King, *Māori*, pp.i-ii.

²⁰³ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonisation and Textual Biculturalism', p.190.

²⁰⁴ King, *History*, p.518.

²⁰⁵ c.f. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (London, 1965), pp.198 as a template for the relationship of power between the patient (or the minority culture) being spoken for on behalf of the psychiatrist (white male historian).

²⁰⁶ n.b This idea is expressed in detail in Chapter Two: Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity.

focused heavily on the imagery and association with New Zealand's landscape and the life histories of its people. Unsurprisingly, these modes of belonging once again teetered between personal and collective ideas about identity. However, all of his personal expressions of New Zealand identity used the nation as a foundation for understanding ones self more intimately. For King the complexity of identity was that it cannot be confined to a single category, but instead it has many markers, of which the nation – which is a bi-cultural nation from King's perspective – was only the base element.²⁰⁷ This thesis aims to show that the nation was used by King, not as a discursive construction, but as a mechanism for an inclusive historical past for the general reader. Whether the concept of a 'nation' is artificial or not, the nation is the most obvious identifier for an individual to conceptualise because of engrained notions of geographical borders and cultural parameters. New Zealanders already drew conclusions about their own identity from this familiar knowledge base. This foundation for understanding the multifaceted construction of ones own identity was developed by myths about becoming a New Zealand nation based on moving away from an English colonial inheritance to an independent nation. King built on these traditional historical tropes of progress, nation and belonging in order to explain a new way of thinking about identity in New Zealand. The result was an exploration of his own identity which he perceived as being Pākehā.

²⁰⁷ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

Chapter Two

Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity

Michael King began his professional writing career as a Journalist for the *Waikato Times* during the late 1960s and early 1970s. This role helped him to understand the people and places that he was reporting on. King was placed mostly on the Māori round. As a result of engaging with Māori culture and gaining an understanding of Māori needs through dialogue, King was in a position to better comprehend the political climate and events happening within Māori communities. He also developed an intimate understanding of mātauranga Māori (cosmology and life ways) by asking questions about the significance of their cultural practices and involving himself in their daily lives. Consequently, King had more than any other social commentator before him, tried to understand Māori in a contemporary way and not relegate their culture to the distant past. What this chapter shows is the development of King's understanding of mātauranga Māori as a base knowledge for his construction of national histories. Although his histories were intended to have both Māori and Pākehā cultural threads, ultimately King's use of Māori oral traditions, whakapapa, chants and songs, Māori language and so on were also a device for understanding Pākehā identity in relation to Māori culture. This bicultural approach was used by King as a way to see Europeans as indigenous to New Zealand. However, King did not appropriate Māori culture to achieve this aim. Instead he used Māori culture as juxtaposition for understanding being Pākehā. This mode of development and understanding of what it meant to be Pākehā in New Zealand is what I have coined mātauranga Pākehā. While the construction of King's histories was generally based on the foundation of biculturalism, the concept that drove the narrative was encompassed in his construction of mātauranga Pākehā or being Pākehā. The development of this historical approach from King's early beginnings to the end of his career showed a definite trajectory from understanding Māori culture to developing his own indigenous outlook on New Zealand history.

In King's first published work *Moko* (1972) he explained that, '[f]or me, it all began with Nga – Ngakahikatea Whirihana, matriarch of the Waikato tribes and probably, at the time of writing, the oldest person in New Zealand'.¹ King's experience with Māori New Zealand; even though he did not know it yet himself, was the starting point for the rest of his career as a New Zealand historian.² King's placement as a journalist in the Waikato signified a new beginning for King. His graduation from Victoria University with a Master of Arts in history saw him take a graduate job as a journalist with the *Waikato Times* in 1968.³ It was a direction he had been heading for several years with contributions to *The Evening Post* in 1966 and his involvement with both *Insight* and *Focus* magazines.⁴ More importantly, however, because of King's interest in Māori culture and Māori affairs which he had developed as a child playing in the estuaries of Paremata,⁵ he was put on the Māori round.⁶ This set into motion a new path for his writing and subsequently his career. It was this role as a journalist and the relationships he built with the Waikato iwi that shaped the way King would write New Zealand history for the next three decades. The development of King's ideas on New Zealand culture and identity were shaped early on by his time researching Māori subjects. The crux of this development of his national histories was the indigenisation of Europeans through King's understanding of mātauranga Māori. In his use of this framework current academics have seen his approach as reminiscent of Victorian era Pākehā scholars who collected Māori oral traditions to illustrate how their own place within the new country was a contrast to Māori culture.⁷ Or in other words, having knowledge about Māori and controlling the way in which the knowledge was used, in this case to affirm Pākehā identity, has been seen as a colonising tool because it appropriates Māori culture for European use.⁸ King's intention however, was not to continue colonisation of Māori through text, but to elevate

¹ Michael King, *Moko: Māori Tattooing in the Twentieth Century* (Wellington, 1972), p.1.

² Michael King, *Being Pākehā: An Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (Auckland, 1985), pp.102-103.

³ *Ibid*, p.85.

⁴ *Ibid*, p.77 and p.85.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.52.

⁶ *Ibid*, pp.86-103.

⁷ Jacob Pollock, 'Cultural Colonization and Textual Biculturalism: James Belich and Michael King's General Histories of New Zealand', *NZJH*, vol.41, no.2 (2007), p.195.

⁸ Peter Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization and National Identity', *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1 (2002), p.14.

their status within the New Zealand historical narrative.⁹ The realisation of the indigenisation of his own identity grew organically from his research on Māori subjects and his understanding of mātauranga Māori.

Mātauranga Māori described the process of how King formed his ideas through a Māori knowledge structure. This did not mean that King had a Māori point of view, or that he wanted to be Māori.¹⁰ Rather it meant that he developed, through his research in New Zealand history and especially Māori history, his own stylised application of Māori concepts to explain the world around him. As a historian King constructed his historical narratives based on ‘facts’. In doing so, King dictated the taxonomy of these histories and assigned meaning to his categories. This is one of the fundamental codes of culture: that for every person there is a structure governed by language, schemes of perception, its exchanges, its techniques and its values.¹¹ These codes are explained by Michel Foucault as the ordering of space.¹² Or as King explained himself, ‘[c]ulture is, in the end, the sum total of what people do to enable themselves to cope with reality’.¹³ King’s ordering of space, in his works, was apparent in his use of creation stories, whakapapa, songs and chants, oral historical evidence and most noticeably his use of the Māori language in his text.¹⁴ It was this process of ‘ordering space’ that was developed in King’s ideas on New Zealand national history.

It was in King’s early works from the 1970s that he laid the foundations for his use of mātauranga Māori to strengthen an understanding of Pākehā culture within the New Zealand historical narrative. On first glance his first three works from this period *Moko* (1972), the television series *Tangata Whenua* (1974) and *Make it News: How to Approach the Media* (1974) seem to be merely a direct result of

⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.110-112.

¹⁰ Michael King, ‘Allegiance to One’s Origins’ in *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life*, (2001), p.107.

¹¹ cf. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London, 1970), p.xx.

¹² cf. Foucault, *The Order of Things* and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London, 1972).

¹³ King, ‘Allegiance to One’s Origins’, p.109.

¹⁴ n.b. King also acknowledges that Māori is a part of New Zealand English; and therefore, Māori words are not to be italicised as foreign or be pluralised. Michael King, *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (Auckland, 1983), p.ii.

King's career as a journalist.¹⁵ However, King implemented this journalistic approach in all his historical works in this period and arguably he continued with this journalistic style for the rest of his writing career.¹⁶ In contrast, his works in the later 1970s: *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga* (ed.) (1975), *Te Puea: a Biography* (1977) and *Tihe Mauri Ora: Aspects of Māoritanga* (ed.) (1978) showed a more in depth pursuit of historiography and historical method.¹⁷ However, an element of investigative journalism was clearly visible, especially in regard to the collection of oral sources from Māori informants as well as ensuring his works contained current affairs appeal.¹⁸ One other noticeable aspect of King's early work was that, with the exception of *Make it News: How to Approach the Media* (1974),¹⁹ they all had one thing in common: they all centred on Māori subject matter. These early works showed King's building of a Māori knowledge base in order to understand more clearly both New Zealand as a country, and also, most importantly, its peoples.²⁰

During this time, Māori were going through a time of social change independent from non-Māori and their notions of identity. The younger generation of Māori had been moving away from their ancestral homes into the cities since the late 1940s.²¹ In the 1970s many Māori were living alongside non-Māori in cities and towns, which forced contact between Māori and European on a scale that had not occurred since the nineteenth century.²² For Māori, urbanisation caused a deterioration of traditional learning, language, custom and protocol.²³ On the

¹⁵ King described his transition from Victoria University into journalism as going 'Into History', *Being Pākehā*, pp.85-107.

¹⁶ Annabel Schuler, *Michael King: Journalist. A Study of the Influence of Journalism on King's Later Writing*, A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Mass Communication in the University of Canterbury (2006), p.25.

¹⁷ n.b. Schuler has argued that King did not engage in academic debate and therefore his writing style was more journalistic than historical (p.50-51). However, works like *Te Puea: A Biography* (Auckland, 1977) show King's in depth research of difficult oral sources and manuscripts, including Te Puea Herangi's own diary (p.13).

¹⁸ Michael King, *Make it News: How to Approach the Media* (Wellington, 1974), pp.5-13 and Michael King, *Kawe Kōrero: A Guide to Reporting on Māori Activities* (Pukekoe, 1985).

¹⁹ n.b. King does mention Māori groups in the text as an example of groups who may need to approach the media for exposure on relevant issues [*Make it News*, p.42]. However, the book does not centre on Māori subjects.

²⁰ King, *Māori*, p.i.

²¹ *Ibid*, pp. 249-251.

²² Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), p.467.

²³ Ranginui Walker, 'Māori Mana Motuhake'; 'Nga Totohe ki Taiwiwi'; 'Ma te Ture te Ture e Patu', *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End* (Auckland, 1990), pp.186-119; pp.220-

other hand, influenced especially by the black civil rights movement in America, Māori began to express their identity and assert their citizenship more vocally.²⁴ Non-Māori found this public expression of Māori rights and identity, mainly through protesting and lobbying, foreign and unsettling.²⁵ Not only did it not comply with a unifying nationalistic identity, it was perceived as an affront to it – this view was fuelled by very little knowledge of Māori culture or history.²⁶ Before Keith Sinclair,²⁷ New Zealand historians had portrayed Māori as passive actors in a Pākehā driven narrative.²⁸ European New Zealanders had developed a false idea of successful assimilation of Māori from early settlement to the present. While the many parents of the baby boomer generation perceived that there was no problem of race relations between Māori and Pākehā, it was Sinclair who first described his generation's perception of Māori and Pākehā relations in his article: 'Why are Race Relations in New Zealand Better than in South Africa, South Australia or South Dakota?'²⁹ European New Zealanders felt safe in the knowledge of this position on the world stage and the myth continued to permeate New Zealand society. While Sinclair's determination to write Māori stories into the national history was groundbreaking for its time, he expressed great frustration at the new generation of Māori who were asserting their differences as tangata whenua. He wrote in 1986, '[...]a minority of Māori radicals, some of whom have only a small proportion of Māori genes, and little Māori language or culture, continue to protest against their ineluctable fate, to share a country whether they feel part of the nation or not'.³⁰ King endeavoured, through his writing on Māori subjects in the 1970s, to explain to non-Māori New Zealanders the active role of Māori in the national story that was both a part of a shared

247;' pp.248-287 and Michael King, *Tangata Whenua series* (Pacific Films Television New Zealand, 1974), 280mins.

²⁴ cf. Donna Awatere, *Māori Sovereignty* (Auckland, 1984) and Aroha Harris, *Hikoi: Forty Years of Māori Protest* (Wellington, 2004).

²⁵ King, *Māori*, p.i and pp.249-254.

²⁶ Michael King, 'Introduction: New Directions', *Te Ao Hurihuri: The World Moves On: Aspects of Māoritanga* (Wellington, 1975), pp.16-19.

²⁷ n.b. Sinclair does not entirely disregard the role of Māori in New Zealand history, but he does see their history as separate to his narrative. Therefore Māori history is not a part of his 'Pākehā nation' as he perceives it. *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity* (Wellington, 1986), p.14.

²⁸ Michael King, *Te Puea: a Biography* (Auckland, 1977), p.12.

²⁹ Keith Sinclair, 'Why are Race Relations in New Zealand Better Than in South Africa, South Australia or South Dakota?', *NZJH*, vol.5, no.2 (October, 1971), pp.121-127.

³⁰ Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, p.262.

experience and one of individual and cultural difference.³¹ King refused to relegate Māori to a subaltern role and instead intended to write history against the silences. This was innovative because of his pursuit of a Māori structure for history that attempted to explain the Māori role in New Zealand history, for the most part, to a Pākehā audience.³² This made him an intermediary between the cultures; he later called himself New Zealand's kawē kōrero.³³

King's first work *Moko* was a collection of oral histories of kuia who have undergone the ritual of facial tattooing, either in chisel or needle form, from the 1890s to the 1940s. It was a good example of presenting New Zealand history from a Māori knowledge structure. King travelled around most parts of the North Island surveying over 70 women with moko and found that there had been two intensive periods of tattooing in the twentieth century: the first was chisel tattooing from the 1900s to WWI and the second was its revival in needle form in the 1930s.³⁴ From his results King saw moko not as dying custom, as other scholars of moko such as Sir Peter Buck had postulated,³⁵ but as a form of identity for Māori that carried on into the first half of the twentieth century.³⁶ As he explained, '[p]ost-European tattooing, however, grew out of a new awareness of the Māori as a threatened minority group that needed to assert its identity'.³⁷

Moko for many of these kuia represented a connection to their ancestors. It connected them to the women who had received moko before them, but it also connected them to the male tattooists who carved the patterns of their tribal area permanently into their skin.³⁸ The ritual of tattooing, especially in the early 1900s, was sacred. Tents often were erected to uphold the tapu of the ceremony; as was also custom for the tangihanga. The procedure was often accompanied by a karakia before, during and after the sitting which could take days.³⁹ After the

³¹ King, 'New Directions', p.20.

³² n.b. The journalist/historian in the Māori field was a mediator between the two cultures: Māori and Pākehā. King, *Kawē Kōrero* p.12

³³ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.164.

³⁴ King, *Moko*, p.6.

³⁵ Peter Henry Buck, *The Coming of the Māori* (Christchurch, 1949), pp.269-301 and pp.322-325.

³⁶ King, *Moko*, pp.80-84.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.80.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p.77.

³⁹ *Ibid*, pp.8-9.

moko was completed the women had to abide by prohibitions on sexual relations, eating, washing the face or looking in the mirror immediately after the procedure or else after the scarring healed the moko would disappear.⁴⁰ Rangi Ruri of Whakatāne was one of the last to receive chisel moko before the First World War. She recalled that she lay down on the ground, blindfolded, and two women held her down. Her moko was performed by two tohunga: Hokotahi drew the moko and Taiwera put the moko on her chin. ‘ “[...]He made cuts before he dipped the chisel in the dye and pressed it in. It was very painful. I had to brace myself and be still” she explained.⁴¹ The pain was so excruciating on her bottom lip she had to get him to stop. She made no secret now that she had regretted not having her moko completed.⁴²

What King gained through the interaction with these kuia was not only an insight into the sacred art of facial tattooing; he was also shown the emotional and spiritual connections these kuia had with their past and their culture. King remembered his first encounter with Nga in which he recalled that ‘[a] mist was rising off the frost-covered paddocks around the house and the sun was just breaking through from a clear sky above the fog[... w]ith the mist behind her [Nga] seemed to be walking out of history’.⁴³ Nga took King down to the Waikato river and knelt before it, close enough to touch its surface, to stress its importance, ‘[...]with her outstretched palm, and [she would] call to her parents, grandparents and other kinsfolk beyond life. It was her way of establishing and intensifying the link with the genealogies that were her source of identity’.⁴⁴ King learnt that Māori identity was intrinsically linked with the land; this notion was reinforced with every encounter. These women were also aching to share their experience and divulge their knowledge of Māori history. King described these women as ‘bridges between the present and the past, between the living and the dead’.⁴⁵ These personal experiences strengthened King’s sense of mātauranga Māori in his writing of New Zealand history.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.79.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp.9-10.

⁴² *Ibid*.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p.1.

⁴⁴ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.87.

⁴⁵ King, *Moko*, p.3.

In *Moko* King was attempting to highlight Māori culture and values within New Zealand history while simultaneously making non-Māori more aware and more understanding about Māori culture. Therefore, King attempted to expose Pākehā to Māori things that previously Pākehā might not have had any contact or prior knowledge of. His second project *Tangata Whenua*, a six episode documentary series for the New Zealand Broadcasting Commission, it would be for King ‘[...]the most ambitious and painful project that has tried to redress an imbalance in the media’.⁴⁶ Exposing Pākehā to Māori cultural behaviours and history, or Māoritanga as it is known collectively in the vernacular, were beautifully showcased in *Tangata Whenua* which screened on New Zealand television in 1974.⁴⁷ The programmes directed by Barry Barclay included topics on: women’s moko; past and present leadership in Māori communities; the cohesion of Māori communities through religion and/or politics and also a Māori perspective on how Māori were coping with migration to the cities. This documentary series was groundbreaking in its time because of the nature of its content.⁴⁸ King was adamant that all the footage filmed and obtained by the crew must be with the consent of the informants and taken in a culturally sensitive manner. King was aware that Māori and non-Māori have separate and strong-rooted traditions about the transmission of knowledge.⁴⁹ The film crew had to learn to accept food when it was offered, allow time to karakia and not ask direct questions but let the informant speak as though they were on the marae in whaiwhaikōrero style.⁵⁰ Strikingly this meant that Māori language is a large part of this documentary series; it is interchangeable with English and sections of film contain emotive renditions of waiata and prayer. Furthermore, later works continued in the same vein; King included lists and appendices of Māori words and terms.⁵¹ The result for the *Tangata Whenua* series was that it gave viewers an insight into the world of Māori that many Pākehā had never seen or knew existed in New Zealand.

⁴⁶ Michael King, ‘Tangata Whenua: Origins and Conclusions’, *Landfall*, no.121, vol.31 (March, 1977), p. 40.

⁴⁷ King, *Tangata Whenua* series (1974).

⁴⁸ King, ‘Tangata Whenua’, pp.46-47.

⁴⁹ Michael King, ‘Some Māori Attitudes to Documents’, *Tihe Māori Ora*, (1978), p.9.

⁵⁰ King, ‘Tangata Whenua’, pp.42-47.

⁵¹ King, *Kawe Kōrero*, pp.13-15 and King, *Being Pākehā*, ‘Taha Māori: Things Pākehā Ought to Know’, pp.204-224.

King's *Tangata Whenua* was able to reach a large audience in 1974 because it screened on TVNZ's only channel network.⁵² However, the continuing lack of understanding of Māori culture for many Pākehā was only in part the result of an underexposure to Māoritanga. It was also a consequence of Māori migration to the cities during this period. The younger Māori generation were lured to the cities in search of work and better income. They were immediately expected to assimilate to a Western way of life.⁵³ Until that time, Māori had been living mostly in the rural areas of the country and had continued a traditional lifestyle in marae environments away from the cities.⁵⁴ The success of *Tangata Whenua* was that it showed the impact of migration for those who had left and those that remained behind, and it showed it in technicolor. The Māori who were represented on the screen were real people; experiencing real problems. In the last two episodes, 'Tūrangawaewae – A Place to Stand' and 'The Carving Cries' this was highlighted by the focus on the problems of urbanisation for Māori. In the fifth episode King focused on the marae as a stronghold for the Māori people, and that without it they felt like they would have no place to belong. One young Māori woman summarised this experience explaining '[h]ere I feel like a Queen [on the marae]. Up there [in town] I'm nobody'.⁵⁵ The episode focused on the work of the Ngā Tamatoa organisation established by young Māori to help Māori transition into city life.⁵⁶

The sixth episode reiterated what it meant for Māori in the current climate to be a citizen of New Zealand. It pondered the enduring questions: where do Māori belong? What was their citizenship worth? And what is the future direction for preserving and asserting Māori identity?⁵⁷ These questions were interwoven with the theme of tapu and the sacred values that shaped Māori life in opposition to the absorption of their identity into the mainstream culture through the mantra of 'one people together'.⁵⁸ The last frame of the series shows a carving crying; it was a

⁵² 'The Carving Cries', *Tangata Whenua series*, (1974).

⁵³ King, *Māori*, pp.250-252.

⁵⁴ King, 'Between Two Worlds', p.299-301.

⁵⁵ King, 'Tūrangawaewae', *Tangata Whenua series* (1974).

⁵⁶ King, *Māori*, p.253.

⁵⁷ King, 'The Carving Cries', *Tangata Whenua series*, (1974).

⁵⁸ Michael King, 'Between Two Worlds', *The Oxford History of New Zealand* (Wellington, 1981), p.300.

symbol of Māori tapu and culture, a symbol to show that many Māori had lost the aspects of Māori life that give them a sense of identity and self. This last episode was an amalgamation of grieving for culture lost and an acknowledgement of a culture changing from that of traditional Māori marae based culture. This sense of a loss of identity was heightened by Māori adaptation in a non-Māori dominated society.⁵⁹

Te Ao Hurihuri (1975) was an attempt by King to bridge the ‘cultural-gap’ between Pākehā and Māori in order to enhance the dialogue between New Zealanders.⁶⁰ King’s role as an intermediary between Māori and Pākehā through writing on Māori subjects was more than a conscious pursuit of writing history against the silences. King’s intention was to help New Zealanders find ways to share their everyday experiences and start a reciprocal dialogue.⁶¹ However, many Māori and Pākehā continue to feel a great divide between their two cultures. *Te Ao Hurihuri* was a collection of essays by Māori authors on Māori subjects, which included writing from Ranginui Walker,⁶² Douglas Sinclair⁶³ and Harry Dansey.⁶⁴ One of the factors contributing to the book’s importance for Māori scholarship was that the authors’ concerns about Māoridom are reflected in the diversity of the subject matter: the marae and its protocol, Māori language, arts, land, cosmology and being Māori. All of the authors conveyed individually through their own experiences what it meant to them to be Māori.⁶⁵ For example, in John Rangihau’s contribution to the concept of ‘being Māori’ he stated: ‘[a]lthough these feelings are Māori, for me they are my Tūhoetanga rather than my Māoritanga. My being Māori is absolutely dependent on my history as a Tūhoe person as against being a Māori person [...] I have a faint suspicion that Māoritanga is a term coined by the Pākehā to bring the tribes together.’⁶⁶ Māori modes of cultural self identification were much different. While Māori identified

⁵⁹ King, ‘The Carving Cries’, *Tangata Whenua series*, (1974).

⁶⁰ n.b King talks about bridging the ‘cultural gap’ through knowledge in *Kawe Kōrero*, p.11.

⁶¹ King, ‘New Directions’, p.20.

⁶² Ranginui Walker, ‘Marae: A Place to Stand’, *Te Ao Hurihuri* Michael King (ed.) (Wellington, 1977), pp. 21-34.

⁶³ Douglas Sinclair, ‘Land: Māori View and European Response’ and ‘Land Since the Treaty: The Nibble, the Bite, the Swallow’, *Te Ao Hurihuri*, King (ed.), (1977), pp.114-139 and pp.140-171.

⁶⁴ Harry Dansey, ‘A View of Death’ in *Te Ao Hurihuri*, Michael King (ed.) (1977), pp.172-189.

⁶⁵ King, ‘New Directions’, p.18.

⁶⁶ John Rangihau, ‘Being Māori’ in *Te Ao Hurihuri*, Michael King (ed.) (1977), pp.232-233.

firstly within their whānau and hapu, they historically never conceived themselves as one cultural entity. It was not until European arrival that ‘Māori’ began to conceive of themselves as tangata whenua and Europeans as tau iwi or foreigners.⁶⁷ From then on the term Māori was developed by the tangata whenua to mean ‘ordinary people’.⁶⁸

Equally *Te Ao Hurihuri* was an expression of approaching Māori identity from within a Māori knowledge structure. In Māori Marsden’s chapter ‘God, Man and Universe: A Māori View’⁶⁹ he explained the cosmological structure of the universe for Māori. The importance of this chapter was its distinct use of mātauranga Māori to explain the world in its present shape for Māori and thereby explain why Māori think and express themselves differently from non-Māori. As Māori Marsden explains ‘[t]he route to Māoritanga through abstract interpretation is a dead end’.⁷⁰ Through a Māori epistemological approach King intended to bring issues of Māori culture to the forefront of public understanding. In this respect *Te Ao Hurihuri* was not just a way to convey information about Māori subjects but to explain how Māori relate to one another and to the places in which they live and meet.⁷¹ The publication of this book stimulated discussion among Māori as well as between Māori and Pākehā. Also, just as importantly, the book was successful because it took traditional learning from the marae and ensured it was discussed across the country.⁷² Furthermore, because of its topical nature *Te Ao Hurihuri* was re-published in 1977, 1981 and 1992.⁷³

King’s next collaborative project, the counterpart of *Te Ao Hurihuri*, *Tihe Māori Ora* (1978) proved to be a much more topical publication than the former. *Tihe Māori Ora* covered more sensitive and topical subjects that were on the minds of

⁶⁷ Michael King, *New Zealand in Colour* (Wellington, 1985), pp.6-7.

⁶⁸ n.b. John Rangaihu has expressed that the collective term for all New Zealand iwi and their cultural practices [Māori/Māoritanga] as a Pākehā method of control by bringing the tribes together in order to preside over them. King, ‘The Prophet – Tuhoe and Te Kooti Rikirangi’, *Tangata Whenua series* (1974).

⁶⁹ Māori Marsden, ‘God, Man and Universe: A Māori View’, *Te Ao Hurihuri*, Michael King (ed.), (Wellington, 1975), pp. 190-219.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p.190.

⁷¹ King, ‘New Directions’, p.15.

⁷² Tipene O’Regan, ‘Dynamic Role of the Past’, *Listener* (July 19-25, 1975), p.48

⁷³ King, *Te Ao Hurihuri* (ed.) (1977); Michael King, *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga* (ed.) (Auckland, Longman and Paul, 1981); Michael King, *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga* (ed.) (Auckland, Reed, 1992).

both Māori and Pākehā in the increasingly tense political climate.⁷⁴ The contributors to this book were much less reserved about asserting their points of view on subjects pertaining to Māori rights and identity. King explained that it was the cultural imperialism of New Zealand's past that replaced Māori culture with a European ethos as a factor that binds the contributors together.⁷⁵ These chapters include topics such as remaining in contact with your culture;⁷⁶ a critique of the movements established by Māori to grapple Māori problems for which the settler government cannot provide;⁷⁷ the need for Māori protocol as a means to retain a Māori experience;⁷⁸ the right of Māori to establish the contours of the 'Māori cultural map';⁷⁹ the vulnerability of Māori who are not involved in the economic and social life of the wider community;⁸⁰ and the belief that social equality means uniformity and proposed prerequisites for bicultural communities.⁸¹ Both *Te Ao Hurihuri* and *Tihe Māori Ora* reflected the deep set grievances that Māori were beginning to voice about their place in a society dominated by Western institutions and thought.⁸²

In 1977 King published the biography of Waikato matriarch Te Puea Herangi (b.1883). By its completion, he had acquired a strong knowledge base shaped by mātauranga Māori. In *Te Puea*, as with *Tangata Whenua*, King sought to bridge the gap between the public and their understanding of the national narrative. King completed his study of Te Puea of Kāhui ariki – the family of the first Māori King: Pōtatau Te Wherowhero – as his doctorate at the University of Waikato.⁸³ King had come into contact with many people involved with the Kīngitanga movement as a result of being a journalist in the Waikato. One of these contacts

⁷⁴ King, 'Preface', *Tihe Māori Ora* (ed.) (1978), p.7.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p.8.

⁷⁶ Ranginui Walker, 'The Relevance of Māori Myth and Tradition', *Tihe Māori Ora*, King (ed.), (1978), pp.19-32.

⁷⁷ Robert Mahuta, 'The Māori King Movement Today'; Moana Raureti, 'The Origins of the Ratana Movement'; Wi Tarei, 'A Church Called Ringatu', *Tihe Māori Ora*, King (ed.), (1978), pp.33-41, pp.42-59 and pp.60-66.

⁷⁸ Sam Karetu, 'Kawa in Crisis', *Tihe Māori Ora*, King (ed.), (1978), pp.67-79.

⁷⁹ Patricia Grace and Witi Ihimaera, 'The Māori in Literature', *Tihe Māori Ora*, King (ed.), (1978), pp.80-85.

⁸⁰ Robert Mahuta, 'Māori Communities and Industrial Development', *Tihe Māori Ora*, King (ed.), (1978), pp.86-97.

⁸¹ Pat Hohepa, 'Māori and Pākehā: The One-People Myth' in *Tihe Māori Ora*, King (ed.), (1978), pp.19-32.

⁸² cf. Awatere, *Māori Sovereignty* (1984) and Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou* (1990).

⁸³ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.133.

Pei Te Hurinui Jones, at the time the chairman of the Māori Council, had been involved with the Kīngitanga during the time of King Koroki and Te Puea.⁸⁴ He had always helped King when he had asked for advice, but Pei was less than supportive when King brought to his attention the possibility of a biography of Te Puea's extensive career. King felt that '[...]the knowledge of Te Puea's charisma and achievement was the strongest impression [he had] retained from [his] time in the Waikato; and that the impression was not diluted by the fact that, outside Waikato Māori circles, few people remembered her or had even heard of her'.⁸⁵ Pei laughed, and explained that it would be too difficult for him to write such a work as he knew too much about her. In response King asked if someone else would be more appropriate? Pei laughed again: '[n]obody, Māori or Pākehā, could understand her diary. Besides, they would never let you'.⁸⁶

In fact, on both counts Pei was wrong. King wrote to Dame Te Atairangikaahu proposing his study and was summoned to a meeting at Tūrangawaewae marae to discuss the project.⁸⁷ After much discussion King was permitted to proceed. Not only did King make sense of Te Puea's writings, but he also went to extensive lengths to interview Māori informants who had lived and worked with Te Puea.⁸⁸ The work showed King's full immersion and comprehension of Māori culture through a Tainui gaze. He gave detailed accounts of Tainui opposition to conscription in WWI and WWII; the rise of the Pai Mārire faith; Tainui experience during the 1918 influenza epidemic; the Tainui contribution to Apirana Ngata's land and work schemes in the 1920s; and most importantly Te Puea's vision for the resettlement of her people on confiscated land after the New Zealand Wars in the 1880s.⁸⁹

The conclusion to *Te Puea* exemplified how much mātauranga Māori had influenced his writing as a national historian, showing that he understood the importance of oral traditions for Māori history and understanding. Interestingly, King used a parable to finish:

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p.127.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, pp.128-129.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.131.

⁸⁸ King, *Te Puea*, pp.13-15.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, pp.79-97; pp.206-211; pp.166-173; pp.97-101; pp.149-159; pp.98-126.

When he [Tumokai] returned there after the tangi he found the house stripped of everything with which Te Puea had had contact: bedclothes, crockery, cutlery; a case of muru. But the clothing in the long shed, covered by his own, remained. Later that year, when he was away at Raungawiri, the shed caught fire. Momo, Papi and her husband Rua Cooper managed to throw the garments clear. Cooper built another shed at once and Momo hung the dresses, evening gowns, skirts, blouses and cardigans at the far end. Within a week a swarm of bees had settled around the entrance; they stung anybody who came within yards of the door. Only Tumokai could enter the shed unmolested and he did so every few months to sweep it clean. Twenty-four years later the bees and clothes – now encrusted in honeycomb – were there still.⁹⁰

After a death it is customary that either all the possessions are buried with the body or they are burnt. However, as this parable shows, the clothes of Te Puea were saved which Māori would consider an omen not to touch her possessions and a mark of rahui to not trespass and disturb Tumokai's residence.⁹¹ This was further confirmed by the bees' appearance to protect the clothes from all but Tumokai. It was a story that sweetly and pointedly expressed culturally the sacred nature of the passing of a great leader, who may be gone, but not forgotten. Yet, it was also characteristic of how King had come to appreciate and incorporate Māori thinking into his histories.

This approach was seen to develop from his earliest work *Moko* to *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (2003): his last work. For example, in *Moko* the first thing King used to explain the importance of moko to Māori was the oral tradition of Mataroa who introduced the custom of moko to humanity from the underworld.⁹² While King did not recite the tradition in full, only mentioning that Mataroa visits the underworld with his face painted in moko to return with it permanently punctured on his face, he did note its significance.⁹³ King explained that the tradition affirms the sacred nature of tattooing.⁹⁴ Other scholars of Māori myth validate King's appraisal. David Simmons studied on the authenticity of oral tradition and the importance of using oral traditions in the writing of Māori history. He explained that oral traditions are important because they are what

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p.286.

⁹¹ Personal correspondents with Te Maire Tau 10 October 2008.

⁹² King, *Moko*, p.4.

⁹³ cf. A.W. Reed, *Reed Book of Māori Mythology* (Wellington, 2004), pp.97-101 for a full version of the Mataroa tradition.

⁹⁴ King, *Moko*, p.4.

tribes believe about their origins and history.⁹⁵ Ranginui Walker clarifies this position stating, '[o]ne way of looking at mythology is to read it as the mirror-image of a culture. Myths reflect the philosophy, ideals and norms of the people who adhere to them as legitimating charters.'⁹⁶ Succinctly, Māori oral traditions are the organising principles for day to day living.⁹⁷ Accordingly, King used Māori cosmology as an ordering principle of his histories.

King's mention of the Mataroa tradition is brief but King's use of oral traditions became more extensive and frequent with every publication. In *New Zealand: Its Land and its People* (1979) he placed the Māori tradition of creation after his explanation of the geographical formation of the landscape.⁹⁸ King used the story of Ranginui, Papatūānuku and their children as validation for the shape and character of New Zealand's landscape. King repeated this tradition again in *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (1984), and explained that myth serves as a way to give meaning and continuity to the lives of Māori.⁹⁹ However, it is also true in the context of King's work that Māori myth and Māori oral tradition gave him a sense of structure and meaning.

King also used songs and chants as a way to reinforce the importance of a Māori knowledge structure. Writing Māori history, songs or chants also have an important role in creating a structure to live by. Simmons uses them as a marker for 'genuine tradition' because the oral nature of Māori culture has meant that their history has been traditionally passed down through generations by memory aids such as songs and chants.¹⁰⁰ King used these songs or chants throughout his works to give his work cultural validation and significance. In *Te Ao Hurihuri* King not only wrote the dedication in Māori¹⁰¹ but he also added a proverb, in Māori and English, explaining the nature of the new world: 'Te Ao Hurihuri is a

⁹⁵ David Simmons, *The Great New Zealand Myth: A Study of the Discovery and Origin Traditions of the Māori* (Wellington, 1976), p.321.

⁹⁶ Walker, 'The Relevance of Māori Myth and Tradition', p.170.

⁹⁷ Te Maire Tau, *Nga Pikituroa: The Oral Traditions of Ngai Tahu* (Dunedin, 2003), p.18-20.

⁹⁸ Michael King, *New Zealand: its Land and its People* (Wellington, 1979), pp.17-20.

⁹⁹ King, *Māori*, p.39.

¹⁰⁰ n.b. Simmons' study on oral traditions is not an attempt to find elements of 'truth' – in the historical sense – within the an oral tradition, but to establish whether the tradition is a reliable source that can be used as historical evidence [*The Great New Zealand Myth*, pp.8-12].

¹⁰¹ i.e. 'Hei tohu aroha ki oku hoa kaumātua ki a Piri Poutapu rāua ko John Rangihau mo a rāua tohutohu, manaaki, atawhai I ahau' [King, *Te Ao Hurihuri*, p.2].

world revolving: a world that moves forward to the place it came from; a wheel that turns on an axle of strength'.¹⁰² Similarly, in King's biography of Whina Cooper he used songs and chants to confirm certain behaviours or to explain why an event took place. For example, for the people of Te Rawa the place of rest and the point of transcendence to the afterlife is at the foot of Panguru mountain. King demonstrated the importance of this classic poroporoaki as a tool for remembering their history and their ancestors:

Hei konei e Ninihi, e	Farewell Ninihi and Puhanga
Puhunga Tohora.	Tohora.
Ka hoki nei ahau ki	I return to Panguru, to
Panguru, ki Patapata,	Papata,
Ki re rākau tu patapata i	To the tree that stands tall
tu	
Ki tē hauāuru,	In the west wind,
Ki a Ruarei, ki a	To the ancestors Ruarei and Raparapa
Raparapa	
Ki nga uri ō	And to the descendants of Whare-tē-
Wharewhare-tē-Rangi,	Rangi,
Te angaanga I titi iho	To the peaceful calm that descends
i tē rangi	from
Tu tē ra, tu te pō.	Heaven. Day and night. ¹⁰³

It also affirmed the identity for the people whose lives are dominated by the proximity and omnipresence of the mountain.¹⁰⁴

Even King's composition of his prose represented the influence that Māori culture had on his approach to writing history. For example, he described the personality and energy of Nga in metaphorical prose that resonated with Māori and their association with the land commenting that '[...]life rattled inside her like seeds in a dried pod'.¹⁰⁵ In addition, King explained in the same vein, '[t]o investigate the identity of a person [Whina Cooper] raised in traditional Māori fashion is to scale a ladder that climbs back through history and disappears into the mists of unverifiable and frequently contentious tradition'.¹⁰⁶ In this sentence King invoked the notion that Māori history is based on elements of time that are in flux. This fits the Māori knowledge structure, because of the belief by Māori that the

¹⁰² viz. 'Te Ao Hurihuri tē ao huri ai ki tona tauranga: tē ao rapu; ko tē huripoki e huri nei I runga I tē taumata ō tē kaha'. *Ibid*, p.1.

¹⁰³ Michael King, *Whina: A Biography* (Auckland, 1983), p.20.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁵ King, *Moko*, p.1.

¹⁰⁶ King, *Whina*, p.18.

ancestors of the past influence the actions of the living. An example of this was King's use of mist, as he had in *Moko*.¹⁰⁷ Mist has many meanings for cultures across the globe. For Māori its presence suggests the atua or the spirits of their ancestors. This was important because the core of mātauranga Māori was whakapapa which is found at the centre of all Māori oral traditions. Whakapapa is what orders the Māori world.¹⁰⁸ For Māori the knowledge of their origins and their traditions are central not only to their history but also their identity. This makes history a personal experience.¹⁰⁹ King's resolve to write history from personal experience would become a trademark of his career; but, it would also take the focus of his work in a new direction.¹¹⁰

After 1984 King virtually stopped writing Māori history.¹¹¹ In part this was due to the influx of Māori authors, born of the Māori renaissance, who produced literature from a Māori view point for Māori readership.¹¹² King felt that these offspring had taken their rightful place in the discipline and his presence was no longer required to 'fill-in the blanks'.¹¹³ While he had endeavoured to write against the dominant voices in New Zealand history by including Māori within his texts some Māori questioned his intention to gain knowledge of so much Māori tikanga.¹¹⁴ It was not until more recently that Pākehā historians questioned his use of Māori knowledge with the same ferocity as Māori scholars had in the 1970s.¹¹⁵ King paved the tenuous road for Pākehā scholars to be able to approach Māori

¹⁰⁷ i.e. King describes Nga coming out of the mist as through she is walking through time [*Moko*, p.1].

¹⁰⁸ Rawiri Te Maire Tau, 'In Defence of Oral History: Whakapapa as a Case Study', *Te Karaka* (Winter, 2001), p.8.

¹⁰⁹ Tipene O'Regan, 'Te Kupenga o nga Tupuna: The Net of Tupuna', *From the Beginning: the Archaeology of the Māori*, John Wilson (ed.) (Auckland, 1987), p.26.

¹¹⁰ cf. Chapter Four of this thesis: 'King's People: The Life Histories of New Zealanders'.

¹¹¹ n.b. By including Māori within his larger historical narratives was an imperative of King's work, however he produced *Nga Iwi o te Motu: One Thousand Years of Māori History* (Auckland, 1997) after the eighties which focused purely on Māori subject matter.

¹¹² n.b. King cited Ranginui Walker [*Nga Pepa a Ranginui: The Walker Papers* (Auckland, 1996)], Buddy Mikaere [*Te Maiharoa and the Promised Land* (Auckland, 1988)] and Lindsay Cox [*Kotahitanga: The Search for Māori Political Unity* (Oxford, 1993)] as those Māori who had taken up this role. However, he regretted that many Māori had become 'swallowed' by the Treaty claims industry [King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu*, p.5]. This was sentiment shared five years earlier by the editor of the 2nd edn. *OHNZ* Geoffrey Rice, p. ix.

¹¹³ King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu*, p.5.

¹¹⁴ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.165-166.

¹¹⁵ cf. Pollock, 'Cultural Colonisation and Textual Biculturalism', (2007), pp. 180-198.

subjects without fear of being accused of ‘cultural raiding’.¹¹⁶ However, the next generation of Pākehā scholars are in a position to critique King’s writing to examine to what extent his approach was a form of appropriation of Māori culture. Nevertheless, King had gained a considerable base of knowledge through his early work on Māori subjects. His training as a journalist had brought him to the Waikato and gave him experience at a grass-roots level of the day to day living and concerns of Māori. King explained, ‘I grew up in a culture that did not have a past it wanted to remember[...u]ntil I moved to the Waikato, I was unaware that there was a mythology in New Zealand that had grown out of our landscape – our earth, sea, forest and sky – and out of the deeds of men whose lives extended over centuries. I was also unaware that this mythology still provides support for thousands of people’.¹¹⁷ King wanted to elevate the value of the Māori voice within New Zealand history. King, satisfied that Māori had established their presence within the discipline and realising his own inadequacies to continue such research, turned his gaze on his own culture.¹¹⁸ His gaze, however, had been influenced by mātauranga Māori. His work prior to 1984 shows his accumulation of this knowledge base; after 1984 his work continued to show Māori elements and ideas that were shaped by what could be called ‘mātauranga Pākehā’.¹¹⁹

Like many definitions about identity, being Pākehā cannot be encompassed in a succinct definition. As King himself explained, ‘[i]n the past, New Zealanders have had difficulty defining themselves. Or, rather, they have disagreed about definitions’.¹²⁰ Pākehā is a term that is bandied about today with very little explanation. The accepted binding element of Pākehā identity was the immigration of peoples from Europe to New Zealand to first, trade, and then to

¹¹⁶ cf. Tipene O’Regan, ‘Who Owns the Past?: Change in Māori Perceptions of the Past’, *From the Beginning: The Archaeology of Māori*, John Wilson (ed.) (Auckland, 1987), pp.142-144. King was also accused of being an ‘academic raider’ by Albie Tahana. King, *Being Pākehā*, p.165.

¹¹⁷ King, *Moko*, p.85.

¹¹⁸ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.204.

¹¹⁹ n.b. King’s own phrase for understanding his place in New Zealand was ‘Being Pākehā’ which was developed in his memoir *Being Pākehā* (1985).

¹²⁰ King, *New Zealand Its Land and Its People*, p.8.

settle.¹²¹ This definition of Pākehā has broadened today to include people of most non-Māori ethnicities – normally of Anglo or Celtic origins – who are two, or more, generations ‘native’ born.¹²² Scholars of New Zealand history have debated whether being Pākehā is a negative or positive identifier. While non-Māori New Zealanders view the term Pākehā as a positive hybrid post-colonial identifier,¹²³ David Pearson points out that the majority of the populace prefer the self-label of a Kiwi or New Zealander.¹²⁴ King on the other hand cannot understand why the ‘majority’ would reject an indigenised term for a term devised by Dutch cartographers.¹²⁵ Historians Peter Gibbons and Giselle Byrnes both subscribe to the notion that the term Pākehā continues to ‘colonise’ Māori through texts.¹²⁶ The anecdotally colonial connotations do still linger for the term Pākehā in the public arena, but for King it gave him a sense of belonging.¹²⁷ Because Pākehā is a Māori term for non-Māori it helps to explain King’s view of Europeans as becoming indigenous to New Zealand. Māori language was used here as the indigenising mechanism. Therefore, Pākehā belong to the world King structured. King did not explain his definition of what it meant to be Pākehā until his book *Being Pākehā*.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, his developing understanding of the term can be tracked throughout his work from its beginning in the 1970s until the late 1990s when he refused to apologise for his identification with Pākehā culture, and its right to be a legitimate culture in the make-up of New Zealand’s peoples.¹²⁹

The development of King’s definition of what it means to be Pākehā came distinctly from a term that distinguished Europeans who were foreign settlers

¹²¹ c.f. Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Harmondsworth, 1959) and James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders for the 1880s to the Year 2000* (Harmondsworth, 2001).

¹²² Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, (Wellington, 1986), pp.31-45 and 46-60.

¹²³ Paul Spoonley, ‘Becoming Pākehā: Majority Group Identity in a Globalising World’, in R. Patman and C. Rudd (eds.) *Sovereignty Under Siege: Globalisation and New Zealand* (Aldershot, 2005), p.57.

¹²⁴ David Pearson, ‘Reframing Majoritarian National Identities Within an Antipodean Perspective’, *Thesis Eleven*, Number 95, November 2008, p.53.

¹²⁵ Michael King, ‘A Vision for the new Millennium’, *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life* (2001), p.103.

¹²⁶ c.f. Gibbons ‘Cultural Colonisation and National Identity’, pp.5-17 and Giselle Byrnes “‘A dead sheet covered with meaningless words?’ Place Names and Cultural Colonisation of Tauranga’ *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1, (April 2002), pp.18-35.

¹²⁷ Kerry Howe, ‘Forward’, *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native*, 2nd edn. (Auckland, 2004), p.vii.

¹²⁸ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.177-186.

¹²⁹ King, ‘Allegiance to Ones Origins’, p.119.

from Pākehā who feel and recognise themselves as indigenous to New Zealand. In this respect the Pākehā is an ‘in-house’ term used to describe a group within the nation.¹³⁰ It was not surprising then that King’s first step in indigenising Pākehā was to explain their immigration and subsequent settlement. King placed New Zealand at the centre of a migration narrative stating, ‘New Zealand lies on the edge of the Pacific Ocean – at the bottom left corner of an imaginary triangle that bounds the islands of Polynesia. By its geographical points of reference it is certainly a Pacific country’.¹³¹ Interestingly, King did not describe the geographical space of New Zealand within a Pacific ‘Archipelago’ in the sense that J.G.A. Pocock’s had in his thesis on what national histories lacking: an understanding of more than one historical consciousness between nations.¹³² King did not use the narrative of migration as a means to write a transnational history which could have made his narrative more inclusive of larger tropes of historical thought. Instead he made both Pākehā and Māori immigrants to New Zealand which kept the narrative nationally insular. However, this approach also achieved a status of equality for Māori and Pākehā because King recognised them both as immigrants. He went so far as to make both groups colonisers of New Zealand,¹³³ and in his work *Mori: A People Rediscovered* (1989) King reminded the reader of the desolation left by the colonisation by Taranaki Māori of the Chatham Islands in the 1830s.¹³⁴ For proponents of this approach, like James Belich in *Making Peoples: A History of New Zealanders: from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (1996), the basis of ‘equality’ is the ideology on which a bicultural society is formed. King furthers his sentiment of Māori as immigrants by referring to them as Polynesians, and that Europeans re-discovered New Zealand.¹³⁵

In *Being Pākehā* King explained ‘[i]n a country inhabited for a mere one thousand years, everybody is an immigrant or a descendant of immigrants’.¹³⁶ Again, this

¹³⁰ Pearson, pp.52-53.

¹³¹ King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.8.

¹³² J.G.A. Pocock, ‘British History: a Plea for a New Subject’, *NZJH*, vol.8, no.1 (1974), p.21.

¹³³ *New Zealand Its Land and Its People*, p.145.

¹³⁴ King, *Mori: A People Rediscovered* (Auckland, 1989), p.59.

¹³⁵ King, *New Zealand in Colour*, p.6.

¹³⁶ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.14. n.b. In ‘Allegiance to Origins’, *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland, 1999), pp.235-241 King made this sentiment stronger telling us we must have allegiance to our origins.

placed Māori and Pākehā in an equal position within the nation. In this work King embellished the point by taking a chapter to explain his grandparents' immigration from Ireland to New Zealand. King methodically began his memoir in this way in order to weave his own genealogy with the narrative of migration and settlement.¹³⁷ King was aware of the importance of whakapapa to Māori history, and consequently, he made his own whakapapa central to his history. King's purpose was to make Pākehā more aware of their origins and therefore, understand more about New Zealand society.¹³⁸ King's foresight about the importance of genealogy to gain a better understanding of an individual's culture can be seen today in the revival of Māori culture in New Zealand with an emphasis on whakapapa, and also in an increasing exposure of Pākehā to Māori ways of thinking.¹³⁹ King's main purpose was to break his ties to the old country by emphasising the act of immigration but he was also aware of creating a lineage for Pākehā that transcends 'a mere one thousand years of history'.¹⁴⁰ Again, he used songs to emphasise the importance of his – in this case Irish – ancestry. He recalled songs that his grandmother sang to him as a boy¹⁴¹ as well as those the Catholic nuns taught him at school: 'Hail Glorious St. Patrick, dear saint of our isle[...]'.¹⁴² He also described how, on his visit to Europe en route to Menton, France, to begin the Katherine Mansfield scholarship, he had a strange feeling of déjà vu and a feeling akin to homesickness.¹⁴³ However, he was quick to assert that '[m]y place is in New Zealand, New Zealand is my place';¹⁴⁴ assuring the reader that Pākehā have roots in New Zealand, and not in a far distant land.

For King the land was a marker of identity that was shared between Māori and Pākehā.¹⁴⁵ From the individual settlement to their first contact, New Zealand was the stage-setting where the narrative of New Zealand identity unfolds. Once the two cultures meet King explained, '[t]ogether Polynesians and Europeans are

¹³⁷ King, 'Immigrants' *Being Pākehā*, pp.14-29 and 'Origins', *Being Pākehā Now*, p.13-31.

¹³⁸ King, *Māori*, p.i.

¹³⁹ Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800 – 1945* (Auckland, 2008), p.11.

¹⁴⁰ *Being Pākehā*, p.14.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.18.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, p.27.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p.147.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.160.

¹⁴⁵ cf. Chapter Three of this thesis: 'Identity and the Landscape: Imagining New Zealand Through King's Personal Experience of Place.'

evolving in New Zealand a culture that is neither wholly Polynesian nor wholly Western, but an exciting amalgam of both; and something that is distinctively New Zealand in character'.¹⁴⁶ King went as far as to state, '[e]ven their [European] traditions became New Zealand-centred as they made the rapid transition from migrants to tangata whenua, people of the land'.¹⁴⁷ By making Pākehā also tangata whenua of New Zealand he took the exclusivity of the word away from Māori, thereby creating a shared marker for identity.¹⁴⁸ Pocock shares this view on indigenous status. He believes that the history of the world is the history of migration and the only right tangata whenua can claim is the right to occupation.¹⁴⁹ King himself stated plainly that '[h]istory is the story of human occupation of a place compiled from surviving evidence'.¹⁵⁰ However, King reiterated that Pākehā culture was not an indigenous culture that displaces or supplants that of the Māori tangata whenua, but it had a symbiotic relationship to Māoritanga.¹⁵¹ Pākehā were New Zealand's second indigenous culture, or as King affectionately called them the teina or younger-sibling culture without threatening the special status of Māori as the first indigenous culture.¹⁵²

For Pākehā, New Zealand is home. King once again used a Māori term to explain the importance of this connection: New Zealand was his tūrangawaewae.¹⁵³ King reiterated this sentiment in *Being Pākehā Now*, stating that Pākehā born in and committed to New Zealand have no other tūrangawaewae, anymore than Māori do anywhere else in the Pacific.¹⁵⁴ To Māori this is a term that is used to explain the importance of the marae as a place of belonging. Literally translated it means a

¹⁴⁶ *New Zealand Its Land and Its People*, p.72.

¹⁴⁷ King, *New Zealand in Colour*, p.7.

¹⁴⁸ n.b. King does not 'diffuse and displace' Māori claims to tangata whenua status in New Zealand as Pollock asserts in 'Cultural Colonization and Textual Biculturalism', p.195. King acknowledged that Māori were the first tangata whenua and Pākehā are the second. King is creating a shared culture that appealed to the differential markers of each culture.

¹⁴⁹ J.G.A. Pocock, 'Tangata Whenua and Enlightenment Anthropology' *NZJH*, vol.8, no.1, (April, 1974), pp.30-33.

¹⁵⁰ King, *Māori*, p.37.

¹⁵¹ Michael King, 'Being Pākehā', *Pākehā: The Quest for New Zealand Identity* (Auckland, 1991), p.20.

¹⁵² King, 'A Vision of the New Millennium', p.104.

¹⁵³ n.b. I believe that King formulated his ideas on tūrangawaewae from his biography on Te Puea Herangi and her struggle to give her people 'a place to stand' [*Te Puea*, pp.103-104.] But, he first calls Pākehā tūrangawaewae in *New Zealand in Colour*, p.7.

¹⁵⁴ *Being Pākehā Now*, p.12.

place to stand.¹⁵⁵ But, for Māori it has stronger connotations which include family, spirituality and tradition. King understood this importance and likened the passing of knowledge to an umbilical cord through which the present is nourished and better understood;¹⁵⁶ it is as if Papatūānuku herself feeds Aotearoa and facilitates the growth and development of culture. As Pākehā developed these connections with the land, and as their generational roots became more embedded in the soil, they began to blossom as a people.¹⁵⁷ Like the honeysuckle of English origin that thrived in New Zealand gardens,¹⁵⁸ Pākehā identity continued to bloom in a climate that was focused, not on the dominant associations of identity, but on indigenous rights and the revival of Māori culture. In fact the Māori renaissance helped to spark awareness by Pākehā about their own origins even in the face of fierce accusations by Māori of oppression and continual colonisation.¹⁵⁹

As this evidence has shown, during the 1970s and 1980s King continued to construct Pākehā identity around Māori elements, through the process I have coined *mātauranga Pākehā*. This stylised concept that King used to explain the world around him can be simply described as an indigenisation of Europeans that was adapted by a personal understanding of Māori culture and life ways. However, there are more elements to *mātauranga Pākehā* than European indigenisation through a bicultural framework. This was the base element of King's method of writing history. As previously stated King's position as a New Zealand historian within the historiography of national identity was a mix of both traditional modes of an autochthonous historical approach as well as being influenced by the multiple identifiers of late twentieth century scholarship. Hence, the concept of *mātauranga Pākehā* was more than an appropriation of Māori concepts and themes; it was an attempt by King to reconcile traditional and new ideas of history and identity. To achieve this King wanted the term Pākehā to be a positive personal identifier for Europeans. This was achieved through the legitimisation of their migration and consequent settlement in New Zealand. Hence, an association with the landscape became one of the elements of

¹⁵⁵ Walker, 'Marae: A Place to Stand', pp.21-31.

¹⁵⁶ Michael King, *After the War: New Zealander Since 1945* (Auckland, 1988), p.9.

¹⁵⁷ King, 'A Vision of the New Millennium', p.103.

¹⁵⁸ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.224.

¹⁵⁹ King, 'A Vision of the New Millennium', p.104.

mātauranga Pākehā. Traditionally in a Western history occupation of land of land denoted power and privilege within the nation. King disregarded this approach and concentrated on the concepts of ancestry, spirituality and a personal familiarity of place. To appreciate the landscape in such a personal manner was in aid of his understanding and, he hoped, the readers' understanding of identity. Furthermore, his life histories of New Zealanders also encapsulated that personal experience of history through the examples of others' lives. So, mātauranga Pākehā also encompassed a personal understanding of one's identity to make one's histories more accessible and meaningful, thereby it could ultimately be related to the readers own experience and notions about self. Ultimately for King, this structure of mātauranga Pākehā underpinned an expression of his position within the nation, which he recognised as one of the many identities within New Zealand.

King's focus on his own identity was in part because of the tension during the seventies and eighties on Māori and Pākehā relations. For many European New Zealanders frictions around Māori rights and identity have been characterised by the Māori protest movements.¹⁶⁰ Because mātauranga Pākehā was structured on a juxtaposition with Māori culture, it was interesting that King chose to engage only very briefly during this period of Māori and Pākehā relations, especially, in reference to the Treaty of Waitangi¹⁶¹ (except, to show his dismay at the bulk of Māori scholars being drawn into the claims process).¹⁶² It was in the latter part of his career from the 1990s onwards that King became more unapologetic, and much more political about his position about Pākehā identity in New Zealand. It was important to note that in the nineties was when King spoke up about issues that he believed were significant in terms of the Treaty. While King seemed to continue to echo the mantra of good race relations in New Zealand, in terms of the Treaty being an outgrowth of British humanitarianism, he noted that its outcome had equated to the most contentious and problematic ingredients of New Zealand

¹⁶⁰ Harris, 'Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou', pp.58-67; "'Not One More Acre'", pp.68-77; 'Bastion Point is Māori Land', pp.78-87; 'Maranga Mai', pp.88-103; 'Rejecting Racist Rugby', pp.104-110.

¹⁶¹ n.b. King has an appendix in *Being Pākehā* [pp.236-237] on the Treaty of Waitangi in the section titled 'Taha Māori: Things Pākehā Ought to Know' which is the most engagement he had with the Treaty over his whole career.

¹⁶² King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu*, p.5.

history.¹⁶³ Hence, as he recognised, the major issues for Māori and Pākehā were the implications of tino rangatiratanga and the exact nature of partnership between Māori and the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi.¹⁶⁴ King referred to Pākehā as ‘tangata tiriti’ – a phrase first used by a Māori Land Court Judge – the people who were born from the documents signed on the 6 February 1840.¹⁶⁵

King also expressed in this period, more strongly than before, that he never had any doubts about Pākehā culture’s right to be in New Zealand.¹⁶⁶ In the introduction to his editorial piece *Pākehā the Quest for Identity* King stated strongly: ‘[f]or both peoples, Māori and Pākehā, home is Aotearoa/New Zealand, the focus of present and future loyalties and commitments. The fact that one of these peoples has been here longer than the other does not make them *more* ‘New Zealand’ than later arrivals, nor give them the right to exclude other from full participation in the national life. If it did, we would have to accept the matching precepts of Hitler’s Germany, Enoch Powell’s Britain and Idi Amin’s Uganda’.¹⁶⁷ He made this point again in *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life*:

In saying what I have about Pākehā culture, about its right to be here, to belong, and to carry indigenous status, I seek to do two things: one is to reflect and articulate a reality that is evolving but not always acknowledged; the other is to accompany my Pākehā brothers and sisters towards a similar degree of confidence and security in their identification with this land as Māori have.

And I seek to do this without guilt, and without apology.¹⁶⁸

King’s position on Māori issues in relation to the state had not moved dramatically from the 1970s, but they had come to the forefront of his works. King had in previous works deliberately chosen to disregard the political issues of the era and concentrate on the cultural aspects of New Zealand identity for Māori and Pākehā. By the 1990s, after decades of criticism from some Māori for writing Māori history, King was no longer willing to let his own position as a Pākehā New Zealander be challenged as illegitimate or colonising. King had established for Pākehā a deeply embedded foundation in history and tradition. From this

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, p.30.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, pp.113-118.

¹⁶⁵ King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu*, p.36.

¹⁶⁶ *Being Pākehā Now*, p. 235.

¹⁶⁷ Michael King, ‘Preface’, *Pākehā*, p.9.

¹⁶⁸ King, ‘Allegiance to One’s Origins’, p.119.

foundation they could become more aware and confident about their identity, as he was: '[t]he culture I have is Irish-Catholic heritage, plus the ingredients from many other sources, especially Māori, which have attached themselves to me like iron filings to a magnet as I have grown up and continued to grow in New Zealand'.¹⁶⁹

This analogy of a 'magnet' attracting different 'filings' or components of identity was a constant thread over King's career. While at face value King's use of this metaphor for identity reflected his own personal experience of New Zealand, his being Pākehā; it also can be read as an indicator for larger tropes of national identity within his texts. As the following chapters argue, King wrote New Zealand history as a story of human occupation. Therefore, the most important components were for his histories the land and the people, and how the two interacted and incorporated one another. In this regard, for each individual that interacts with the people of the nation, the 'magnet' can also be seen as a symbol for the nation, the constant and most obvious identifier for an individual to feel a belonging to. The 'magnet' or the nation becomes the most tangible component of their self; the 'filings' become the individual points of difference between each person within the nation. King believed that the most powerful 'filing' that was attracted individually and collectively to the nation was an association to the geographical landscape.

¹⁶⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

Chapter Three

Identity and the Landscape: Imagining New Zealand Through King's Personal Experience of Place

A personal relationship with the landscape of New Zealand was for Michael King an essential part of his identity. It reinforced his approach to history through mātauranga Pākehā because he was able to explain the attraction of certain types of personal identifiers (or the different 'filings'¹) for a person's experience of landscape and place. Because King's experience of New Zealand history was through a knowledge base of mātauranga Pākehā, he explained his own sense of the landscape through this model. For the duration of his career King endeavoured to explain the New Zealand landscape through both physical and imagined landscapes.² He believed that if readers were able to embrace their own personal responses to the landscape as well as being aware of their own identity and personal history (be that Pākehā or not) within the spaces of local, national and global geographies, then a larger understanding of collective identity could be understood and embraced.³

To achieve this goal of communicating to readers that their personal experiences were key to understanding their national histories, King explained that New Zealand's landscape was both a physical geographic entity⁴ as well as something less tangible that was created and lived through human interaction.⁵ For King this interaction with the landscape was a Pākehā one.⁶ Hence, King explored his own relationship with the landscape in relation to his identity through three main themes: an association with place during childhood, the reinforcement of that identity during adulthood and the development of a spirituality which was the connection between humans and nature.⁷ By imbuing the landscape with his own memories and stories King hoped that the

¹ Michael King, *Being Pākehā: An Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (Auckland, 1985), p.177.

² cf. Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London, 1995).

³ Michael King, 'Michael King: Being Pākehā', *The Writing of New Zealand: Inventions of Identities* (ed.) Alex Calder (Auckland, 1993), p.235.

⁴ i.e. This was best expressed in his production of many photographic histories: Michael King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People* (Wellington, 1979); *New Zealand in Colour* (Wellington, 1982); *New Zealand* (Auckland, 1987) etc.

⁵ cf. Stephen Daniels and Catherine Nash, 'Lifepaths: Geography and Biography', *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol.30 (2004), pp.449-458.

⁶ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.185-186 and *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland, 1999), pp.240-241.

⁷ Michael King, *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* (Auckland, 1992), p.11.

reader would be inspired to do the same and therefore build on their individual ‘filings’ that formed their personal identity and their larger conception of national identity.⁸ However, while King maintained a new approach to landscape through personal experience, traditional forms of New Zealand landscape and nation building still occurred in his works.

The process of immigration, settlement and occupation are still large parts of his bicultural narrative,⁹ and once more colonial ideology and cultural domination can be seen to loom within his texts.¹⁰ This was reinforced by King’s use of regional stereotypes and pictorial histories that focused on notions of collective human ownership and understandings rather than living and experiencing certain landscapes on an individual level.¹¹ Once more King was balancing his desire to unearth new concepts of history and identity for both Māori and Pākehā against the engrained long-established European myths of ‘New Zealandness’. However, this time he tried to maintain the balance through exploring the national landscape. This chapter explains the new and traditional modes of landscape histories that King used within his works to try and enrich the personal histories of New Zealanders in aid of better understanding national history. The first half of the chapter discusses King’s approach of self consciously telling his own personal histories that correspond with the landscape and his identity as a model for the reader to think about their own experiences. The second half of the chapter critiques the more traditional modes of national expression towards landscape that King uses in his texts. This can allow us to assess to what extent the prominence of landscape within his works has achieved a new or different approach to understanding identity and national history or whether King has merely reworked established historical themes and myths about landscape and identity in New Zealand.

Mātauranga Pākehā was the framework through which King viewed the world around him and which helped him to shape the way in which his histories were written. His

⁸ Kerry Howe, ‘Forward’, *Being Pākehā: The Recollections and Reflections of a White Native* (2nd edn.) (Auckland, 2004), p.vi.

⁹ King, *New Zealand Its Land and Its People*, pp.8-12 and pp.33-53 and King, *New Zealand in Colour*, pp.6-9.

¹⁰ Caroline Daley, ‘Review: The Penguin History of New Zealand’, *NZJH*, vol.38, no.1, (April, 2004), pp.77-79.

¹¹ i.e. Michael King, *Auckland* (Auckland, 1985), p.5.

landscape histories were no exception. As previously discussed this Pākehā way of thinking was more than an acknowledgment of what he perceived as a developing bicultural nation or a means of justifying an indigenous status for Pākehā in New Zealand.¹² As shown in the preceding chapter it was suggested that King used landscape as a means to show how European New Zealanders became indigenous over the course of history through their immigration, settlement and adaption to the New Zealand environment.¹³ Furthermore, the landscape eventually became their tūrangawaewae.¹⁴ In this context, being indigenous literally means to be ‘of the soil’. In Māori language the term for an indigenous person is tangata whenua: people of the land.¹⁵ King’s landscape and identity nexus however, sought to explain more than the legitimacy of both Māori and Pākehā culture. King wanted to show how personal experiences of an individual were intimately linked with the larger historical tropes of the nation.¹⁶ Through writing about New Zealand landscape King determined that being Pākehā was not just an ideology but was also a way of life, an existence that was practised individually and on a collective level.¹⁷ In other words, by including landscape as an important ‘filing’ for identity King reinforced his framework for history writing as relevant for his audience.¹⁸ King successfully accomplished this through imagining his own place within New Zealand through his childhood and later adult experiences.

King realised that personal geographies were important to understanding larger historical tropes. While such an approach can seem insignificant to a collective history,¹⁹ King focused on the experiences for periods of a person’s life rather than certain events that would evoke meaning for the reader through similarities of

¹² Michael King, ‘Allegiance to One’s Origins: The Consequences of Belief’, *Tread Softly: For You Tread On My Life* (Auckland, 2001), p.119.

¹³ Geoff Park, ‘Whenua – The Ecology of Placental Connection’, *Theatre Country: Essays on Landscape and Whenua* (Wellington, 2006), pp.240-241.

¹⁴ Michael King, ‘A Vision For The New Millennium’, *Tread Softly: For You Tread On My Life* (Auckland, 2001), pp.103-104.

¹⁵ J.G.A. Pocock, ‘Tangata whenua and Enlightenment Anthropology’, *NZJH*, vol. 26, no.1, (April, 1992), pp.28.

¹⁶ Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Kent, 1984), p.3.

¹⁷ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.184-186.

¹⁸ Cosgrove, p.38.

¹⁹ Laurence Murphy and Richard Le Heron, ‘Encountering Places, Peoples and Environments: Introducing Human Geography’, *Explorations in Human Geography: Encountering Place* (ed.) Richard Le Heron, Laurence Murphy, Pip Fover and Margaret Goldstone (Auckland, 1999), pp. 2-3.

experience.²⁰ Therefore, the first period that King explored through his personal experiences was his interaction with the landscape during childhood. He proceeded to investigate this period in two stages. The first was the differing association individuals have with the place where they are born and secondly where they have grown up and experienced childhood. Both of these stages can form a strong allegiance to place.²¹ As King declared about his loyalty to Auckland, where his family moved when he was twelve years old, he wrote ‘[c]onverts to cities are like converts to religion. Their former ignorance and doubts are replaced by a hunger for information and faith that borders on the evangelical.’²² His reason for this statement was that he understood that the personal interaction and experiences within these places during childhood resonated later in life as a precursors to adult identity.²³ King retold early childhood memories of growing up in Paremata as one of the defining reasons for his interest in New Zealand landscape and history, as well as the beginning of his journey of self identification as Pākehā. King wrote:

A sense of history comes from three ingredients: early habitation, evidence of that habitation, and stories about it based on evidence. Paremata had all three. Rare for a New Zealand locality, it had been occupied sporadically over nearly a thousand years; the imprint of the people before was as visible on the rural landscape as the rise and fall of the tides around it [...] A solitary child, I walked, rowed and cycled around the harbour and explored every site [...] I lay on the earthworks behind the Pāuātaha nui Anglican church, which had been built over Rangihaeata’s pa, I cycled up the Horokiri Valley and then climbed the Battle Hill to find Rangihaeata’s rifle pits and (at the bottom) the graves of Imperial troops killed fighting there. These experiences did make history live for me. I *felt* the presence of people who had gone before. I saw them in a kind of Arthurian world that was not in Camelot but (literally) on my own doorstep.²⁴

In 1957 King’s parents moved the family to Auckland. However, King’s interaction with the estuaries of Paremata had in ‘these six impressionable years [from six to twelve years old] generated in me a relationship with the sea, a love of wildlife and a passion for New Zealand history’.²⁵ This interest in New Zealand was not lost on King in his arrival in Auckland. He was especially taken by Auckland’s many volcanic cones and often sat and sketched them: some 60 cones that cover the

²⁰ Kerry Howe, ‘Foreword’, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.vi.

²¹ Howard Morphy, ‘Landscape and Ancestral Past’ in *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space* (eds.) Eric Hirsh and Michael O’Hanlon (Oxford, 1995), p.197.

²² King, *Auckland*, p.7.

²³ Paula Backscheider, *Reflections on Biography* (Oxford, 1999), pp.94-96.

²⁴ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.40-41.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.52.

isthmus, a presence which he understood spanned 50,000 years.²⁶ King reiterated the importance to him of the layers of history that he viewed on Auckland's landscape with the arrival and settlement of Māori:

We have no names for these earliest Aucklanders. They were nomadic hunter-gathers, attracted by the twin harbours, the rich marine life, and the waterways stocked with fish and fowl. Later inhabitants began to cultivate the volcanic soils to grow kumara, taro and fern root; and still later residents (about 500 years ago) to live on and re-shape the volcanoes.²⁷

Through writing biography King also acknowledged in the attachments of other New Zealanders the importance of interaction with landscape when you are young to achieve a greater sense of self.²⁸ For example, in *Whina: A Biography of Whina Cooper* (1983) King described her fight as an adult to retain the right to live in Panguru, her childhood home, after being banished by her village as a result of her questionable behaviour as their community leader.²⁹ For Whina the place had sentimental and family connections of belonging and she believed it was where she needed to retire in her old age despite opposition to her return. Similarly, in his work on Frank Sargeson King described a young Sargeson's disdain for the cityscape of Hamilton and the great jubilation and peace he found in his Uncle's Waikato farming block.³⁰ This love of the countryside prompted him to move to the family's Takapuna bach to live permanently as a resident writer.³¹ King understood the importance of early interaction with the landscape for inspiring a direction for later in life. For King's life the landscape aroused a love of history and learning;³² for Whina it defined her belonging to a community that in turn encouraged her to assert her leadership,³³ and for Sargeson the landscape provided the backdrops and metaphors for his novels, short stories and poetry.³⁴ King's understanding even extended to those living outside of New Zealand. In his biography of the Austrian taxidermist Andreas Reischek, King linked Reischek's early childhood exploration through the parks and forests of Kerfermarkt as a precursor to his career in natural history collection.³⁵

²⁶ King, *Auckland*, p.8.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Richard Muir, *Approaches to Landscape* (Hampshire, 1999), p.303.

²⁹ Michael King, *Whina: A Biography of Whina Cooper* (Auckland, 1983), p.222.

³⁰ Michael King, *Frank Sargeson: A Life* (Auckland, 1995), pp.19-23.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.97-98.

³² King, *Being Pākehā*, p.52.

³³ King, *Whina*, p. 240-246.

³⁴ King, *Frank Sargeson*, pp.97-98; pp.360-373 and p.398.

³⁵ Michael King, *The Collector A Biography of Andreas Reischek* (Auckland, 1981), pp.16-17.

Childhood memories of landscape imprint themselves on the fabric of self identity and are reinforced through our later years. There was no doubt that growing up in Paremata and Auckland had made King identify personally with the landscape and that it had also helped him to build on his understanding of historical layers on the land that complemented a formation of Pākehā identity.³⁶ An example of how his Pākehā identity was reinforced by the landscape was through the stories that were passed down to him by his ancestors.³⁷ As explained in the previous chapter King developed his approach to history through understanding Māori culture and that the oral transmission of family stories through the generations was dominant feature of Māori history.³⁸ Hence, King acknowledged in his histories the Māori ancestral relationship with the land as a foundation for his own Pākehā understanding of the landscape in relation to his identity. For example, in *Whina* King made reference to Whina's thoughts on belonging to a place: '[a]t your own home you feel like you belong – You think of your forefathers who lived there, all the things in the present that relate you to the past. The hills talk to you, the sea talks to you, everywhere you go things talk to you'.³⁹ For Māori, their ancestors are alive and part of the landscape, and therefore of their everyday lives. Their oral traditions, like those of other indigenous populations, incorporate the landscape because it is such a universal part of human existence. It is a triadic relationship between the individual, the ancestral past, and the world in which that person lives.⁴⁰

King showed that this is no different for Pākehā. What King revealed was not that Europeans came to New Zealand and imposed new myths on the landscape, but that myths they carried with them were transferred and taken over by the new country.⁴¹ King recalled that his grandmother knew about her father's childhood from County Mayo and would tell them stories, sing them songs and show them the family albums, '[s]he told us all – her children, her grandchildren – who we were and where we came

³⁶ Michael King, 'Michael King: Being Pākehā', *The Writing of New Zealand: Inventions and Identities* (ed.) Alex Calder (Auckland, 1993), p.235.

³⁷ Paul Claval, 'Changing Conceptions of Heritage and Landscape', *Heritage, Memory and the Politics of Landscape*, Niamh Moore and Yvonne Whelan (eds.) (Aldershot, 2007), p.85.

³⁸ Michael King, 'New Zealand Oral History: Some Cultural and Methodological Considerations', *NZJH*, vol.12, no.2, (October, 1978), pp.104-107.

³⁹ King, *Whina*, p.165.

⁴⁰ Morphy, p.187.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.186.

from. Then, having told us, she kept reminding us'.⁴² King felt that he was acting out a version of his grandparents' visions of life away from the greasy cobblestones, sandstone tenements, grimy mines and mills: 'I can go further and believe that I am influenced by race memories of great-great-grandparents on the west coast of Ireland, planting and cultivating and worshiping in view of the sea high over Clew Bay in County Mayo; or of those other great-great-grandparents working their crofts in Easter Ross alongside Cromarty Firth.'⁴³ King explained that his grandmother had learned to be Irish in England and his mother had learned to be Irish in New Zealand.⁴⁴ This Irish Catholic tradition in New Zealand was what King inherited from his kinship ties and through the nuns at the Catholic schools.⁴⁵ However, he very soon learned that this was not all there was to his identity.

King's early influences from his grandmother's Irish Catholic heritage and his mother's upbringing, were absorbed values and transformed by his New Zealand setting.⁴⁶ For King, *mātauranga Pākehā*, coupled with his strong childhood association with the New Zealand landscape meant that rather than reject his grandmother's identification with Ireland, he embraced its values, especially Catholicism, and let his surroundings fuel his notions of identity. As he explained, 'It wasn't that I felt no pull to Europe; just that my interests in New Zealand were stronger. I was born in New Zealand, I belonged to that country, there was so much I didn't know was about it and *wanted* to know, and this process seemed to me to be life-long'.⁴⁷ Furthermore, King described how his identity as a Pākehā New Zealander was strengthened once he did go overseas. 'I became more deeply conscious of my roots in my own country because I had experienced their absence'.⁴⁸ King described when he first visited England, enroute to Menton in France to take up the Katherine Mansfield scholarship, he visited Durham Cathedral. King was taken by the presence of his ancestral past:

As I knelt I thought about the dead, my dead: the Catholics of Ireland and Northumbria; the monks of Lindisfarne who, before bringing their relics here, had carried Christianity to most of Northern Europe; the monks of Jarrow,

⁴² King, *Being Pākehā*, p.19.

⁴³ King, 'Being Pākehā', *Pākehā: The Quest for Identity in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1991), p.22.

⁴⁴ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.23-24.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.43-48.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p.23-24.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.146

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.159.

Bede's community; the invading Danes and Normans who had set in motion the events that raised the cathedral; and the victims of the Reformation who, after five centuries of worship, were driven from this place. I gathered these dead about me and was comforted by a sense of their presence and companionship. Had I been Māori, I would have poroporoaki'd and keened with them. Instead, I nursed lines of Eliot: 'We were born with the dead: See, they return and bring us with them.' Never had I felt more aware of the past in the present, nor more secured by it.⁴⁹

Here King recognised not just his ancestral past, but how growing up in New Zealand influenced his values and beliefs. As he attested in the early 1990s, '[a]s for any Māori person, the songs of *this* land are still to be heard, those of Tangaroa from the hillside. I hear them because they vibrate from the ethos of the land, and because I am open to them. I hear them too because they are in harmony with those rhythms, patterns and continuities that come to me from my Pākehā, Celtic and European past'.⁵⁰ Through the incorporation of his family genealogy into the landscape King was able to reinforce his identity as a Pākehā New Zealander.

While Paremata and Auckland were the defining places of King's childhood, he discovered another place that he settled in later in life and which stirred in him the same passionate association.⁵¹ This place was the Coromandel; but unlike the landscape of his childhood that helped to develop his identity, the landscapes that he encountered in adulthood helped to shape and reinforce his earliest conceptions of self.⁵² King had lived in the Coromandel when he was a young man, and returned to live there with his second wife: '[a] decade passed before I went back to the Coromandel. But the shapes of the hills and coast remained encoded on my mind.'⁵³ King recounted its undiscovered wonders:

[g]roves of Kauri as silent and high as cathedrals; high waterfalls dropping into deep pools surrounded by ferns; decaying wooden dams from days of kauri logging; derelict mines like ruined abbeys; shafts driven vertically and horizontally into rock; shorelines littered with petrified wood and gemstones; fossils in creek beds; contours of fortified pa on almost every side head land. I found quartz crystals, opalised jasper and kauri gum, and a moa bone fish hook on the surface of a crumbling beach midden.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p.148.

⁵⁰ King, 'Being Pākehā', p.22.

⁵¹ cf. Colin Hogg and John Carlaw, *History Man* (Auckland, 2004), 70min.

⁵² Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, p.6.

⁵³ Michael King, *Coromandel* (Auckland, 1993), p.10.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p.4.

It was here, in the Coromandel, that King found his creative sanctuary. For him it was a community of like-minded people who felt the creative forces the landscape embodied.⁵⁵ King felt that no matter how long the residents of the Coromandel had lived in the area, it was the ‘[t]he proximity of that rugged range with its craggy tops, its steep slopes, its deep valleys; and the juxtaposition of these features to the sea’⁵⁶ that binds and stamps them with identity. He even went so far as to say that it became a part of their emotional and spiritual life, ‘Coromandel people not only have a peninsula on their doorstep; they have it imprinted on their psyche. And most feel deprived when they are out of sight and reach of it’.⁵⁷

These adult understandings of the land as one of the many emotive components of belonging to a place took on greater meaning for King in the later part of his career. The layers of history that he saw as the products of human occupation and interaction on the landscape captured for him a higher plane of existence, one that reinforced his upbringing as a New Zealand Catholic and was consequently changed by his mātauranga Pākehā framework. King wrote in *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* in 1992 that he now realised that growing up in the Paremata Harbour was the time of his earliest spiritual feelings.⁵⁸ It was ‘[a] knowledge that I was a part of nature and nature was a part of me.’⁵⁹ King believed in two religious teleologies, one based in religious instruction and the other in nature.⁶⁰ He believed that religion was a universal experience: that the giving of life on the physical plane resonates of the spiritual and eternal. For some people this encounter happens in the natural world.⁶¹ King stated that, ‘[i]t is in this process [of nature] that I apprehend what I would now call God’.⁶² To King, this spiritual association was felt best at St. Gabriel’s Church in Pawarenga in Northland because it was among nature. However, it also reminded him of Ireland because the church is the ‘Hawaiiki-nui’ of non-Māori Catholics in New Zealand.⁶³ King wrote that this is not a novel discovery or a New Age mantra, but it is

⁵⁵ Hogg and Carlaw, *History Man* (2004).

⁵⁶ King, *Coromandel*, p.148.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ King, *Hidden Places*, p.234.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ King, *Hidden Places*, p.236.

⁶¹ Michael King, *God’s Farthest Outpost: A History of Catholics in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1997), p.12.

⁶² King, *Hidden Places*, p.243.

⁶³ King, *God’s Farthest Outpost*, p.12.

‘[...] insufficient to *hear* such a message; one has to *experience* it to know that things are so.’⁶⁴

This notion of the land evoking his spiritual self was first explored by King in his discovery of (and I argue in comparison to) another identity, that of the peoples of the Chatham Islands: the Moriori. King had always been interested in the stories of Moriori because the myths of their existence and migration to the Chatham Islands had percolated through school and academic texts.⁶⁵ King was asked to write a history of the Moriori by descendant Maui Solomon. King was moved by their plight and desire to be recognised as the ‘tchakat henu’ or tangata whenua of the Chatham Islands.⁶⁶ He recognised immediately the ‘psychic residue’ that the island’s landscape had developed over the centuries; he saw a Polynesian culture that had evolved to living on the island and had developed a strong sense of place.⁶⁷ He explained his perceived experience of landscape for Moriori through the marking of trees by their ancestors. He illuminated their spiritual qualities by linking nature and Moriori together: ‘[b]ecause the trees live, the figures on them live, so long as they remain recognisable. To be in such a place, heavy with physic residue, is to feel close to nature, close to the spiritual qualities of nature of which nature is emblematic, and close to people who carved the trees and departed forever.’⁶⁸ He went on to describe the holiness of these dendroglyphs and the ancestors they represented as quiet observers and ‘church-like stands of trees’.⁶⁹ King’s connection of spirituality with the landscape reinforced not only the interaction that our ancestors had had with the landscape through their stories and experiences, but also the myths and meaning humans attach to their environment to better understand themselves.⁷⁰ King however, did not see this pursuit of spirituality or God in nature as something perverse, but a natural consequence of identifying with one’s community.⁷¹

⁶⁴ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.240.

⁶⁵ Michael King, *A Land Apart: The Chatham Islands of New Zealand* (Auckland, 1990), p.i.

⁶⁶ Michael King, *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* (Auckland, 1989), p16.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.194

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ King, *A Land Apart*, p.9.

⁷⁰ King, *God’s Farthest Outpost*, pp.11-29.

⁷¹ Morphy, pp.197-199.

The proof of King's close association of the landscape with religious overtones was in his attempt to reconcile with Catholicism his new found spirituality from the cycles of natural world.⁷² The most obvious example of this was in his attempt to explain the relationship of human occupation with the landscape. After all, in death, all humans who exist on the landscape eventually become a part of the land, occupying it forever.⁷³ King's interpretation of the event of death in association with the landscape was influenced heavily by his Catholic moral framework. King explained human existence in these terms stating that '[a]s conscious flecks of matter we come from dust – or, in the metaphor of another culture from Papatūānuku, we shed brief light into darkness around us; then we return to dust'.⁷⁴ The phrase 'ashes to ashes and dust to dust' was a common prayer conducted during Christian burial services. While this was not strictly a Catholic liturgy, its Christian symbolism alluded to humans being first made in the image of God through the dusts of the earth to eventually return their earthly bodies to the land in death.⁷⁵ King also, though, melded that religious philosophy with his mātauranga Pākehā framework by comparing the Christian tradition of man's creation with the Māori oral tradition of the similar narrative. King illustrated the importance of these burial rites to his understanding of spiritual identity when writer Frank Sargeson's bach in Takapuna, Auckland, was deemed the final resting place for his ashes in June 1999.⁷⁶ Furthermore, King was saddened by the possibility that Sargeson's Bach would be forgotten and torn-down and he was part of a group who turned the Bach into a writer's retreat in his memory.⁷⁷ King went so far as to recount the last days of the protest vessel *The Rainbow Warrior* with the same religious sentiment as if it was a human to be buried. He described how Dover Samuels, as the representative of the area had the propeller moved to the steep hill above the Matauri Bay; this was a site that overlooked the vessel's final resting place.⁷⁸

⁷² cf. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and Profane: the Nature of Religion* (New York, 1959), pp.11-12 and pp. 148-149.

⁷³ Morphy, pp.197-199.

⁷⁴ King, *Hidden Places*, p.242.

⁷⁵ cf. Eliade, pp.184-186.

⁷⁶ King, *Auckland*, p.86.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Michael King, *The Death of the Rainbow Warrior* (Auckland, 1986), pp.249-252.

King recited these ebbs and flows of the natural world because he understood the complex notion of self-identification, which reflected a larger purpose: ‘[i]n the rise of mist from the estuary and the fall of rain, in the movements of the incoming and outgoing tides, I see a reflection of the deepest mystery and most sustaining pattern in all life: that of arrival and departure, of death and regeneration. And in them I feel satisfaction. I am thankful that this piece of earth exists and we upon it, to see and to experience these things; and – thanks to the miracle of human consciousness – to *know* that we experience them.’⁷⁹ King believed that human interaction with the landscape was a catalyst for larger understandings of self within a historical context. He reinforced this notion when he explained his spiritual understanding of the landscape as the relationship between people and the natural world.⁸⁰ He wrote: ‘[t]he God I discern now is infused in the host of good and honest men and women who make up the underlying fabric that holds communities like ours together, and in the regenerative power of the natural world’.⁸¹

For King an association with the landscape was not merely shared, but a part of his very being: his emotional and spiritual self.⁸² He also understood more intimately towards the end of his career that the landscape’s ‘regenerative’ power was closely linked to identity.⁸³ King saw the natural world as a stimulant for thinking more closely about the components of an individual’s identity.⁸⁴ As he explained at the end of *Being Pākehā*: ‘[a]s I watch this land and seascape, wrapped around by recollections of relationships and remembrance of times past, I find I am Pākehā, I am New Zealander, I am Irish, I am Scottish, I am European; and I am in parts of my spirit Māori. I am all these things simultaneously. Most of all, though, and most gratefully of all, I am human and I am alive. I rejoice in the gifts that my antecedents and associations have bequeathed me.’⁸⁵ In this quote King once again explained how an individual’s identity was constructed in terms of smaller components that make up a whole.⁸⁶ He plainly stated that all these ‘filings’/differences of identity had

⁷⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.241.

⁸⁰ Geoff Park, ‘Introduction – A More Indigenous Life’, *Theatre Country: Essays on Landscape and Whenua* (ed.) (Wellington, 2006), p.10.

⁸¹ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.241.

⁸² Morphy, p.205.

⁸³ Park, ‘A More Indigenous Life’, p.10.

⁸⁴ Muir, p.303.

⁸⁵ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.186.

⁸⁶ Murphy and Le Heron, p.3.

developed in such a way for him because of his family background and upbringing in a New Zealand setting.⁸⁷

While King's histories of New Zealand indulged in his own personal experiences of the land in relation to his memories and associations,⁸⁸ his main goal was to use his life narrative as a teaching tool for the reader to better understand their own situation.⁸⁹ In this regard it was unsurprising that King viewed his identity and New Zealand history through a *mātauranga Pākehā* framework of which contained a bicultural subtext. As Kerry Howe has explained, '[e]verything he [King] ever wrote he imbued with a sense of place and captured its historical essence. It was always a peopled landscape, and an inclusive one incorporating Māori and Pākehā.'⁹⁰ This framework for writing his histories can be critiqued in terms of how effectively King used landscape for the purpose of strengthening the readers association with New Zealand.⁹¹ Although King strove to demonstrate the importance of landscape to the readers' identity by employing his personal experiences as a teaching tool, he was still often unsuccessful in shaking the traditional myths about the landscape that were both physical and imagined in regard to colonisation, settlement, and regionalism. This chapter will now assess to what extent King's conventional depictions of New Zealand landscape obscured his innovative view of the landscape through a *mātauranga Pākehā* gaze.

In the previous chapters the discussion of King's approach to writing New Zealand history has shown that his generational preconceptions about national history and identity continued to be expressed in his works despite his intention to view this history in a different way from his predecessors. Without repeating the analysis from the preceding chapters, it is important to highlight King's continuing use of colonisation and settlement narratives, despite his reimagining the landscape through personal experiences of place. King observed that the landscape held two different 'parent ecologies' as New Zealand landscape historian Geoff Park described them.⁹² It

⁸⁷ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.235 and pp.238-239.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, pp.9-10.

⁸⁹ Kerry Howe, 'Foreword', Michael King, *Being Pākehā Now*, 2nd (ed.) (Auckland, 2004), p.viii.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p.vi.

⁹¹ cf. Chapter Five of this thesis: 'A Career Full Circle?: A Discussion of *The Penguin History of New Zealand*.

⁹² Park, p.92.

was Māori and Pākehā myths of migration and settlement on the land that imbedded a sense of belonging into the landscape. In this way landscape has been described as a palimpsest, a document on which the original writing has been erased to make room for other writing, but yet is still faintly visible.⁹³ In this approach landscape can be read and re-written. Hence, King was a conscious contributor to this reinterpretation of the New Zealand landscape. He saw Māori as the first writers on the document and European settlers as the second.⁹⁴ As King himself wrote, the land that we live on has a historical echo: ‘Whenever I go to a new place, or visit a familiar one, I instinctively look first for the shapes on the land and the middens that indicate where the first inhabitants of that place chose to make their home and gather food. I am drawn to and comforted by the psychic residue of their presence’.⁹⁵ However, to have a place to be settled first by Māori and then by Pākehā, King had to ensure that the land itself had a history so that when it was settled the people not only added to this history, but gained a preconceived linear descent that was thousands of years old.⁹⁶

To give Pākehā a sense of a history that was much older than human habitation King evoked the living memory of plant life and animal life before human settlement.⁹⁷ This invocation of myths of belonging to the landscape, even from its primordial ages beyond human memory, was a reflection that human history is shorter than the history of the physical geography. Therefore, the need for new European settlers to feel a part of their surroundings was so great that their historical narratives from early human habitation used the landscape as a mechanism for expanding their history beyond their arrival and settlement.⁹⁸ This was certainly the case for American historians of European origin who found that the magnificence of their natural landscapes adequately compensated for the country’s missing historical associations.⁹⁹ The importance of establishing the land as first devoid of humans was to establish a

⁹³ Muir, p.xiv.

⁹⁴ c.f. Chapter Two of this thesis: ‘Mātauranga Pākehā: King’s Construction of a New Zealand Identity’.

⁹⁵ King, *Pākehā*, p.19.

⁹⁶ Tadhg O’Keeffe, ‘Landscape and Memory: Historiography, Theory, Methodology’, *Heritage, Memory and the Politics of Identity: New Perspectives on the Cultural Landscape* (Aldershot, 2007), p.3.

⁹⁷ King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.15-26.

⁹⁸ Muir, p.40.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

physical place on which history took place.¹⁰⁰ The place King described was unpeopled and started with the physical geographical formation of Gondwanaland.¹⁰¹ King wrote in *New Zealand* (1987) that ‘[i]n the beginning was the land. And the land was without people, in fact longer than any habitable continent or major island on earth.’¹⁰² This approach not only connected human settlement to a narrative much longer than their own, but it also primed the stage of human history to occur. The untouched and untamed landscape was to be indefinitely changed by human agency and control.¹⁰³

This narrative of taming or moulding the landscape for the new European settlers understanding of their identity was a traditional approach to writing Western history.¹⁰⁴ This approach had been used by both Imperial and later national historians to create for their audience a conceivably elongated and sturdy historical base for their nation’s story. In this context King’s use of this identity motif can be critiqued. In this case, historian Peter Gibbons has identified the need to control landscape through text by Imperial and national historians as a further form of domination by Europeans over Māori who also share the same geographical spaces.¹⁰⁵ This process becomes problematic in the case of King’s landscape histories because his narrative was intended to be inclusive of both Māori and Pākehā streams of thought and their feelings of belonging to landscape.¹⁰⁶ However, what needs to be examined about King’s approach to landscape is the extent to which King retained his intended inclusive bicultural narrative by asserting both a Māori and Pākehā sense of belonging to the New Zealand landscape while using a traditional framework that was embedded with Imperial themes and colonising methodologies.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ c.f. Chapter Two of this thesis: ‘Mātauranga Pākehā: King’s Construction of a New Zealand Identity’.

¹⁰¹ King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.15-26.

¹⁰² Michael King, *New Zealand* (Auckland, 1987), p.5.

¹⁰³ Cosgrove, pp.1-15.

¹⁰⁴ cf. Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (1995).

¹⁰⁵ Peter Gibbons, ‘Cultural Colonization and National Identity, *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1 (2002), pp.7-8.

¹⁰⁶ n.b. Geoff Park’s ‘Going Between the Goddesses – The Ecology of Looking to Ourselves After Britannia and Papatūānuku’, *Theatre Country* (2006), pp.76-94 follows the same line of argument that both Māori and Pākehā must use a bicultural framework for understanding their relationship with one another and the landscape.

¹⁰⁷ c.f. Chapter One of this thesis: ‘‘Being Pākehā’ in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand.’

One form of landscape that King used often to explain a sense of belonging to New Zealand and its landscape was its mountains.¹⁰⁸ The motif of mountains and their importance to New Zealanders was a perfect way for King to explain a bicultural appreciation of the landscape through both Māori and Pākehā understandings of the mountains' origins, exploration and domination.¹⁰⁹ Both Māori and Pākehā have strong connections to the mountains and hilly terrain of the North and South Islands.¹¹⁰ For Pākehā this was often due to the location of mountains residing within national parks and protected national areas or 'wild places' which embodied a sense of remoteness and discovery, challenge, freedom and romance.¹¹¹ Also, mountains have given New Zealand its own recognisable character which has created a shared perception of their national significance.¹¹² Mountains within national parks have encouraged retention of a 'pioneering spirit' motif within Pākehā nationalism from colonial settlement.¹¹³ Today's reality is that the percentage of New Zealanders that have been to, or even repeatedly visit national parks would be lower than those who have never been and prefer to frequent large cities and urban cityscapes.¹¹⁴ However, the significance of mountains and other forms of landscape lies not in the reality of interaction is with the landscape, but in what Pākehā and Māori perceive their connection to the landscape to be – even if it is imagined through personal memories transposed onto the strata of indigenous rock.¹¹⁵

For Māori mountains are their ancestors and guardians; therefore, Māori connect with each mountain through genealogy and kinship.¹¹⁶ This makes the origins of each mountain extremely important to Māori. Similarly, Te Puea Herangi described the Waikato river as a symbol of life because her ancestors live in it; people are given attributes of the river and the taniwha who live in the river are the metaphorical

¹⁰⁸ c.f. King, *New Zealand in Colour*, pp.78-83 and King, *New Zealand*, pp.76-77 and pp.135-139.

¹⁰⁹ cf. Eric Pawson, 'The Meanings of Mountains' *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (eds) Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking (Melbourne, 2002), pp.136-150.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.136.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p.149.

¹¹² Park, p.86.

¹¹³ Pawson, 'The Meanings of Mountains', p.138-139.

¹¹⁴ cf. Eric Pawson, 'On the Edge: Making Urban Places', *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (eds) Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking (Melbourne, 2002), pp.200-213.

¹¹⁵ Schama, pp.6-7.

¹¹⁶ Tipene O'Regan, 'Te Kupenga o nga Tupuna: The Net of Ancestry', *From the Beginning: The Archaeology of the Māori*, John Wilson (ed.) (Auckland, 1987), p.23.

expressions of a chiefs.¹¹⁷ While King was conscious of the need to include Māori oral traditions about the landscape in his descriptions and photographic histories of New Zealand,¹¹⁸ the insertion of Māori associations with mountains can be critiqued as representing not a gesture of good will but a platform of comparison from which to legitimately talk about Pākehā understandings of the nexus between landscape and identity.¹¹⁹

King's tendency in his landscape histories to express devotion to the rolling hills, grasslands and snowy mountains of New Zealand has been likened by historian Caroline Daley to the same assertions of love and belonging to the land that has previously been expressed by 'South Island poets and mountain climbers'.¹²⁰ She was disappointed to note that King had not tried to take into account Gibbons' cultural colonisation thesis in relation to his argument that the relationship with the land was one that was ongoing and not just something that occurred at the time of Māori and European arrival.¹²¹ In part, King's passion can be seen as shared with his poetic predecessors.¹²² He understood that Europeans in New Zealand did not have the same amount of time to develop a cosmology around landscape that was as complex as Māori;¹²³ instead Europeans took great pride in conquering these landscapes and then incorporating that sentiment into their history.¹²⁴ When able to be both physically and mentally conquered by Pākehā settlers New Zealand mountains became a symbol of their achievements as colonists. Furthermore, the conquering of these mountain scapes was seen as a representation of the burgeoning British Empire.¹²⁵ This conquest can be through text, as in the nationalistic poetry referred to by Daley or in King's own works, as Jacob Pollock has discussed.¹²⁶ This sense of accomplishment through claiming, exploring and climbing great peaks was how Europeans

¹¹⁷ King, *Te Puea*, p.50.

¹¹⁸ i.e. in *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, pp.17-20 King recounts the Māori creation myth of separation of the earth Mother Papatūānuku and the sky Father Ranganui by their son Tane. King connected this Māori myth with the geographical upheaval of its formation before human occupancy.

¹¹⁹ King, 'Being Pākehā', p.229.

¹²⁰ Caroline Daley, 'Review: The Penguin History of New Zealand', *NZJH*, vol.38, no.1 (2003), p.77.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² cf. Keith Sinclair, 'The Singers of Loneliness', *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for a National Identity* (Wellington, 1986), p.253.

¹²³ Michael King, 'A Vision for the New Millennium', *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life* (Auckland, 2001), 103.

¹²⁴ King, *New Zealand*, p.15.

¹²⁵ Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, p.396.

¹²⁶ cf. Daley, pp.77-79 and Pollock, 'Cultural Colonisation and Textural Biculturalism', pp.194.

compensated for not having an already established cosmology incorporating the landscape.¹²⁷ King expressed the European understanding of this conquering of mountainous landscapes by describing the archetypal New Zealander as Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to conquer Mount Everest in Nepal.¹²⁸ King wrote that New Zealanders took great pride in this ‘laconic, raw-boned young man’ who had represented his country so credibly on the international stage.¹²⁹ Critics of King’s traditional national narrative are right in interpreting his use of mountain motifs as a symbol for Pākehā identity and therefore blurring his bicultural approach to ‘New Zealandness’. Mountains in the traditional sense were symbols for European expansion, conquest and development.¹³⁰ Therefore, the message of a balanced bicultural narrative was overshadowed by European understandings of history. For example, in *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People* (1979) King dedicated a large fold out of ‘Mount Cook/Aorangi’, the largest mountain in New Zealand, in the centre of this work.¹³¹ King explained that New Zealanders understood the mountain to be both named after the Uruao canoe in Māori tradition and Captain James Cook in the European tradition.¹³² Yet, this approach was not seen as innovative by his academic peers, but as a rehash of the same colonising, Eurocentric, male dominated narratives of his predecessors.

King confirmed his critics’ reservations about this unoriginal approach to landscape histories through his continuous production of coffee table pictorial histories.¹³³ This was in part because the production of such works offered little in the way of new information about the landscape history of New Zealand and proved instead to highlight older notions of European domination and regional stereotypes of the landscape.¹³⁴ King’s approach needs to be located in the wider context: the issue of sustaining a steady income from writing must be addressed.¹³⁵ King’s production of

¹²⁷ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.235.

¹²⁸ King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.145; King, *New Zealand*, p.15 and Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), pp.508-509.

¹²⁹ King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.145.

¹³⁰ Schama, p.396.

¹³¹ King, ‘The Southern Alps’, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, pp.83-96.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ cf. King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People* (1979); King, *New Zealand in Colour* (1982); King, *Auckland* (1985); King, *New Zealand* (1987); King, *A Land Apart* (1990); and King, *Coromandel* (1993).

¹³⁴ i.e. as discussed above.

¹³⁵ King, *Hidden Places*, p.12.

six pictorial landscape histories over his career can be seen as a way for him to sustain a writing career in New Zealand.¹³⁶ This was undoubtedly helped by the publishing of pictorial histories to maintain an income in between larger and more time consuming projects.¹³⁷ This perspective is strengthened by his accommodation of tourists in the latter part of his life. Living in his beloved Coromandel he led tourists on walks of the peninsula and shared his love of place with them.¹³⁸ Moreover, he knew that many of his pictorial histories would become guide books.¹³⁹ *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People* was actually first published in Switzerland, in 1977, two years before it was published for a New Zealand audience.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, King's *New Zealand in Colour* (1982) was reproduced in German, Chinese and Japanese versions.¹⁴¹ There was no doubt that King's pictorial histories of New Zealand were a means of making a living as a writer that sustained his relationships with publishers and kept his name as an author in the public sphere.

Even though King produced these pictorial histories for his own personal benefit they cannot be completely seen as just works published for monetary gain. While King was successful at maintaining a career from writing in New Zealand, his pictorial histories do not lack expression of the same emotive personal experiences found in his other works.¹⁴² For example, he wrote in *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*: '[e]very author at sometime contemplates writing a general book about his own country, most often in the form of a celebration of a love affair. It is likely to become a statement about why (apart from the reasons of birth) that a person chooses to live in one place or another.'¹⁴³ This passionate association with the landscape gave King the proper focus for explaining the landscape to Māori and Pākehā and its importance to their identity.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁶ Michael King, in 'New Zealand Radio Interview with Kim Hill', 11/10/03.

¹³⁷ i.e. King comments on his struggle to maintain an income as a writer in *Being Pākehā*, pp.132-135 and how gaining literary grants and prizes was a way to continue writing history.

¹³⁸ Colin Hogg and John Carlaw, *History Man* (Auckland, 2004), 70mins.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ cf. The publication information on the inside cover of this work.

¹⁴¹ Michael King, *Nyujirando Kara Ban*, Machin Bariboru Shashin and Kikuchi Atsuko Yaku (trans.) (Auckland, 1991); Michael King, *Neuseeland in Farbe* (Auckland, 1993); and Michael King, *Feng guang wu xian Niu Xi Lan*, Martin Liu (trans.) (Auckland, 1997).

¹⁴² i.e. Many of King's sentiments about the landscape cross over from his pictorial histories to his more serious works. For example, the phrase 'physic residue' which King uses to describe

¹⁴³ Michael King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, (Wellington, 1979), p.5.

¹⁴⁴ Howe, pp.vi-viii.

The deliberate layering of historical knowledge onto the landscape was also shaped by King's knowledge of a vernacular understanding of place. A regional understanding of a country's landscape was a technique used early in New Zealand's historiography to establish a sense of belonging for Māori and Pākehā settlers in new areas of occupation.¹⁴⁵ However, King again reverts back to a monocultural understanding of belonging through the act of naming and claiming land. For Pākehā in New Zealand from the time of first discovery, this included the systematic colonisation and provincial divisions that were validated by the building of towns and legislatures.¹⁴⁶ In the first general history of New Zealand, *The Long White Cloud: Aotearoa* (1899), William Pember Reeves reinforced the importance of the provinces to the development of New Zealand history. He firstly described the landscape of New Zealand as 'scenery'.¹⁴⁷ Then he went on to describe the provinces in relation to their importance to New Zealand's development as 'pastoral' strongholds.¹⁴⁸ In the chapter 'The Pastoral Provinces' Reeves expressed that the European settlers in these areas had a history that was being built on by their presence and hard work. He wrote as an example from a South Island perspective:

Their square, flat city they called Christchurch, and its rectangular streets by the names of the Anglican Bishoprics [...] But the clear stream of the place, which then ran past flax koromiko, and glittering toé-toé and now winds under weeping willows [...] it is called the Avon [...] The Canterbury dream [to be a slice of England] seems a little pathetic as well as amusing now, but those who dreamed it were very much in earnest in 1850, and they laid the foundation stones of a fine settlement [...].¹⁴⁹

Similarly historian F.L.W. Wood focused very heavily on the importance of the regions of New Zealand to building a sense of self for Pākehā. In *This is New Zealand* (1949), a half century after Reeves' history, Wood continued the narrative of the New Zealand landscape and European development. Wood based much of his argument on the perspective that '[m]odern New Zealand is built upon grass'.¹⁵⁰ In doing so he was able to explain that New Zealand's industry, economics and character was due to its regional landscape. As he explained:

¹⁴⁵ cf. Giselle Byrnes, "'A dead sheet covered with meaningless words?'" Place Names and Cultural Colonization of Tauranga', *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1, (April, 2002), pp.18-35.

¹⁴⁶ King, *New Zealand*, p.11.

¹⁴⁷ William Pember Reeves, 'The Long White Cloud', *The Long White Cloud: Aotearoa* (London, 1899), pp.1-32.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pp.231-248.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p.235.

¹⁵⁰ F.L.W. Wood, *This New Zealand* (London, 1946), p.37.

There are innumerable small and vigorous communities with well-remembered local traditions and strong local pride which still resist the flattening forces of centralization, and which still have a hold on members who may be scattered among other provinces through choice or necessity. In spite of all that New Zealanders have in common, these differences are as characteristic of their country as are the basic traditions which they share. Out of their own soil and conditions of life they have even built up local variations of a common theme, variations which do something toward giving vitality and independence of view to people as a whole. Here as else where geography is governed by human development.¹⁵¹

King's landscape histories also used this narrative arrangement to show historical development. His ordering of landscape histories in this manner to explain Pākehā identity to his readers did so with the intention of building knowledge about New Zealand history in a familiar format. With this in mind, King achieved this style through his many pictorial histories which allowed for a regional format to be constructed. In *New Zealand in Colour* (1982) he separated the chapters by provinces: The Far North, Auckland, Provincial North Island, Wellington, The South Island, Canterbury, The West Coast, Dunedin and The South.¹⁵² King goes on to refer to these provinces in colloquial and conventional Pākehā terms or names. The Far North he calls 'the cradle of European Culture'¹⁵³ and Auckland 'the Queen City'.¹⁵⁴ Both these terms of endearment have come from the historical layers of settler understandings that cemented themselves in the land. In another example, King called the areas encompassed by the towns of Hamilton, New Plymouth, Wanganui and Gisborne the 'Provincial North Island' because of their vast fields for sheep and dairy farming. He went so far as to call it the 'backbone of New Zealand'.¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, he stated that the same can be said of its people because they preach and practise the virtues of New Zealand life.¹⁵⁶ While King understood that these generalisations might hold an element of truth, that there was more to the equation. He explained, '[a]lthough the country is heavily reliant on agriculture, not all New Zealanders are farmers, of course. More than eighty percent of them live in cities [...]'¹⁵⁷ Hence, the people living in the 'Provincial North Island' might see their locality as being covered

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, pp.50-51.

¹⁵² King, *New Zealand in Colour*, pp.10-21; pp.22-29; pp.30-57; pp.58-65; pp.66-73; pp.74-85; pp.86-95; pp.96-101; and pp.102-108.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p.10.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p.22.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.30.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁵⁷ King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.124.

in farm land and therefore, being important for the economy and the rest of the country. King affirmed this notion by calling agriculture the ‘lifeblood’ of the nation.¹⁵⁸ This helped to construct the ‘Provincial North Islanders’ identity through promoting a better lifestyle than that of those living in the city, even if their ‘provincial’ lifestyle does not fit King’s description.¹⁵⁹ The country lifestyle myth held the perception by Pākehā that the ‘real’ and ‘unchanging’ New Zealand was where traditional values and ideologies like community and hard work are cherished and practised.¹⁶⁰ This outlook conjured up older settler historical conceptions of colonial hardship, working the land and bonding together over those experiences of labour and development.¹⁶¹ While this was not the association that King wanted to encourage his traditional framework for New Zealand regions reinforced the criticism that his work was unoriginal and inconsequential to the twentieth century reader because it emphasised an unbalanced Pākehā driven narrative.¹⁶²

Although King’s narrative was dominated by his own Pākehā identity he acknowledged through differentiating between regions how Māori identity related to the New Zealand landscape. To achieve this distinction between Māori and Pākehā culture King compared the physical differences in the landscape to the differences of its people.¹⁶³ King explained the diversity of the North and South Island through the what he believed was the distinguishing feature that separated the two islands: the prominence of Māori things in the North Island. King believed that [...] Māori values pulsate beneath the cloak of Western appearance’.¹⁶⁴ It was also important to note that the photographs King used in his photographic histories only showed Māori living in the North Island, but not in the South Island.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, they were dressed often in ‘traditional costume’ and are performing kapa haka.¹⁶⁶ There were few instances in which they were participating in everyday life.¹⁶⁷ While this was not a fair

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.113.

¹⁵⁹ cf. Muir, p.39.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*.

¹⁶¹ cf. Jock Phillips, *A Man’s Country?: The Image of the Pākehā Male: A History* (Auckland, 1987), pp.11-38.

¹⁶² cf. Chapter One of this thesis: “Being Pākehā’ in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand’.

¹⁶³ King, *New Zealand in Colour*, p.66.

¹⁶⁴ King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.66.

¹⁶⁵ King, *New Zealand*, pp.25-27.

¹⁶⁶ King, *New Zealand in Colour*, p.16 and King, *New Zealand*, p.56.

¹⁶⁷ cf. King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, pp.38-39 and p.71.

representation of Māori life in New Zealand at the time (in comparison to King's documentary series *Tangata Whenua*)¹⁶⁸ these images helped to maintain difference between North and South and Māori and Pākehā which of reinforced traditional European perceptions about regions and people which in turn shaped their identity. As King poetically replied to those who questioned what they saw as his emphasis on Pākehā identification with the landscape, '[m]y place is in New Zealand, New Zealand is my place'.¹⁶⁹

In many ways King's approach to landscape histories in New Zealand still continued a conventional emphasis on colonisation, settlement, occupation and regionalism. However, it was through a sharing of stories, oral and written that King was able to recast colonial nationalist ideals of landscape and look at it in a new bi-cultural way.¹⁷⁰ King believed that that Pākehā knew little historically about how their attitudes and values had changed as a result of their interaction with the land, with Māori and other settlers.¹⁷¹ In response King inscribed the New Zealand landscape with human lives. King expressed the importance of personally knowing the landscape in order to rework a national identity outside of traditional Pākehā perceptions.¹⁷² A sympathiser and fellow landscape historian Geoffrey Park has argued that:

I have seen now to be in no doubt that Pākehā New Zealanders peering into the twenty-first century have, like white Australians, a history that now requires them to re-imagine their community, to rethink their nation's responsibility to its indigenous people – as Māori are indeed fast rethinking their responsibility to Pākehā. The key to re-imagining will be the landscape.¹⁷³

Indeed this was what King strived to attain, the recasting of national identity through shared human experiences, and nothing is more universally shared in the human experience than the landscape.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, King wanted Pākehā to embrace an identification with the land that was similar to that of Māori, one that was spiritually connected to place through whakapapa and tipuna, a process which he conceived as

¹⁶⁸ cf. Michael King, *Tangata Whenua series* (1974), 280 mins.

¹⁶⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.183.

¹⁷⁰ Howe, pp.vii-viii.

¹⁷¹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.183.

¹⁷² King, *Being Pākehā Now*, pp.239-241.

¹⁷³ Park, p.91.

¹⁷⁴ Cosgrove. p.3.

not yet being achieved by Pākehā.¹⁷⁵ King invited the reader to understand the emotional and spiritual symbolism that the landscape could hold from one's own personal experience. For King, ultimately, this identity is formed from many cultural elements or 'filings'. For him personally these elements in combination equated to being Pākehā.

¹⁷⁵ King, 'A Vision for the New Millennium', p.103.

Chapter Four

King's People: The Life Histories of New Zealanders

King invited readers to journey with him through New Zealand's historical past so they could proceed more confidently into their present. His use of the first person in addition to re-telling shared personal experiences helped the readers to place themselves within the historical narrative.¹ In *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (2003) he explained that 'New Zealand history sometimes seems extraordinarily compressed and close at hand.'² For King this feeling of national history as being short and close at hand was both figurative and literal. For example, he wrote from where he was sitting that he saw Maungaruawahine and Ruahiwiwi hilltop pa still imprinted with the 'physic residue' of those who had fortified them.³ In *History* King once more reminded the reader of the importance of landscape and human memory for creating meaning.⁴ He then went on to explain to his perceived bicultural readers their relationship between history, and the observers and/or the participants of history. He demonstrated this notion with an example of the chronological length of the relationship between New Zealand history and its historical actors. For Pākehā, he showed that in the boarder scheme of human histories this relationship was quite brief:

In my student days I knew Tom Seddon, born in 1884, who in childhood had enjoyed the company of his father's friend George Grey. So I had shaken the hand of someone who had shaken the hand of Sir George Grey, Governor of New Zealand at the time of the Northern Wars. And Grey had shaken the hand of Hone Heke. Much later I knew Whina Cooper, whose father, Heremia Te Wake, had been born two years before the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. These proximities gave me the *feeling*, if not quite the reality, that I was but one generation removed from the most momentous events of nineteenth-century New Zealand history; and that made those events seem all the more vivid and close to my own lifetime. Writing this book has confirmed that feeling.⁵

¹ Michael King, *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* (Auckland, 1992), p.185.

² Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), p.9.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ c.f. Chapter Three of this thesis: 'Identity and the Landscape: Imagining New Zealand Through King's Personal Experience of Place'.

⁵ King, *History*, pp.9-10.

King deliberately attempted to place the reader within the historical narrative by using his own personal experiences to trigger a personal response.⁶

This quotation above also suggests that King understood his role as the writer in relation to the reader as an historical guide.⁷ When writing about the people of New Zealand and their life histories he was consciously aware of his position within the text as the writer, researcher and mediator.⁸ He saw himself as New Zealand's kawē kōrero: an interpreter for Europeans about Māori life ways and Māori histories.⁹ King wanted not just to communicate with his mostly Pākehā audience, but he also wanted them to understand and emulate his practise of mātauranga Pākehā.¹⁰ Much of this instruction about how to be open to a better understanding of New Zealand society and the readers' place in it was in King's life histories.¹¹

This intimate approach to writing New Zealand history meant that King often used the genre of biography and memoir to explore an individual's life within New Zealand's social context.¹² While King's works of biography and memoir stand out as obvious examples of this intimacy between national history and the reader, King did not restrict himself to these two forms to express New Zealanders' connectedness. King consciously exhibited in many of his works the life histories of individuals in New Zealand through interviews, oral histories, the use of personal documents and photographs.¹³ While this chapter will concentrate mostly on the more obvious forms of life histories – biography, memoir and literary biography – King's undeniable dedication to ensure New Zealanders understood and felt they were part of their history has meant his histories have an emphasis on the individual in history. Understanding, the role of the individual within history was another way for King to affirm his metaphor for the components of identity being like iron filings to a

⁶ Michael King, *Being Pākehā: An Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (Auckland, 1985), p.12.

⁷ Michael King, *Kawē Kōrero: A Guide to Writing on Māori Activities* (Pukekohe, 1985), pp.

⁸ King, *Hidden Places*, p.2.

⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.164.

¹⁰ Kerry Howe, 'Forward', *Being Pākehā: The Recollections and Reflections of a White Native*, 2nd edn. (Auckland, 2004), p.viii.

¹¹ King, *Hidden Places*, p.11.

¹² Michael King, 'Biography and Compassionate Truth', *Tread Softly: For You Tread on my Life* (Auckland, 2001), p.11.

¹³ cf. Michael King, 'Some Māori Attitudes to Documents', *Tihe Māori Ora: Aspects of Māoritanga*, Michael King (ed.) (Wellington, 1978), pp.9-18. and Michael King, *After the War: New Zealand Since 1945* (Auckland, 1988).

magnet.¹⁴ Through the different lives he explored the different characteristics and variations that could be conceived by New Zealanders about their individual identities.¹⁵ This was all achieved from his base of writing national histories that were expressed through the framework of mātauranga Pākehā.¹⁶ King's life histories are no exception.

However King's emphasis on life histories contributed to his writings being misrepresented within New Zealand historiography as non-academic.¹⁷ The uneasiness surrounding life history narratives by academics is explained by Brian Roberts: '[b]iography is an unstable genre since, in blurring the distinction between fiction and non-fiction, it challenges assumptions of positivism or the collection of measurable, observable facts, notions of objectivity and validity, and a deductive procedure – by raising questions regarding the nature and construction of knowledge.'¹⁸ Life histories as a genre of history writing tread a very thin line for historians between being credible and unbelievable; the very idea that life histories reflect reality or empirical truth is seen as simplistic and misconceived.¹⁹ What is certain is that the subject's 'story' and the writer's interpretation of the story are shaped by narrative conventions.²⁰

King's construction of knowledge within the genre of life history is the focus of this chapter. I will examine the role King occupied as a researcher and a writer, focusing primarily on his interpretation of the sources to create a narrative for a distinct purpose.²¹ King strove to write about national figures that shaped New Zealand culture or to give voices to figures that had been neglected in the New Zealand historical narrative.²² However, King's life histories also revealed other motives and agendas for writing in the life history genre. King used the life history style of

¹⁴ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

¹⁵ Susan Tridgell, *Understanding Ourselves: The Dangerous Art of Biography* (Bern, 2004), p.114.

¹⁶ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: 'Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity'.

¹⁷ Annabel Schuler, *Michael King: Journalist. A Study of the Influence of Journalism on King's Later Writing*, A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Mass Communication at the University of Canterbury (2006), pp.50-51.

¹⁸ Brian Roberts, *Biographical Research* (Buckingham, 2002), p.60.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.7.

²⁰ *Ibid*.

²¹ n.b. Historians always have an underlying agenda for constructing their histories in a certain way. Even though historians practise a degree of objectivity in their retelling of the past they can not escape their own biases and generational frameworks for writing history. [cf. Roberts, pp.20-21.]

²² Colin Hogg and John Carlaw, *History Man* (Auckland, 2004), 70mins.

historical writing to express his concerns about New Zealand society and the writing of New Zealand history.

King's emphasis on the individual and how personal experiences shape the narrative of national history was a primary factor in the production of four memoirs during his writing career: *Being Pākehā: An Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (1985); *Being Pākehā Now: the Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (1999); *Hidden Places: a Memoir in Journalism* (1992); and *At the Edge of Memory: a Family Story* (2002). Two other works have chapters or sections that are brief snippets of memoir: *God's Farthest Outpost: A History of Catholics in New Zealand* (1997) and *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life* (2001). These works all invite readers to reflect on their own experiences but also let King express his thoughts and reveal incidents or events from his past.²³ Memoirs are not a life to death narrative, but what Thomas Larson calls a 'divisible past' that reflects life's many thematic centres.²⁴ In this way memoir focuses on the 'nitty-gritty' that the audience wants to read and the author wants to write, unlike the autobiography which is constructed as a much broader account of one's life.²⁵ As King commented in *Hidden Places*, 'I intend to record my association with others if I live long enough to write an autobiography proper.'²⁶ What makes memoir so readable is perhaps that it is not about a full life but one that is evolving and can be assessed by memory, time, history, culture and the myth of an individual life during a defined period.²⁷ Two main themes that King explored in writing his memoirs were his ethnic identity of being Pākehā and the self-reflection involved in living the life of the writer.

Kerry Howe commented on King's incorporation of these two main themes, of ethnic identity and his identity as a writer, into his memoir writing. Furthermore, Howe explained that even though these concepts of identity are quite complex King accomplished in *Being Pākehā Now* a text that was easy to follow and understand for the reader about themes that were important to King's identity. Howe explained that it can be read on many different levels: it is a story of childhood through to adolescence,

²³ Thomas Larson, *The Memoir and the Memoirist: Reading and Writing Personal Narrative* (Ohio, 2007), p.2.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 2 and 17.

²⁶ King, *Hidden Places*, p.35.

²⁷ Larson, p.2.

growing to intellectual awareness, as well as of King's journey into Māori communities, and eventual success and influence in literary and scholarly worlds.²⁸ Furthermore, Howe believes that King's use of personal stories and experience revealed issues relevant for all New Zealanders. This self-awareness did not derive from vanity, but from recognition that his life's stories might be exemplary and/or instructional.²⁹ King validated this intention himself by noting '[i]t is not an autobiography *per se*: but is necessarily autobiographical. In describing experiences common to most Pākehā New Zealanders, it tries to place these experiences in cultural and historical context.'³⁰ Accordingly, memoir is a journey of self-reflection which, as with landscape, is a shared human experience. Humans are unique in their ability to ask such questions as 'Who am I?' and 'What am I doing with my life?'³¹ Certainly, these were the questions King was trying to answer in *Being Pākehā* and *Being Pākehā Now*, and even to a certain extent in *At the Edge of Memory*.³² As King plainly stated, '[f]or more than a decade I had been writing about origins and connections in the lives of others. But who was I, who was my family, where did we come from and where did we belong? What did it mean to be a Pākehā in New Zealand?'³³ For King the result of this self-analysis was a mix of personal and national identity that formed into what he called 'ethnic biography'.³⁴ *Being Pākehā* for King was an exploration of both his belonging and not belonging ethnically to New Zealand.³⁵

Before explaining further King's ethnic belonging as well as his belonging as a writer as expressed in his memoirs, it is important to discuss another thread of self-knowing that he attributed to a large part of his personal identity and collective memory.³⁶ This was his identification with being an Irish Catholic in New Zealand. For all of King's childhood, through adolescence and then adulthood, the Catholic faith had constructed

²⁸ Kerry Howe, 'Foreword' in *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native*, Second Edition (Auckland, 2004), p.vi.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.12.

³¹ David A. Jopling, 'Self-Knowledge: Making and Finding Sense in Life-History' in *Shaping Lives: Reflections on Biography* (eds.) Ian Donald, Peter Read and James Walter (Canberra, 1992), p.171.

³² i.e. In *At the Edge of Memory* (2002) King discovers his Jewish ancestry.

³³ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.7.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Tessa Molloy, *New Zealand Biography in the 1940s and the 1990s: A Comparative View* A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in History at the University of Canterbury (2004), p.15.

his world-view and values well before he asked questions about ethnicity and belonging to New Zealand.³⁷ These first associations for King and his siblings, during their childhood of being Irish Catholic, upheld King's initial ideas about self:

[w]e were New Zealanders, but Irish New Zealanders. Although statistics may have lumped us among the almost ninety percent of the population descended from European migration to New Zealand, we did not feel like members of the majority. Nor did we feel part of a wider group and culture that had displaced an indigenous people and shredded the formerly seamless robe of their culture. Because we – my siblings and myself – saw no Māori at this time, we had no concept of race; simply of Irish and Scots versus the rest.³⁸

The liturgy and dogma surrounding the Catholic Church practices in New Zealand gave King a strong and specific sense of belonging to the Catholic faith because of the connection to a long history and lineage.³⁹ King felt connected to the Saints and Popes of time gone by and other religious figures such as Saint Patrick and Thomas Aquinas and New Zealand Catholics Mother Aubert and Father Emmet McHardy.⁴⁰ King also felt connected by the power of language and ritual; it was a connection to his history and deepest group memories.⁴¹ He emphasised this sentiment about being connected to an omnipresent meta-structure: '[...]his very same liturgy was being celebrated on precisely the same way, minute by minute, in almost every other country in the world. It was an umbilical cord that bound us to the past and penetrated national cultures. And it was, we believed, unchanging and unchangeable.'⁴²

Throughout his life this sense of belonging to something larger than himself manifested and expressed itself in different ways. For example, during his time at high school King thought about becoming a priest;⁴³ while at University he tried to start a Catholic magazine called *Insight*.⁴⁴ However, it was during King's years in Hamilton as a journalist when he recognised that his faith was leaving him. King noted that it was in part because he believed that Bishop James Liston ran the most

³⁷ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.182-183.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p.29.

³⁹ Michael King, *Gods Farthest Outpost: A History of Catholicism in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1997), pp.18-27.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.18.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp.28-29.

⁴² *Ibid*, p.29.

⁴³ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.66.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.70.

conservative dioceses in the country.⁴⁵ King had made this judgement based on his own generational mores of how a religion should engage its followers and his previous research on Whina's life and, specifically, her interaction with Liston as an overseer of the Mill Hill Fathers and his support of her in the Panguru community.⁴⁶ Liston's biographer Nicholas Reid writes, 'King's misgivings appear to be borne out by a parochial history of Tauranga which gives details of Liston's stifling Mill Hill attempts to make liturgy more accessible to Māori congregations.'⁴⁷ Reid comments that other biographers would agree with King's statement that Liston's growing conservatism imposed stress on his colleagues until, finally in the 1970s, rapid changes were made to the liturgy (such as the bishops facing the congregation during sermons) which brought the church-goer closer to the bishops and clergy.⁴⁸ King's connection through the universal experience of religion to the larger patterns of history was later substituted by a connection to the New Zealand landscape.⁴⁹ Even so, King's Catholic sense of belonging never went away.⁵⁰ It was a base for his understanding of belonging to larger historical tropes that were connected to his multiple identifiers of self. Hence, he continued throughout his whole career to write about New Zealand Catholics in the New Zealand story.⁵¹

King's 'ethnic biography' *Being Pākehā* and its sequel *Being Pākehā Now* are both examples of how compiling personal experience to construct one's self aids the individual to better understanding their place in history.⁵² King recognised his own reservations about writing memoirs before he retired, but remarked that in 1984 four factors – his last surviving grandparent dying, entering his fortieth year, a lengthy convalescence and the fierce attack on his work for writing Māori history – caused him to reflect on his life so far and the challenges it had wrought. These factors brought about long periods of self-reflection and chances to go through old diaries

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.99.

⁴⁶ Nicholas Reid, *James Michael Liston: A Life* (Wellington, 2006), p.20.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*.

⁴⁸ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.99-101.

⁴⁹ cf. Chapter Three of this thesis: 'Identity and the Landscape: Imagining New Zealand Through King's Personal Experience of Place'.

⁵⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.101.

⁵¹ King, *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland, 1999), pp.208; pp.210-212 and King, *Gods Farthest Outpost*, p.183.

⁵² Tridgell, p.103.

and letters.⁵³ A memoirist's reason for writing is manifold and not just about self-reflection. Indeed the periods of childhood and adolescence are a large part of King's 'ethnic biographies' because these early events are seen as the building blocks of the subject's developing identity and personality in adulthood.⁵⁴ It is this transition from a child to a man that King believed was the foundation for his sense later in life of belonging to the landscape (discussed in the previous chapter) through being born to a certain place, growing up in a place and learning about place from ancestors.⁵⁵ This approach ensures that the participants of history are linked through the same framework of personal milestones.⁵⁶ Memoirs in this regard are often about transforming the understanding of oneself or charting the transformation of self that has taken place. As Larson explains, the truth is found by connecting the past-self to – and within – the present writer as a means to getting at the truth of identity.⁵⁷ This is why memoirists often use elements of childhood as foreshadowing change or as stimulants for change in an individual's life.⁵⁸

Memoirists are often compose their works as a reaction to a traumatic event as a way for the author to deal with what has happened and reconcile his or her actions.⁵⁹ Following King's illness⁶⁰ and the ample time he had to reflect on his critics, King's 'ethnic biography' reads like a testimony of why he chose to, and had a right to, write Māori history. Larson calls this type of reflective work a 'sudden memoir' because it avoids hindsight and captures something before memory has time to alter it.⁶¹ King himself explained that writing *Being Pākehā* was not reactive to the assertions of Māori identity in opposition to his own. Instead he claimed to look from the 'high ground' of the 1980s back onto the 1940s and 1950s and to a lesser extent on the 1920s and 1930s.⁶² It was clear that the impact of the Māori renaissance and protest movements in New Zealand in the 1980s was a contributing factor to King's strong

⁵³ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.29.

⁵⁴ Paula R. Backscheider, *Reflections on Biography* (Oxford, 1999) pp.94-96.

⁵⁵ cf. Chapter Three of this thesis: 'Identity and the Landscape: Imagining New Zealand Through King's Personal Experience of Place'.

⁵⁶ Backscheider, pp.90-91.

⁵⁷ Larson, p.24.

⁵⁸ Jopling, p.171.

⁵⁹ Larson, p.79.

⁶⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.7.

⁶¹ Larson, p.79.

⁶² King, *Being Pākehā*, p.13.

investment in and consequence defence of his Pākehā identity.⁶³ This was evident in the last two chapters of *Being Pākehā* where he describes the challenges and assaults on his career as a Pākehā journalist and historian writing on Māori subjects.⁶⁴ King charted the change in climate from the 1970s when Māori academics saw King's literary efforts as cultural raiding.⁶⁵

In response to criticism, King felt that Pākehā historians had neglected Māori history and ought not to. King believed that he was addressing this imbalance, but it did not change the fact that the Māori did not see his uptake of Māori historical subjects in this way.⁶⁶ In *Being Pākehā* King defended his early work on tattooed kuia published in *Moko*: 'I need to stress now – in review of subsequent Māori sensitivities – that I spoke to these women only when they and their descendants wanted me to'.⁶⁷ He explained that only in writing *Te Puea: a Biography* (1977) did he receive money through grants for Māori projects, thereby refuting allegations made against him.⁶⁸ Despite the opposition to his expression of Pākehā identity in the following years, a Māori version *Growing up Māori* (1998) and a white Australian version *Being Whitefella* (1994) appeared in the academic arena.⁶⁹ While these works had contributions from multiple authors, they embodied the objective that King's original work had intended, which was to stimulate discussion about identity.

King's detractors were both Māori and Pākehā. His colleagues in journalism felt that King directed too much attention towards race relations issues in New Zealand.⁷⁰ King responded that this issue was one only Māori had considered and he questioned the ability of British institutions in New Zealand to represent fairly those whose values were not Pākehā.⁷¹ He even persuaded the *Waikato Times* to give strong editorial support to the establishment of a Māori research centre at the University of Waikato. 'Some of my colleagues – especially those who had strongly supported the

⁶³ Michael King, 'A Vision for the new Millennium', *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life* (Auckland, 2001), p.104.

⁶⁴ King, 'The Climate Changes', pp.161-176 and 'Being Pākehā', pp.177-187 in *Being Pākehā* (1985).

⁶⁵ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: 'Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity'.

⁶⁶ Michael King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu: 1000 Years of Māori History* (Auckland, 1997), pp.5-6.

⁶⁷ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.89.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.133.

⁶⁹ Witi Ihimaera (ed.), *Growing up Māori* (Auckland, 1998) and Graham Duncan (ed.), *Being Whitefella* (South Freemantle, 1994).

⁷⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.98.

⁷¹ Michael King, *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga* (Wellington, 1975), p.15.

All Black tour of South Africa in 1970 – believed that Māori-Pākehā relations would be fine if people like me would stop writing provocative articles and stirring up resentment where none had existed previously.⁷² Despite opposition from both Māori and Pākehā King felt that he did not want to give up his position as kawē kōrero because Pākehā had much to learn and Māori had not made a full transition into the fields of journalism and history. Even by 1984, when writing his ‘ethnic biography’, King felt there were no Māori historians who wrote for both a Māori and Pākehā audience.⁷³ Māori practised history in the traditional arenas of the marae in the form of oration and whaiwhaikōrero by tribal historians, but this valuable history was not being transferred to paper.⁷⁴

By the 1990s King recognised that this gap was more than rectified and it was time to step aside for Māori historians to tell their own stories.⁷⁵ But King did not hide away in the ‘white world’ as a result.⁷⁶ King’s agenda for writing an ‘ethnic biography’ was a reaction to the critique of his works on Māori subjects and his intentions for writing Māori history. Attacks on King’s love of writing history encouraged him to justify his position.⁷⁷ Indeed, King refused to apologise for his self-identification as Pākehā.⁷⁸ He went so far as to assert that, ‘I feel nothing but sadness for Pākehā who want to be Māori, or who believe they have become Māori – usually empty vessels waiting to be filled by the nearest exotic cultural fountain – who romanticise Māori life and want to bask forever in aura of aroha and āwhina.’⁷⁹ King names Pākehā writer Barry Brailsford who wrote *The Song of Waitaha: the Histories of a Nation* (2003)⁸⁰ as one of those writers who wanted to be Māori. King dismissed his history of a pre-Māori people – the Waitaha nation – as a fabrication and a way (King suspected) for Brailsford to claim Māori descent.⁸¹ King reminded those who doubted his assertion of Pākehā identity that Pākehā are who they are physically and culturally and cannot

⁷² King, *Being Pākehā*, p.98.

⁷³ *Ibid*, p.164.

⁷⁴ King, ‘Some Māori Attitudes to Documents’, pp.12-13.

⁷⁵ King, *Nga Iwi o te Motu*, p.5.

⁷⁶ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.171.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*.

⁷⁸ Michael King, ‘Being Pākehā’, *Pākehā: The Quest for New Zealand Identity* (Auckland, 1991), p.9.

⁷⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.179.

⁸⁰ cf. Barry Brailsford, *The Song of Waitaha: the Histories of a Nation* (Christchurch, 2003).

⁸¹ Michael King, ‘A Fraction Too Much Fiction?’, *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life* (Auckland, 2001), pp.129-130.

choose to be something they are not.⁸² Furthermore, King attested, ‘[m]y loyalties have always been first to family, and then to individual people and to truth as I have perceived it – never blindly to a tribe or a race, not even my own ‘race’, whatever that may be.’⁸³

King’s 2002 work *At the Edge of Memory* is an extension of the objective set out by his ‘ethnic biography’ to continue the pursuit of self-knowledge to gain greater understanding of the world around the knower.⁸⁴ *At the Edge of Memory* focused on King’s family make-up, which included Jewish identity and history that he had never explored.⁸⁵ King’s interest was initiated when he received a phone call from David Belgray, an American who wanted to make contact with King’s extended family. Belgray explained that his original family name had been Bilgoraj, a Jewish family that had fled to different countries, changing their names, in order to escape persecution in Europe and make new identities in a new country.⁸⁶ King’s cousins, the Belgraves, had never seemed anything other than Catholic to him when he was growing up. This notion was reinforced by King being corrected on certain habits that were deemed ‘un-New Zealand’. King gives the example of being reminded of his Irish ancestry when he asked why they could not eat white cheese on his toast for breakfast like his Jewish friend did.⁸⁷

These types of variations to ‘normal’ New Zealand family routines were deviations from the forms of ingrained Irish, Scottish and English traditions. Recent studies, such as Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn’s *Settlers: New Zealand Immigrants from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800-1945* reminded the reader that Pākehā New Zealand was

⁸² King, *Being Pākehā*, p.179.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Jopling, p.171.

⁸⁵ n.b. As King’s career progressed he began to add a Jewish element to his explanations of New Zealand’s ethnic diversity. For example, in *Pākehā: The Quest for New Zealand Identity* (ed.) Michael King (Auckland, 1991) he included Lesley Max’s experience of being a Jewish New Zealander [‘Having it all: the Kibbutznik and the Powhiri’, pp.79-104.] as well as in *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), p.513 he wrote: ‘[...]Pākehā culture was made up of many strands [... some of which] may wish to retain active links with their cultures of origin. In that sense, the quality of being Māori, a Pacific Islander, a Gujarati or Jewish New Zealander may differ markedly in some contexts.’

⁸⁶ Michael King, *At the Edge of Memory: A Family Story* (2002), p.54.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.43.

not an essentially monocultural 'British' society.⁸⁸ Its ethnic components were not equal either, in fact Irish settlers were considered the most undesirable of the 'British' migrants to New Zealand because by and large New Zealand retained an anti-Catholic stance and saw Irish settlers in comparison to the English or Scots as '[...]poor unlettered peasants likely to be unreliable workers, with few skills and a propensity to drink.'⁸⁹ King encountered these perpetuating biases growing-up and therefore had a sympathetic outlook to Jewish identity. King's conversation with Belgray as well as his own memories of New Zealand reaction to Jewish immigrants in New Zealand sparked his interest to go Europe and America to enquire about the origins of his extended family.⁹⁰ King explained that '[t]he whole narrative arises from the edge of memory rather than from a central foreground of finely focused documentary evidence.'⁹¹ Again King invited the reader to join him in exploring how history and memory connects us together. King explained this through the experiences of his Jewish friend who '[h]ad witnessed the Bolshevik revolution, danced with Anna Pavlova and watched Lenin's funeral procession. To New Zealanders [...] such encounters with history seemed nothing less than miraculous'.⁹² Furthermore, King linked religion to shared human experience by describing the prayer in an American synagogue: '[i]t was an ancient sound, redolent of an umbilical pull of continuity that linked these men and boys to their ancestors and to a powerful sense of identity and security.'⁹³ King's reflection on his Jewish ancestry showed that his perception of identity was constructed from many different components, while some of those filings did not have the same magnetic pull as others, they still played a part in his understanding of self.

To feel secure in their identities readers as historical participants must first understand that their identity is made up of many different parts.⁹⁴ After King had abandoned writing about Māori subjects he returned to being involved heavily in the process of writing on other subjects. He explained one of the many parts of his identity in

⁸⁸ Jock Phillips and Terry Hearn, *Settlers: New Zealand Immigration from England, Ireland and Scotland 1800-1945* (Auckland, 2008), p.14.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, pp.58-59.

⁹⁰ King, *At the Edge of Memory*, p.54.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.10.

⁹² *Ibid*, p.43.

⁹³ *Ibid*, p.82.

⁹⁴ Michael King, 'Michael King: Being Pākehā', *The Writing of New Zealand: Inventions of Identities* (ed.) Alex Calder (Auckland, 1993), p.235.

relation to its other ‘filings’: ‘[f]or me, growing up, that tribe was made up of my fellow New Zealand-Irish Catholics; in the more recent part of my life it has largely been the community of writers.’⁹⁵ King continued this sentiment by explaining that ‘[...]literature is one of the few things that makes sense of life, when life itself does not.’⁹⁶ King used writing as a way to test ideas and think about the world around him. Writing becomes a self-reflective process for both the writer and reader.⁹⁷ Again, King can retrace the stirrings of the self-identification to literature to his childhood. In school King had two English teachers Noel Delaney and Bernie Ryan who instilled in their students an appetite for literature and how to be discerning readers.⁹⁸ In addition, they nurtured King’s writing and taught him the difference between ‘fine writing’ and good writing that was communicated in a clear, crisp, direct manner.⁹⁹ Becoming a librarian at school made him even more absorbed into the world of books.¹⁰⁰

King’s childhood love of books was a trait that he shared with his friend, and his subject of literary biography Janet Frame. Janet’s mother was a poet and she encouraged her girls to read and write for the local newspaper’s children’s pages.¹⁰¹ In her teenage years, Frame began to keep a diary addressed to the bearded ruler of an imaginary world Land of Ardenue, in which she mingled real events with fiction.¹⁰² The result was an insight into Janet’s state of mind in the 1940s as well as her emersion and understanding of the world through literature. Janet writes, ‘Why need books have so much influence over me? I think I am too impressionable. Today I lived in dreams – I recited strange poetry to myself ... If it were not for feverish control I should at this very moment leap from my bed... and shout aloud to Eden Street – all the beautiful poetry I have read. I must do it. I must ...’¹⁰³

King followed his childhood experiences with books and writing with his recollection of experiences and interactions with New Zealand writers throughout his career. The most notable of these writers were Denis Glover, James K. Baxter, E.H. McCormick

⁹⁵ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.208.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Roberts, p.12.

⁹⁸ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.58.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.59.

¹⁰¹ Michael King, *Wrestling with the Angel: A Life of Janet Frame* (Auckland, 2000), pp.20-21.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.46.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p.47.

and fellow journalist Christine Cole Catley.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, King acknowledged those in his field: ‘[a]s one moves up the generational ladder, one becomes increasingly grateful for friendships that have endured. And for me, some of the most enriching associations have come from the ranks of fellow historians [...]’.¹⁰⁵ King reiterated this notion in *History* when he acknowledged all the historians (like Angela Ballara; Judith Binney; Tom Brooking; Jim Gardner; Kerry Howe; W.H. Oliver; Claudia Orange; Ann Parsonson; Jock Phillips; Anne Salmond, Keith Sinclair and Ranginui Walker to name a few) who challenged him to think differently about the pursuit of knowledge and history as a discipline.¹⁰⁶ In the later literary biographies of Frank Sargeson and Janet Frame, King extended his appreciation of the inner workings of the writers and their world by analysing what he called the ‘occupational ambience’.¹⁰⁷

King was not only involved with the reflective process of understanding one’s self. He was also interested in the lives of other New Zealanders, as he felt their experiences and situations could also be tools for collective and individual understandings of identity.¹⁰⁸ Before exploring how King approached the lives of New Zealanders in life histories and biography, it is important to highlight once more his need to place the reader within New Zealand historical narrative by conjuring up personal memories of shared experiences.¹⁰⁹ For example, King used the assassination of American President John F. Kennedy Jr. to evoke the readers’ memories about their experience of the event and how it fitted into the context of their life. King noted that his sister was married on the day that Kennedy was shot, and he explained that he tried to keep the news from her, but it hung over the wedding like a dark cloud.¹¹⁰ King was also not shy about using well-known historical events to draw the reader in to a shared memory of a collective past. King wrote about Whina Cooper, ‘[s]he was born in an earth-floored hut among Māoris who had welcomed Europeans to New

¹⁰⁴ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, pp.208-229.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.227.

¹⁰⁶ King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, pp.522-523.

¹⁰⁷ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.208.

¹⁰⁸ Roberts, pp.13-14.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.62.

Zealand and witnessed the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. She survived into the age of space travel and led the migration of her people from rural to urban living.’¹¹¹

While King consistently sought to place the reader in the historical narrative, he also used traumatic events to stir emotive responses. The purpose was to formulate even stronger notions of shared experience through the emotional impact of certain events.¹¹² In *After the War: New Zealanders Since 1945* (1988) King structured the photographic history around milestone events in New Zealand history. Some of the shared memories in this work are positive like the Labour government’s implementation of milk in schools.¹¹³ A large majority of these milestones are of disasters both natural and manmade. In every section of the book, divided by years, King reminded the reader of an earthquake or flood, a fire, a plane crash or other unforeseen tragedy. In 1947, King recounts the tragic affect of the Ballantynes fire; most of the victims were so badly burnt they had to be buried in a mass grave.¹¹⁴ Other examples include, 1948 a Tornado in Frankton;¹¹⁵ 1953 the Tangiwai Disaster;¹¹⁶ 1968 the Wahine Disaster;¹¹⁷ 1979 the DC10 aircraft crash on Mt. Erebus in Antarctica¹¹⁸ and 1984 severe flooding in Southland.¹¹⁹ In fact King would write a whole book dedicated to one of the most shocking events in New Zealand’s recent history: the deliberate sabotage of Greenpeace’s *Rainbow Warrior*.¹²⁰ King explained, ‘New Zealanders, having shared the national trauma of the first act of terrorism committed within their borders, needed the catharsis of a full trial to release pent-up emotions and see justice done’.¹²¹ In this manner King not only saw the event as important for collective memory, but also the emotions that followed afterwards.

War was perhaps the one shared traumatic experience that King felt could not be ignored because its effects continued to be felt from generation to generation.¹²² He

¹¹¹ Michael King, *Whina: a Biography of Whina Cooper* (Auckland, 1983), p.7.

¹¹² Michael King in [Kim Hill Radio NZ Interview](#), 11/10/03.

¹¹³ King, *After the War*, p.20.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp.32-33.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.38.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.62.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.128.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.173.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.191.

¹²⁰ cf. Michael King, *The Death of the Rainbow Warrior* (Auckland, 1986).

¹²¹ *Ibid*, p.222.

¹²² King, *New Zealanders At War* (Auckland, 1981), p.1.

wrote, '[l]ike it or not, New Zealanders have to acknowledge that warfare has dominated their national experience.'¹²³ While this notion has been challenged by recent scholarship in New Zealand history,¹²⁴ King maintained this traditional view of how war moulded identity through two main interpretations. The first was that war was a frequent feature in pre-contact Māori life as well as a feature of European settlement. King recalled his own grandfather's and father's service on the Western Front in 1916-1918 and participation in the Royal Navy in the 1940s respectively.¹²⁵ King extended the importance of war as a shared memory in a different way with the Vietnam War. King recalled New Zealanders' negative reaction to soldiers returning home from the Vietnam War.¹²⁶ Although original support for sending New Zealand combat troops to Vietnam had great public support, that was overshadowed by the anti-war movement demonstrations and the changing attitude to war being vividly visible on the national television screen. King believed this reaction was a consequence of a shared national sentiment that deserves discussion and recognition.¹²⁷ For King, '[t]he experience of New Zealanders at war over 200 years *does* provide signposts as to what kind of people they have been, what kind of people they are becoming.'¹²⁸

In *Pākehā: The Quest for New Zealand Identity* (1991) fourteen contributors wrote about their personal experiences of being Pākehā in New Zealand and how their 'Pākehāness' developed because '[t]hey derive[d] their identity primarily from their New Zealand location and experience rather than from their countries of origin from which their ancestors emigrated.'¹²⁹ Most contributors concentrated on the legitimacy of their identity through three themes: belonging to the landscape,¹³⁰ 'standing upright'¹³¹ in the face of New Zealand's many cultural influences from Britain and afar and in being resolute in their identity during political challenges to 'New

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ cf. Roberto Rabel, 'New Zealand's Wars', *New Oxford History of New Zealand*, Giselle Byrnes (ed.) (Melbourne, 2009), pp.245-265.

¹²⁵ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, pp.24-25.

¹²⁶ King, *New Zealanders At War*, p.293.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.293-294.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.4.

¹²⁹ Michael King, 'Preface', *Pākehā*, p.7.

¹³⁰ Christine Dann, 'In Love with the Land', pp.46-60 and W.H. Oliver 'Belonging to the Land', pp.92-104, *Pākehā* (ed.) Michael King (1991).

¹³¹ Rosie Scott, 'The Trick of Standing Upright', *Pākehā* (ed.) Michael King (1991).

Zealand' nationalism.¹³² Some of the more interesting life stories were those that historians have not generally told, like that of Lesley Max who knew 'mistily' about her family's origins from Europe as a child.¹³³ When she grew up and started to understand her Jewish history she was saddened by New Zealanders' negative responses to her religion and culture.¹³⁴ She recalled standing with her two children outside the Greys Avenue synagogue in Auckland when a passerby told her coolly and calmly, 'We'll get you all yet'.¹³⁵ Max was even more appalled by Pākehā New Zealanders lack of understanding of themselves. She commented that a well-educated young woman told her she envied Jewish people for their sense of history and identity which as a Pākehā she did not have. She replied, "What are you saying! Have you ever heard of William Pember Reeves? Of Michael Joseph Savage? Of free universal education? Of universal adult suffrage? [...] Aren't you proud of any of it?"¹³⁶ For Max she was proud of both her Jewish and New Zealand parts and it was these influences from Europe and home that made up her identity. Even though sometimes those parts have to be reconciled especially '[d]uring the long morning [Jewish]service, the Kiwi and the Jew that live within me regularly do battle [...]'¹³⁷

Another ethnic identity that King explored was one removed from his own experience: the Moriori of the Chatham Islands. King had a former interest in Moriori history before being approached to write their history.¹³⁸ King's method of writing *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* (1989) was to include historiographical evidence derived from ethnological studies of pre-contact and contact periods by Europeans from the 1790s to their consequent settlement through whaling stations and Christianity in the 1840s,¹³⁹ and the deliberate colonisation by Taranaki Māori of the islands in the 1830s.¹⁴⁰ He also included the contemporary life stories of the Solomon family and their struggle to retain their ethnic identity in the face of the 'Moriori

¹³² Lyndsay Head, 'Culture on the Fault Line', pp.23-34; Jim Traue, 'A Citizen of the Polis with a Library Card and Borrowing Rights', pp.61-70; Paul Spoonley, 'Being Here and Being Pākehā', pp.146-156 and Chris Laidlow, 'Stepping Out From Shadow', pp.157-170, *Pākehā* (ed.) Michael King (1991).

¹³³ Lesley Max, 'Having it all: the Kibbutznik and the Powhiri', *Pākehā* (ed.) Michael King (1991), p.80.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.80-83.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.83.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.85.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.89.

¹³⁸ Michael King, *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* (Auckland, 1989), p.11.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.39-52 and pp.89-109.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.53-88.

myth' that had permeated down generations of New Zealanders.¹⁴¹ King explained that many New Zealanders in the 1980s still believed that Moriori were a dark-skinned, thick lipped, dilapidated people who fled New Zealand when the superior race of Māori arrived.¹⁴² He continued, '[t]hus Moriori culture was revealed and reviled when taken out of its own context and juxtaposed with the nineteenth-century world of imperial expansion, Māori and European colonisation, notions of racial and cultural superiority, industrial and scientific development, and Darwinism.'¹⁴³ To rebuild the human face of the Moriori story and bring in the families of the Chatham Islands, King began this ethnic history by retelling the story of Tommy Solomon's funeral in 1933.¹⁴⁴ Solomon's descendants had been inspired to have their history told when the first documentary of Moriori screen on New Zealand television in 1980.¹⁴⁵ By Bill Saunders, this documentary brought together the families of the Chatham Islands – most notably the Solomons and Preeces. A reunion of the Solomon family in the 1983 prompted them to begin the process of remembering and honouring their own ethnic identity.¹⁴⁶

In 1986 they erected a stone statue of Tommy Solomon: 'the last full blooded Moriori'.¹⁴⁷ In chapter nine 'And Then There Was One?', King recounts the life of Tommy Solomon and his quest for understanding his own identity. Solomon struggled with Chatham Islands culture moving away from Moriori mores and becoming amalgam of Māori and European elements.¹⁴⁸ This struggle, passed down from his father whose feelings of disempowerment and loss by Māori colonisation in 1835 and the favourable Māori Land Court ruling for Māori claims to the five designated blocks in June 1870,¹⁴⁹ resonated for Tommy in his identity construction.¹⁵⁰ King portrayed the character of a man who was well respected among

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp.156-194.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, p.16.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p.38.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp.13-16.

¹⁴⁵ cf. Bill Saunders, *Moriori* (Television New Zealand, 1980).

¹⁴⁶ King, *Moriori*, p.9.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.158.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, pp.123-135.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.157.

his community; he had been elected to the Owenga School committee and coached the Owenga rugby team.¹⁵¹

King continued this celebration of lives in his next work on the Chatham Islands, *A Land Apart: the Chatham Islands of New Zealand* (1990), in which he represented the other families that have taken up residence on the Islands. In this work the Preeces feature predominantly as another Moriori family. Farmers at Owenga, they play an active part in protecting Moriori rights and educating Moriori on their identity. Bunty Preece explains, 'More and more as I get older, it is that Moriori part that comes through. And I want my children and grandchildren to know that they are Moriori and have access to Moriori history'.¹⁵² King also acknowledged the families of migrants that had come to settle in the Chatham Islands. For example, Nick and Otto Zimmerman carry on the German tradition on their farm, '[...b]y continuing to drink schnapps and communicate in the German tongue within sight of where German families worked the Maungahui station 120 years ago.'¹⁵³ While King did also pay significant attention to issues concerning fisheries and other industries, infrastructure and bird conservation,¹⁵⁴ he never lost sight of what was important in retelling the story of the Chatham Islands: its people.

One of King's lesser known works *One of the Boys: Changing Views of Masculinity in New Zealand* (1988) moved away from the focus on ethnicity to gender, for the first and only time in his career.¹⁵⁵ King wanted to write about masculinity, as did Jock Phillips a year before in *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pākehā Male – A History* (1987),¹⁵⁶ as a response to women's literature which addressed the stereotyping of women and femininity.¹⁵⁷ King believed that in New Zealand there was a widespread view that masculinity in New Zealand has contributed to a cycle of

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.181.

¹⁵² King, *A Land Apart: the Chatham Islands of New Zealand* (Auckland, 1990), p.22.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, pp.64-65.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, pp.32-35 and pp. 25-32 and 37-47; pp.101-111 ; and pp.79-83 and pp.132-135.

¹⁵⁵ n.b. while King had focused on questions of male values both historically and socially in other works (c.f. King, *New Zealand: Its Land and Its People*, p.132 and King, *New Zealanders at War*, pp. 4-5 in which he sees war as a male pursuit), this is the first time which he addresses these questions in the lives of identifiable people.

¹⁵⁶ Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pākehā Male – A History* (Auckland, 1987), p.vii.

¹⁵⁷ Michael King, *One of the Boys: Changing Views of Masculinity in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1988), p.vii.

emotional deprivation facilitated by the use of alcohol and drugs, which concluded in violence and violent crime.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore King explained that, ‘[of t]he men writing here many [have] not themselves been prisoners of that vortex; but most of them recognise and have experienced its ingredients.’¹⁵⁹ King cited both the works of Alison Gray, author of *The Jones Men: 100 New Zealand Men Talk About Their Lives and Expression of Sexuality* (1985),¹⁶⁰ and Jock Phillips,¹⁶¹ as treading the ground of male sexuality before him and giving him advice along the way.¹⁶² However, it was the female scholars prior to these works that established gender as a category of analysis.¹⁶³ The fifteen life stories that made up *One of the Boys* illustrated for King the balance men must seek in grappling with the imperatives of family respectability and the expectations of illicit pleasure.¹⁶⁴ King’s own struggle with his masculinity becomes apparent with his use of word illicit to describe sex. Certainly, growing up in an Irish Catholic environment engrained ideas such as pre-marital sex and other forms of sex outside of marriage as inappropriate.¹⁶⁵ Balancing desire with family obligations was key to King’s own view of male sexuality.

The contrasting of approaches of the different contributors to this balance between ‘acceptable’ and ‘other’ forms of male sexuality are stark. For example, Bernard Ryan retells his life as a priest teaching in Catholic schools and how he had to learn to have appropriate relationships with women when he had taken a vow of celibacy.¹⁶⁶ In contrast, Greg McGee invited the reader into his adolescent brain: ‘I’m 12 or 13, with organ fully grown and ready for concerts, but only ever played in frenetic solos which are rarely satisfying: even in the moment of climax. I yearn for the blessed duet.’¹⁶⁷ In

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Alison Gray, *The Jones Men: 100 New Zealand Men Talk About Their Lives* (Wellington, 1983) and *Expressions of Sexuality* (Auckland, 1985); Phillips, *A Man’s Country?* (Auckland, 1987).

¹⁶¹ n.b. in *A Man’s Country?* (1987), p.ix Phillips begins each chapter with a personal life experience related to the chapter title. He explains this is because he wants to make the reader aware of his perspective, as well as show how his life, growing up in the fifties and living through the period of change of the sixties and seventies, can be an instructional tale. Phillips was able to show authority on the subject because he had personally experienced a transformation in the stereotype of the New Zealand Pākehā male.

¹⁶² King, *One of the Boys*, p.ix.

¹⁶³ cf. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (London, 1963); Germaine Geer, *The Female Eunuch* (London, 1970); and Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex: the Case for a Feminist Revolution* (New York, 1979).

¹⁶⁴ King, *One of the Boys?*, p.viii.

¹⁶⁵ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.69-70.

¹⁶⁶ Bernard Ryan, ‘The Celibate Option’, *One of the Boys?* (ed.) Michael King, pp.35-64.

¹⁶⁷ Greg McGee, ‘Sweet Bird’ in *One of the Boys?* (ed.) Michael King, p.157

contrast, Bill Logan's story of knowing he was homosexual – 'Never Exactly One of the Boys' – explained to the reader the shades of grey made that up masculinity in New Zealand.¹⁶⁸ While the contributors are Māori and Pākehā, Catholic and Protestant, Liberal and Conservative, immigrant and native born, heterosexual and gay, all are not stereotypical examples. King commented that '[a]s soon as one talks in and of stereotypes one loses sight of actual people and the real perplexing lives they lead.'¹⁶⁹ Yet King outlined the totality of male experiences in the contributors lives through the similarities of their relationships with their fathers and mothers, their mates, with their girlfriends and wives, as well as their involvement with scouts, the Army, combat, sport, alcohol and so on.¹⁷⁰ In this vein, King also contributed to the life stories with his chapter 'Contradictions' in which he described trying to come to terms with the conventional New Zealand expectations of masculinity because he '[...]had an ambivalent relationship with rugby, as I did with the other major ingredients of male culture, alcohol and sex'.¹⁷¹ Here King once more defended the case that an individual's story can represent the concerns, fears, hopes and dreams of a larger group of people's.¹⁷² It was King's commentary on and interpretation of the intimate life histories that lets the reader feel they 'know' a life and situation outside their own experience.¹⁷³

King widened this focus on individual experiences beyond simply studying self to look at individual lives which represented New Zealand society or cultural milieus in a biographical format.¹⁷⁴ However, King's voice was still present within his biographies, which provided an indication of his construction of a biographical narrative for a specific purpose.¹⁷⁵ Before we examine King's agenda for writing biography and how noticeable his voice was in each work, there needs to be an outline of King's place within biographical writing in New Zealand. Antony Alpers wrote in *Biography in New Zealand* (1985) – the first work to examine the subject – that

¹⁶⁸ Bill Logan, 'Never Exactly One of the Boys', *One of the Boys?* (ed.) Michael King, p.189-209.

¹⁶⁹ King, *One of the Boys?*, p.ix.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ Michael King, 'Contradictions', *One of the Boys?* (ed.) Michael King, p.147.

¹⁷² Roberts, p.12.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ cf. Prue Chamberlayne, Joanna Bornat and Tom Wengraf, 'Introduction: The Biographical Turn', *The Turn to Biographical Methods in the Social Science: Comparative Issues and Examples* (London, 2000), p.22.

¹⁷⁵ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, pp.9-10.

because New Zealand has such a short history much of its biography and literary biography is of those long dead.¹⁷⁶ This begs the question: who constitutes the alumni of ‘long dead’? When Jock Phillips was asked to edit a collection of essays on New Zealand Biography from the 1984 Stout Research Centre’s conference papers on biography,¹⁷⁷ he noted that since 1930 popular level biographies and autobiography were a staple of New Zealand publishing.¹⁷⁸ The Second World War, when ‘well-researched finely crafted biographies’ were being produced in New Zealand, the discipline had been lacking in quality with a diversity of subjects.¹⁷⁹ The biographies that were being written were of persons who celebrated the nation’s character and were perceived to be the ‘makers’ and ‘shapers’ of New Zealand. Commonly the ‘long dead’ were white male politicians, missionaries and military leaders who had accordingly dominated biographical writing in New Zealand,¹⁸⁰ reflecting Thomas Carlyle’s famous phrase, ‘[t]he history of the world is but a biography of great men’.¹⁸¹ King himself understood the notion of ‘hero worship’ within the discipline of biography and jokingly remarked:

[o]ne writes about men and women who drive themselves through life with a force that risks their reputations and their coronary arteries, one writes about war heroes who die magnificently under fire. Whereas the greatest risks the biographer is called upon to face are a sore back from excessive typing, spraining one’s wrists trying to compel exhausted bios to keep on writing, lacerating one’s tongue sealing sharp envelopes, or straining one’s eyes searching for reviews[...].¹⁸²

It is not surprising that to write about exceptional lives is preferable to those whose lives in comparison are ordinary or mundane. The nexus between national biography and national identity has continued to be a strong impulse for biographical writers as a way of defining, through a single life, a shared collective identity.¹⁸³ In fact, many Dictionaries of National Biography are founded on this principle of defining

¹⁷⁶ Antony Alpers, ‘Literary Biography in New Zealand’, *Biography in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1985), p.25.

¹⁷⁷ Jock Phillips (ed.), *Biography in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1985), p.1.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.2.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ cf. Keith Sinclair, *Walter Nash* (Auckland, 1976); A.G. Bagnell and G.C. Petersen, *William Colenso: Printer, Missionary, Botanist, Explorer, Politician: his Life and Journeys* (Wellington, 1948); Judith Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt: a Life of Thomas Kendall* (Auckland, 1968); and Kenneth L. Sandford, *The Mark of the Lion: the Story of Captain Charles Upham, V.C. and Bar* (London, 1962).

¹⁸¹ Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (New York, 1897), p.26.

¹⁸² Michael King, ‘Political Biography: A Commentary’ in *Biography in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1985), p.37.

¹⁸³ James Walter, ‘About National Biography’, *National Biographies and National Identity: A Critical Approach to Theory and Editorial Practice*, Iain McCalman, Jodi Parvey and Misty Cook (eds.) (Canberra, 1996), pp.32-34.

geographical, linguistic and cultural boundaries.¹⁸⁴ In the 1990s the first volume of the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* was published under the editorial guidance of W.H. Oliver. He realised that his challenge was to include in the dictionary both ‘nation makers’ and ‘sub-national’ figures who represented all levels of New Zealand society.¹⁸⁵ As Vaughan Yarwood explains, ‘[Oliver wanted ...] to add to the familiar mix of dead famous people others who, if not imposing presences in their lifetimes, might at least become “memorable historical presences”’.¹⁸⁶ King over his career had contributed six biographies to the national dictionary and none of his subjects could be categorised as the ‘long dead’. Only two were Pākehā, both were writers: George Ramsden a journalist from the 1920s who, like King, worked in the Waikato and took an interest in Te Puea Herangi’s life; and Frank Sargeson a novelist whose career spanned from the 1930s into the 1970s.¹⁸⁷ The other subjects of study were Māori leaders, both male and female, who had contributed to their tribal areas and iwi.¹⁸⁸ His contribution of entries on Māori to the national dictionary of biography was not surprising, given King’s earlier biographies of Māori subjects. During his career, King never wrote a biography of a ‘nation maker’, even though he had planned to.¹⁸⁹ King’s view of the role of life histories aligned with Oliver’s aim for a social history approach to the *NZDB*. He chose in his biographical texts to write on subjects who would be seen as ‘sub-national’ figures yet who were in his eyes as important to the ‘making’ and ‘shaping’ of the nation as those ‘long dead’.

¹⁸⁴ Iain McCalman, ‘Introduction’, *National Biographies and National Identity: A Critical Approach to Theory and Editorial Practice*, Iain McCalman, Jodi Parvey and Misty Cook (eds.) (Canberra, 1996), p.i.

¹⁸⁵ Ministry for Culture and Heritage, ‘Background’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, (Wellington, 2001), accessed from the Dictionary of New Zealand Website 30 December 2009.

¹⁸⁶ Vaughan Yarwood, *The History Makers: Adventures in New Zealand Biography* (Auckland, 2002), p.234.

¹⁸⁷ cf. Michael King, ‘Ramsden, George Eric Oakes 1898 - 1962’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007 and ‘Sargeson, Frank 1903 - 1982’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007, accessed from the Dictionary of New Zealand Website 30 December 2009.

¹⁸⁸ cf. Michael King, ‘Cooper, Whina 1895 - 1994’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007; ‘Riwai, Kiti Karaka 1870 - 1927’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007; King, ‘Solomon, Tommy 1884 - 1933’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007 and King, ‘Tapu, Hirawanu ? - 1900’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 22 June 2007, accessed from the Dictionary of New Zealand Website 30 December 2009.

¹⁸⁹ n.b. King did do extensive research on the personal documents of former Labour Prime Minister Peter Fraser and interviewed his personal advisor Alistair McIntosh. King intended to write a biography on Fraser from this information, but he became ill and asked Michael Bassett to write the work in his stead. All the drafts for the work *Tomorrow Comes a Song: A Life of Peter Fraser* (Auckland, 2000) were discussed with King.

King was not alone in the pursuit of a diversity of subjects within biographical writing. During the last decades of the twentieth century, non-elitist biographies were popular subjects for feminist, linguistic and cultural historians to talk about their subject's place within the national story.¹⁹⁰ As well as a diversity of biographical subjects emerging from historiographical movements in history writing another component of biographical writing began to change. While biography helped to reinforce national myths and stories, biographers opted to pursue more truthfulness in their construction of national subjects.¹⁹¹ 'Hero worshipping' gave way to the truthful retelling of a life: the good and the bad. King called his approach to this ethical decision by the biographer to consider all aspects of a subject's life the application of 'compassionate truth'.¹⁹² He described this approach as working from the record and following the evidence to whatever conclusions it indicated.¹⁹³

The biography in which King's approach of 'compassionate truth' was most obvious was that of the Austrian taxidermist Andreas Reischek. King explained that at first his intention was to highlight the influence of the Austrian and German scientific tradition in New Zealand during the nineteenth century which was often overshadowed by their English contemporaries.¹⁹⁴ Yet as he began to research Reischek, his character and personality became King's primary focus. King stated from the outset that he was not able to obtain all the personal documents from the family that he had hoped.¹⁹⁵ The result was the portrayal of personality that emerged during the writing of this biography might not sit well with Reischek's surviving family; but he assured the reader that it had developed organically from the documents he could acquire. He even suggested that the family would not release all his personal documents because they knew the type of picture that would unfold.¹⁹⁶

One of the aspects of Reischek's life that King concentrated on to explain his subject's disagreeable personality was his unaffectionate relationship with his wife

¹⁹⁰ Chamberlayne, Birnat and Wengraf, 'The Biographical Turn', p.2.

¹⁹¹ Roberts, pp.14-15.

¹⁹² King, 'Biography and Compassionate Truth', pp.9-17.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Michael King, *The Collector: A Biography of Andreas Reischek* (Auckland, 1981), pp.9-10 and p.23.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.14.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Adelheid Hawlicek. King described the immediacy of Reischek's departure to New Zealand as strange because '[l]ess than a year into business on his own, less than a year married, and he was prepared to travel alone to the other side of the world and remain there for two years (which turned into twelve).'¹⁹⁷ King continued to suggest Reischek's disdain for his wife by his continual deception about the intended long duration of his stay in New Zealand and the concealment of his travel plans, which made him hard to reach.¹⁹⁸ Indeed, King portrayed Reischek's relationship with his dog Caesar as full of more love and companionship than that with his wife. Reischek wrote:

On the 21st I said good-bye to him [Caesar] for ever [sic]. How sad he was, as though he too felt the tragedy of parting! He looked at me in such an entreating way that I could not contain myself any longer, and the tears coursed down my cheeks. Poor old chappie! you [sic] had been more than a friend to me. Never, never, could I repay you for what you had given me in love and trust and faithful service!¹⁹⁹

Reischek was heartbroken when Caesar died and he wrote a book about their exploits together in New Zealand called *Caesar: the Wonderful Dog* (1889).²⁰⁰ Conversely, his wife became even more estranged from him when he returned to Austria for good in 1889 as he avoided going home, opting to sleep on his laboratory floor at the Francis-Caroline Museum.²⁰¹

King continued his biographical analysis of Reischek's dubious character through the interpretation of his actions while collecting native flora and fauna to send back to Austria as well as his deceptive and disrespectful interactions with Māori to obtain Māori curios. King remarked, '[w]hile it is true that Reischek has to be observed against what were accepted standards at the time, the scale of his shooting [of native birds] and the fact that for example, he later used Kokoka for soup tends to diminish the admiration of a twentieth-century observer.'²⁰² This observation is interesting because it showed the constant battle of biographers to restrain their own bias and

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p.31.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p.50.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p.129.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid*, pp.126-130 and pp.138-139.

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.148.

²⁰² *Ibid*, p.40.

place the subject within the appropriate context.²⁰³ In this respect King has asked the reader to consider Reischek's actions within a modern framework.

Without reading the whole biography the reader could happily assume that King was merely following his approach of 'compassionate truth'. However, King had a clear agenda for writing this biography and it was not to highlight the contribution of the Austrian scientific tradition in preserving New Zealand artefacts through the activities flawed character of Andreas Reischek. King's intention was to use Reischek as an example of how museums worldwide fail to relinquish artefacts that have been acquired through dubious circumstances back to their rightful owners.²⁰⁴ In the case of Reischek, his most controversial collection was of mummified remains of Kawhai descendants from Hauturu in the King Country.²⁰⁵ Rather than end the biography with Reischek's death, the last chapter recounts Andreas Reischek Jr.'s attempt to obtain for his father the recognition he never received for his collection in Austria as well as the consequent battle by New Zealand authorities from 1945 until 1981, when the fight was abandoned, to reclaim the mummies to be buried.²⁰⁶ Rather than recovering the colourful, albeit flawed, character of a nineteenth century Austrian taxidermist, this biography reflects King's thoughts on current cultural and racial issues.

King's agenda for writing on certain subjects was not always clear or as, in the case of Reischek, so thinly disguised. His selection of subjects reflected his own interests and development of self-identity. As Paula Bakscheider explains, it is not possible to write a biography without the writer's preconceived notions and experience of the subject's personality. Biography is more than a discovery of another person; it is a matter of self-discovery.²⁰⁷ The biographies of Te Puea Herangi and Whina Cooper were, in effect, an extension of King's wish for Pākehā readers to understand the Māori world and Māori identity as a means of better understanding themselves.²⁰⁸ In comparison, King's literary biographies of Frank Sargeson and Janet Frame are examples of writers like himself who go through the same trials and self-criticism as King did. He used these literary biographies as a means to find out the inner thoughts

²⁰³ Bakscheider, pp.8-9.

²⁰⁴ King, *The Collector*, pp.161-174.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pp.92-94.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, pp.152-160 and p.174.

²⁰⁷ Bakscheider, p.90.

²⁰⁸ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.186.

of this group of people to which he belonged.²⁰⁹ Readers and researchers of biography alike would question whether King's voice should have been so prominent.²¹⁰ Yet his purpose for being visible within all his works were a part of a larger goal: revealing to New Zealanders how they are a part of the national story. As Roberts explains, '[t]o place the researcher fully within the research is to recognize that we all have stories and it seems a fundamental part of social interaction to "tell our tales"'.²¹¹

King had the goal of being the *kawe kōrero* for New Zealanders in mind when he wrote biography. This scoped his approach to finding the 'compassionate truth' of a subject. The balance of 'compassionate truth' became more complex when one's biographical subject was still living.²¹² King's literary biography of Janet Frame was a classic example of this quandary. In an 'Author's Note' he explained that Frame gave him permission to write on her life on two conditions, that the work was not an analysis of her writing and that he did not quote verbatim from interviews with her.²¹³ Molloy has argued that this defeats the purpose of a literary biography, which intends to find some inner truth about the personality of the writer through understanding their achievement by interpreting their writing style and not just the circumstances surrounding their texts.²¹⁴

Another illustration of King's struggle to maintain 'compassionate truth' when writing about his subjects was how he approached their sexual relationships as a part of their life stories.²¹⁵ When writing about Te Puea, King found opposition from those who knew her. King recounted in *Being Pākehā*, 'Alexander Mckay asked me how I was going to deal with the human side of Te Puea[...]I asked him what he meant, he looked uncomfortable and exclaimed "her relationships with other people". "Do you mean her sexual relationships?" I asked. He nodded, looking displeased with my

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p.208.

²¹⁰ cf. Backscheider, p.3 Who argues that to notice the biographer in a text is a technical flaw. Conversely, to not notice the biographer in the text is to forget how much interpretation of the text has occurred to the 'facts'.

²¹¹ Roberts, p.13.

²¹² King, 'Biography and Compassionate Truth', p.16.

²¹³ King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, p.viii.

²¹⁴ Molloy, *New Zealand Biography in the 1940s to the 1990s*, pp.79-81.

²¹⁵ King, 'Biography and Compassionate Truth', pp.11-14.

directness[...] “the woman was like a mother to me,” he said warningly.’²¹⁶ Accordingly King was circumspect with what personal material he used in *Te Puea*’s biography. Likewise, when he published the biography of Whina he purposefully withheld information about her sexual relationships because of what it would do to her persona as the ‘mother of the nation’ and out of respect for her family.²¹⁷ However, in Sargeson’s biography King proclaimed that he treated his homosexuality in the way he would heterosexuality, making the discussion of his sex life a non-issue.²¹⁸ I find this approach hypocritical because King was happy to discuss in much more detail than the other biographies Sargeson’s sex life because he did not have children or a spouse who could be offended by the discussion.²¹⁹ The contradictions continued as King explained that Sargeson’s long time partner Harry Doyle had relatives that were less than thrilled with their relationship, but he failed to consider their objections.²²⁰ Ranganui Walker likewise observes that King’s struggle to maintain ‘compassionate truth’ within his works has certain consequences. For example Walker states, ‘*Te Puea* was *Te Puea* by Michael King; *Whina* was *Whina* by Whina.’²²¹ Walker criticised King’s lack of control over Whina’s input into her own biography as the subject. At the time of writing this biography Whina was still very much alive, as evident by her strong personality and determination to have her say in *her* life. This was in contrast to his biography of *Te Puea* where King’s voice was louder and more defined because *Te Puea* had passed away and therefore could not make a contribution to her life story. For this reason King likened the process of writing biography ‘[...] to tightrope walking. But the resulting tension frequently tightens one’s narrative and increases its vibrancy.’²²² Indeed, as this discussion has shown, finding a balance between the resulting tension of writing on a subject, dead or alive, can sometimes cause the biographer to and fall off the tightrope. King’s voice is present within all of his texts, albeit to varying degrees.

One of the most important purposes of writing biography was to understand the subject’s motivations for their book-worthy actions. In this case, an author, through a

²¹⁶ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.132.

²¹⁷ King, ‘Biography and Compassionate Truth’, p.14.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.12.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.13.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ Ranganui Walker in *History Man* (2004), 70mins.

²²² King, ‘Biography and Compassionate Truth’, p.17.

construction of personality, explores the actions of a subject.²²³ This was undoubtedly the procedure King went through when writing about two Māori women leaders, Te Puea Herangi and Whina Cooper, who were known to be cantankerous and strong-willed, yet influential spokespeople for their iwi on political and social issues in their lifetimes.²²⁴ The subtext of his portrayal of both these Māori women was that their stubborn and wilful personalities were a part of their success, even if at times they were perceived as being self serving or disdainful. This was how King described Te Puea, informing the reader: ‘Te Puea strode through life with footsteps that were, by conventional standards, gigantic; they often left painful imprints on other people.’²²⁵ The personality of a subject can be many things, not just positive attributes like charisma but include ‘intellect, character, temperament, disposition and temper’.²²⁶ These traits could cause the subject to seek certain experiences and in turn these actions cause by their personality offer a way of discovering the subject’s motivations for those actions.²²⁷ In his works on Te Puea and Whina, King reinforced his earlier conclusions about Māori society and its functions. One of these conclusions relates to strong tribal leadership.²²⁸ The other is the cultural convention of both women’s gift of matakite, or second sight, that enabled them to be (in a Western sense) clairvoyant, which they saw as a spiritual oneness with their tupuna.²²⁹ King explained Māori society more extensively through these personal experiences of the life history. In doing so he maintained his kawē kōrero status and continued to voice views that evolved and sharpened his mātauranga Pākehā.

The author’s construction of a subject’s personality in biography indicates the subject’s actions and therefore their motivation. For example, King recounted the story of Te Puea’s altercation with an American Commanding Officer at the end of WWII. Te Puea told the surrounding Māori settlements that the officer had refused to keep an appointment with her and called her a ‘nigger woman’.²³⁰ The tribal units retaliated by physically assaulting any soldiers from the regiment that they

²²³ Bakscheider, pp.101-108.

²²⁴ Michael King, *Te Puea: a Biography* (Auckland, 1977), p.273 and King, *Whina*, p.8.

²²⁵ King, *Te Puea*, p.11.

²²⁶ Bakscheider, p.114.

²²⁷ *Ibid*, p.115.

²²⁸ Michael King, *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (Auckland, 1984), pp.159-163 and pp.251-253.

²²⁹ King, *Te Puea*, p.161 and King, *Whina*, p.58.

²³⁰ King, *Te Puea*, p.212.

encountered. Enraged, the officer demanded to see Te Puea and she welcomed him to her marae. As he started to lecture her she interrupted him and summoned her women to bring in afternoon tea telling the American, “[w]e have an old Māori custom. Before we kill our guests and eat them, we always feed them well.”²³¹ Out of context her actions seem unnecessarily confrontational; however King’s purpose for including this story was to portray Te Puea’s relationship with the non-Māori world up until this point.²³² To have gained such success as a tribal leader Te Puea had to engage with the Pākehā world and build relationships with those who she did not necessarily trust. Previous governments had confiscated her tribe’s traditional lands and had very little interest in Māori health and sanitation. This mistrust was compounded by her tribe’s conscription in WWI which contradicted the community’s pacifist religion of the Pai Marire faith.²³³ Though Te Puea’s encounters with Pākehā were not as tumultuous as her reaction to the American Commanding Officer, these difficult relationships can be seen as explicable in the face of so much Pākehā misunderstanding and opposition to Māori welfare. As King attested ‘[s]he [Te Puea] was to describe herself as “pro-Māori rather than anti-Pākehā” in the 1940s. But in the early 1920s there is no doubt that she was simply anti-Pākehā, and with good cause.’²³⁴

In Whina’s biography King recalled another similar anecdote by a no nonsense female personality. King portrayed Whina as a progressive Māori leader who changed the conventional norms of Māori leadership because of her encounter with urbanised Māori and their position in New Zealand society.²³⁵ In his construction of Whina’s story King often confirmed her actions, no matter how inappropriate, as being a means to this end. To illustrate the point, King recounted how Whina interrupted a man speaking during a hui: ‘Men come out of here [pointing to her thighs], all men, never mind who they are, the King, the Governor, the big chiefs – everybody. They all come out of women. Without women they wouldn’t even be alive.’²³⁶ Her point was that she too should have the right to speak on the marae because women are not submissive to men, but on the contrary are superior and deserve respect. In using this event to address Whina’s growing unwillingness to be restricted by marae protocol,

²³¹ *Ibid.*

²³² *Ibid.*, p.209.

²³³ *Ibid.*, pp.79-97.

²³⁴ King, p.112.

²³⁵ King, *Whina*, pp.236-237.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.102.

King does not see this behaviour as improper as the reader might expect, but a part of her progressive leadership style. He concluded that Whina's strong personality meant that she felt her potential was not being fulfilled in her small community of Panguru.²³⁷ While her move to Auckland in 1951 may seem like a positive and confident one on the part of Whina, King did not make a point of explaining that Whina's relationship within the community had by this time deteriorated. Instead he explained that, heartbroken by the death of her second husband, William Cooper, her character ensured that she had the determination and foresight to start fresh and achieve new personal goals.²³⁸ King wrote, 'Whina was a compulsive leader. She didn't feel complete unless she had challenges to meet and people to direct. Auckland offered new opportunities of this kind.'²³⁹ This was a case of where Whina's voice spoke more loudly than King's. There was no doubt that she would have perceived the move to Auckland as a step towards something more positive than the controversies that surrounded her at home. Nevertheless, as a biographer King could have pointed out the inconsistencies of Whina's predicament.²⁴⁰ Walker's argument that Whina directed the shape of King's narrative because she was still alive and had much to do with her own biography holds true in this instance.²⁴¹ Accordingly, King's meta-narrative to portray Whina as a small tribal leader who rose to a national figure that was recognised by Māori and Pākehā as the 'mother of the nation' reflects Whina's view.

In comparison to Whina's biography, the narrative of Te Puea's life history takes shape around King's explanation of the importance of traditional Māori leadership. This theme of traditional Māori leadership and what characterises good leadership was developed by King in Te Puea's biography and reiterated in his subsequent works such as the photographic work *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (1984).²⁴² Te Puea was born of chiefly blood. She was raised and taught in the ways of her tupuna, and gradually earned the respect and right to represent her people through her actions as a community leader in political, social and welfare issues.²⁴³ She remains

²³⁷ *Ibid*, pp.163-165.

²³⁸ *Ibid*, p.163.

²³⁹ *Ibid*, p.165.

²⁴⁰ cf. Backenscheider, pp.7-8.

²⁴¹ Walker, *History Man* (2004), 70mins.

²⁴² King, *Māori*, p.164.

²⁴³ cf. *Te Puea Herangi: From Darkness to Light* (Wellington, 1984).

today as a Tainui icon whose tenacious personality meant she was sometimes offensive and blunt, especially in her older age.²⁴⁴ Yet her argumentative disposition will largely be forgotten because of her astounding achievements in restoring their system of rural-based extended families, maintaining a large proportion of European acceptance for the Kīngitanga, while restoring interest in traditional Māori cultural activities and changing the King movement from a political movement to one that focused on Māori values and could be used as a rallying point for Māori issues.²⁴⁵ These actions, immortalised by King in his biography of her life, ensured the memory of Te Puea as a mythic figure.²⁴⁶

Conversely, Whina's biography challenged this traditional style of leadership. While both women successfully learnt how to use the Pākehā world to their advantage through strategic friendships (as Te Puea had with Eric Ramsden, Gordon Coates and Peter Fraser)²⁴⁷ and learning English both at school and through writing journals,²⁴⁸ what Whina did was literally immerse herself in the Pākehā world by moving from her home and into the city. It was from this point that King charted Whina's transition from traditional tribal leader to an urban Māori leader.²⁴⁹ King made clear her transition to urban Māori leader through her establishment of one of the 315 tribal committees that supported the Māori War Effort Organisation in WWII and Māori Women's Welfare League in 1951, which he saw as the first Māori organisation to speak with a national Māori voice.²⁵⁰ She later led the Māori Land March as a symbol of iwi unity against the Māori Affairs Amendment Act of 1967. The protestors marched from the top of the North Island to Parliament in Wellington.²⁵¹ King's intended message was the passage of the torch from Te Puea to Whina as the most important Māori females of their generations.

King made his comparison between Te Puea and Whina obvious in his works, inferring that, '[a]fter the death of Princess Te Puea in 1952, she [Whina] became the

²⁴⁴ King, *Te Puea*, p.233.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.273.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p.274.

²⁴⁷ King, *Te Puea*, pp.121-123, p.137 and p.211

²⁴⁸ King, *Te Puea*, p.44; and King, *Whina*, p.45.

²⁴⁹ King, *Whina*, p.164.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.178.

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 206.

most visible Māori woman of her lifetime.²⁵² King's portrayal of Te Puea and Whina's lives were surprisingly similar to the point where he purposely wove his later work *Whina* around the same story cycle as that of his biography of Te Puea. Joseph Campbell explained this literary technique in his work *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1975) a study of the similarities of myth and symbol as in the human tradition of storytelling. Campbell identified three important stages of the narrative: a departure, followed by initiation and then the return.²⁵³ Within each of these stages are certain events: for example, in the departure the hero must be called to adventure, guided by a supernatural aid, cross the threshold and then proceed into the belly of the whale. A road of trials and an eventual triumphant return home followed this.²⁵⁴ Both women travelled on such a heroine cycle; they both start out as young charismatic young women who were born to an important tribal family. Both looked up to male role model figures and were forced to find their own place within the tribe when this strong male figure died. Both at a young age had unfavourable first marriages for their status and both overcame tribal in-fighting and disagreements to become kuia of their community.²⁵⁵

The similarities continued in a more subtle way that becomes clear after a close reading of both works. King wrote about both women and their involvement in the 1918 influenza epidemic, the acceptance by both of a CBE and MBE respectively for their services to New Zealand and he even made reference to Whina as the 'Queen of the North' to mimic the nickname of 'Princess' Te Puea coined by Eric Ramsden.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, King made a point of addressing both Whina and Te Puea's promiscuity when they were young women.²⁵⁷ At first it seemed that he did this for two different purposes. Te Puea's promiscuity as a teenager read like a moral tale of what happens when a woman does not uphold the so called meekness of her gender. Not only did King liken her to a Goya Maja painting sprawled out in a not-so-naïve nakedness for male enjoyment.²⁵⁸ King also implied that the reason for being unable to conceive children was because of her promiscuity and probable contraction of a STI, that

²⁵² *Ibid*, p.7.

²⁵³ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (London, 1949), pp.51-221.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁵⁵ King, *Te Puea*, p.260 and King, *Whina*, p.246.

²⁵⁶ King, *Te Puea*, pp.98-101; p.121 and p.192 and King, *Whina*, p.82; p.180 and p.90.

²⁵⁷ King, *Te Puea*, p.45 and King, *Whina*, p.67.

²⁵⁸ King, *Te Puea*, p.45.

resulted later in life in her a need to collect and house stray children.²⁵⁹ In comparison Whina had an affair with Te Rangi Hiroa, which was almost justified by King because she was young and Hiroa's wife was inattentive to him due to her drinking.²⁶⁰ King's attitude towards female sexuality resembles that of his reflections on male sexuality and his upbringing as Irish Catholic because it shows how sex/sexuality outside the 'norm' was seen by King as being taboo.²⁶¹

The inclusion of stories of this type showed King's flair for colourful storytelling.²⁶² Simultaneously they also indicated King's use of human nature to remind the reader of the similarities of experience and curiosity about others' lives outside our own.²⁶³ I also think that King had another motive here and that was to show a progression from wayward misfits to strong Māori women leaders. King pointed out that when Whina was elected as the head of the MWWL in 1951, Te Puea was made its patroness. King remarked, '[d]uring her term as president Whina became a national figure, only the second Māori woman to do so (Te Puea Herangi, who died in 1952, had been the first).'²⁶⁴ While this may seem a simplistic reading of the main narrative it is a common life history trait that a person overcomes adversity to become a leader and example for the nation.

The author of literary biography still strives to maintain a heroic subject whose actions can be used as life lessons for the reader. The actions that are to be interpreted by the author are often not tangible events. Although writing and publishing a book is a physical act, it is the subject's mental process of writing or their inner thoughts that the author wants to convey to the reader.²⁶⁵ Because the inner thoughts of the subject are the main focus of literary biography the author and the subject share a special connection.²⁶⁶ As Molloy explains, '[i]n a literary biography, the biographer has perhaps a closer relationship to and greater insight into the subject because they are

²⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p.45-48.

²⁶⁰ King, *Whina*, p.65.

²⁶¹ King, 'Contradictions', pp.150-152.

²⁶² cf. Chapter Five of this thesis: 'A Career Full Circle? A Discussion of the Penguin History of New Zealand'.

²⁶³ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.241.

²⁶⁴ King, *Whina*, p.179.

²⁶⁵ Backscheider, xviii.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p.xv.

involved in the same activity.²⁶⁷ This was how King approached his biography of the New Zealand literary persona Frank Sargeson. King began Sargeson's biography in a way that mimicked his own journey as a writer, which he described in *Being Pākehā* and in Janet Frame's biography as discovering the joy of reading at a young age.²⁶⁸ The similarities did not stop there: King went on to describe Sargeson's world being no longer structured by the strict Methodist teaching of his Father be framed and driven by literature: '[h]e [Sargeson] was transferring much of the sense of high moral purpose which he had previously associated with the practise of his faith to the pursuit of the arts.'²⁶⁹ Similarly like Sargeson, King himself had realised much later that the teachings of Catholicism did not give his world meaning in the same manner that poetry or public history did.²⁷⁰ Unlike Frame who did not believe at the outset that she could make a career from writing and went into the teaching profession instead,²⁷¹ Sargeson and King both set out to make a living from being full time writers. King's insight on how difficult it was at the beginning of Sargeson's career to be published, either at home or abroad,²⁷² can be seen as reminiscent of his own struggle as a writer. King even suggested that as a result of years of rejection from publishers that Sargeson started to write in short clear sentences, a style that King himself adhered to, and the style of the 'Sargeson short story' was born.²⁷³ Sargeson's first success was 'Conversations with my Uncle' (1935) in *Tomorrow Magazine* followed by a string of short stories, which from 1947 were published in *Landfall* and appealed to the common experience of New Zealanders.²⁷⁴ To further highlight these similarities Sargeson, like King,²⁷⁵ had a secluded house on a beach front from which to write.²⁷⁶ While Sargeson's Takapuna beach is almost 180 kilometres from King's Coromandel Peninsula, their reasons for creating these work spaces are related. They both were able to position themselves or create around them a creative community of like

²⁶⁷ Molloy, p.131.

²⁶⁸ King, *Frank Sargeson: A Life*, pp.31-32; King, *Being Pākehā*, p.59; and King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, pp.28-29.

²⁶⁹ King, *Frank Sargeson*, p.59.

²⁷⁰ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.208.

²⁷¹ King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, pp.50-53.

²⁷² King, *Frank Sargeson*, p.185.

²⁷³ *Ibid*, p.152.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 151-153.

²⁷⁵ n.b. Waikato University brought Michael King's batch in Opoutere to preserve it as a writers retreat for the same sentimental reasons King had in preserving Sargeson's batch after his death ['Waikato University buys Michael King's House' 7 April 2008, accessed from the University of Waikato Website, 8 December 2009].

²⁷⁶ King, *Frank Sargeson*, p.111.

minded people, which was strengthened by their geographical surroundings.²⁷⁷ Both King and Sargeson flourished in beach and bach type surroundings which stimulated their sense of belonging and dedication to writing for New Zealanders.²⁷⁸

Consequently, King was able to relate with Sargeson's inner thoughts on his identity, especially the components of ethnicity and gender, but not sexuality.

King's interpretation of Sargeson's writing on his 'ethnic identity' fits the traditional literary nationalist theory on writing and identity in New Zealand. Sargeson fitted squarely into the new generation of writers – in the 1930s – who sought autochthony by writing about New Zealand as their primary subject rather than England or other far off shores.²⁷⁹ As Sargeson himself explained, '[...]I found myself asking another unsuspected question. What was the European doing in this faraway Pacific Ocean country anyway? Had he the right to be here? What were the ideas that had developed?'²⁸⁰ Sargeson expressed this sentiment again in his 1940 short story 'The Making of the New Zealander' in which the main character Nick knew he was no longer a Dalmatian, but he did not yet feel like a New Zealander.²⁸¹ King was not the first to discuss the exploration through literature of what it meant to be a New Zealander; in fact Sargeson's questions about the European's place in the Pacific Ocean are not unlike his own exploration of his Pākehā identity.²⁸²

King's portrayal of Sargeson's homosexuality failed to use it to gain insight into his subject's personality or writing style. This attempt failed because, instead of being inclusive of sexuality as a positive part of Sargeson's identity, King used the subject's homosexuality as a plot marker rather than a point of discussion. It alternatively allowed King to follow a continuous narrative from Sargeson's realisation that he was gay in 1927 to his 36 year relationship with Harry Doyle.²⁸³ But it does not serve any

²⁷⁷ King, *Coromandel*, pp.21-22 and King, *Frank Sargeson*, p.243.

²⁷⁸ i.e. in *Being Pākehā Now*, p.240 King writes: 'In the mornings, when we wake, we look in one direction and see the rewarewa tree, Frank Sargeson's potent symbol of New Zealand identity, backdropped by a curtain of ferns [...] It would be possible from the evidence within sight and sound of these two windows, to deduce much of the surrounding land's natural and human history.'

²⁷⁹ Peter Gibbons, 'Climate of Opinion', *Oxford History of New Zealand*, W.H. Oliver and B.R. Williams (Wellington, 1981), pp.324-327.

²⁸⁰ King, *Frank Sargeson*, p.180.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp.119-200.

²⁸² cf. Chapter One of this thesis: "Being Pākehā": in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand.

²⁸³ King, *Frank Sargeson*, p.135.

purpose for explaining Sargeson's personality or writing process. King did cite one story called 'I've Lost Your Pal' which is now seen as an exploration of homosexuality, but at the time readers did not see it as such.²⁸⁴ It seemed that King's continual referral to Sargeson's sexuality was in order to make a comment about homosexual law reform. In Sargeson's lifetime he was convicted of 'indecent assault on a male'²⁸⁵ in his adolescence and was sent to live on a farm in the Waikato with his Uncle, who himself never married and was hinted at by King as also being gay.²⁸⁶ Towards the end of his life in the 1980s, after having had a long relationship with Doyle, Sargeson was interested in the Gay Rights Movement that was gaining momentum, but he could not participate because he had lived in what King had described as an 'era of discreetness'.²⁸⁷ The decriminalisation of homosexuality was not implemented until four years after Sargeson's death in 1986 and King used the subtext of this late action to indicate the tragedy of self identification when it is suppressed by society.

King's biographical treatment of another New Zealand writer, Janet Frame, produced an exploration of the inner thoughts of the author through relying heavily on her autobiographies, psychiatric medical notes and interviews with the living subject.²⁸⁸ Whether this attempt was successful or not is debatable. Like his previous biography of Whina, King had to contest with his subject being alive at the time of writing. However, King's agenda with this literary biography was to demythologise Frame's talent as a result of her mental illness.²⁸⁹ In doing so he produced what Molloy has described as, '[...]a non judgemental, comprehensive account of what Frame was doing *as well as* being creative, thinking of herself first and always a writer'.²⁹⁰ Frame was diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1945 after threatening to commit suicide while studying at Teachers College in Dunedin.²⁹¹ Since childhood Frame had felt like an outsider: she had red frizzy hair, wore hand me down clothes and had decaying teeth.²⁹² These physical attributes were compounded by the death of her elder sister

²⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p.159.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p.97.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*, pp.47-48.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.407.

²⁸⁸ cf. King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, p.528.

²⁸⁹ Molloy, p.84.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp.80-81.

²⁹¹ King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, p.69.

²⁹² *Ibid*, pp.46-49.

causing her to carry an awkward disposition and encouraged her retreat into the literary world where she could not be judged or hurt.²⁹³ As Frame's retreat continued her social interaction with people was very guarded and as a result she graced the presence of a select few.²⁹⁴ For the next seven years Frame was in and out of medical institutions – sometimes forced and others of her own free will – in which she received electroconvulsive therapy and narrowly escaped receiving a frontal lobotomy.²⁹⁵ The surgery was indefinitely postponed because she won the Hubert Church Memorial prize for her short story book *The Lagoon and Other Stories* (1951).²⁹⁶

King offered many indicators for her mental illness but no explanation or analysis of her behaviour nor whether this was a part of, or inseparable from, her inner self. This seems odd when writing a literary biography that endeavoured to evaluate the mind of the writer, which Frame herself referred to as her 'inward sun'.²⁹⁷ Even though she wrote stories about being in institutions and the insatiable need to fit in, Frame explained that her literary persona and fiction characters did not reflect her real self.²⁹⁸ Frame had always been uncomfortable with the way others perceived her struggles. As previously stated, Frame requested that King did not critically analyse her work when writing her biography. King was not shy in recounting, on more than one occasion, Canterbury academic Patrick Evans' tempestuous relationship with his subject because of his analysis of her work.²⁹⁹ Evans subscribed to the thought that Frame's characters reflected her real self,³⁰⁰ and King even points out that because of Frame's growing success overseas in the 1990s, the re-release of her books in Australia, Italy and Holland and the biographical Jane Campion film *An Angel at my*

²⁹³ *Ibid*, pp.38-41.

²⁹⁴ n.b. Janet Frame was a good friend of Frank Sargeson who accommodated her on his Takapuna property during the 1950s in an army hut he acquired to house friends and writing colleagues. King recounts their relationship as one of the fondest with a woman [King, *Frank Sargeson*, p.334]. Interestingly both also had cordial relationships with King himself when he approached them about their lives respectively. Much of Frame's acceptance of King as her biographer was directly related to Sargeson's relationship with King [King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, p.512].

²⁹⁵ King, *Wrestling With the Angel*, pp.96-97.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid*, pp.111-112.

²⁹⁷ Michael King, *The Inward Sun: The World of Janet Frame* (Auckland, 2002), p.6.

²⁹⁸ King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, pp.511-512.

²⁹⁹ n.b. Patrick Evans has now released a fiction work about Frank Sargeson's and Janet Frame's relationship while she lived in the bunker at the bottom Sargeson's Takapuna garden in 1955 [Patrick Evans, *Gifted: a Novel* (Wellington, 2010)].

³⁰⁰ King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, p.394.

Table (1990), people wanted to know more about her personal life.³⁰¹ This in essence was why she asked King to write her biography. Apart from her approving of the way in which he wrote her friend Sargeson's life, her preference for King was also so other academics would be discouraged from writing her life story and criticising her work.³⁰² As Molloy suggests, then, this leaves us with more questions than answers. King leaves it again up to reader to decide.³⁰³ Yet, on close reading of the biography, King does leave readers with crumbs to devour. He explained that in a letter from John Money to Frame his analysis of her mental state was the closest anyone – psychiatrist or biographer – has ever come to understanding what was wrong with Frame.³⁰⁴ The letter addressed her infatuation with Money, but more broadly the way she handled everyday situations and emotions:

Many people suffer a loneliness of spirit which becomes overwhelming that at last it forces its possessor to grasp violently at the nearest straw. This is a typical manifestation in our cultural pattern and produces a pattern of behaviour which is mostly called love, but which more truly can be called pathological love.³⁰⁵

Furthermore, King concluded the biography stating:

Talking *and* writing, she conveyed a vivid sense that reality itself is a fiction, and one's grasp on it no more than preposterous pretence and pretension. And that sense delights her, as it does her readers and listener.³⁰⁶

Such acknowledgement of the intimate relationship between the biographer, subject and reader reinforced King's main goal in writing about life histories – reminding the reader of the interconnectedness of the narrative with their own life and others in the nation.³⁰⁷ How well literary biography achieved this in comparison to his other biographies and memoirs is evident by comparing the nuances and construction of King's life histories. King's memoirs ensured that the reader felt a personal connection with the author through his colloquial use of the first person, while his biographies and his other collection of life stories built a rapport with the subject's

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.512.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, pp.511-512.

³⁰³ Molloy, p.145.

³⁰⁴ King, *Wrestling with the Angel*, p.75.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.518.

³⁰⁷ Backscheider, p.xv.

personality or serve as instructive tales for living and being in New Zealand.³⁰⁸ Comparatively, literary biography as a genre does not have the same emotive pull with the general reader as a narrative biography. In part this was because literary biography, unlike King's other works, were written, despite his expressed intentions, more for other academics than the general public.³⁰⁹ The first obvious indication of this was the size of the works; the biographies of both Sargeson and Frame are over five hundred pages long.³¹⁰ King even conceded that *The Inward Sun: the World of Janet Frame* (2002) – a companion to the Wellington 2000 exhibition on Frame's life – was a 'shorter Janet Frame' that was more accessible than *Wrestling with the Angel: a Life of Janet Frame* (2000).³¹¹

Literary biographies often cause a reaction opposite to that intended by the author by because of their length and methodology. Instead of understanding the life of the writer in depth, the reader can become more confused than when they first started reading. Literary biography is not only often victim to length, but it has many extracts from the subject's works as well as correspondents and other comments from literary persons that can make the work dense and difficult to digest.³¹² Such inclusion of text requires many footnotes. It is in King's two literary biographies King's use of footnotes was at the highest volume of any of his works.³¹³ King continued to show the reader how New Zealanders' lives were interrelated through the relationships with other writers. For example, King described the 'sons of Sargeson' who frequented his Takapuna bach or Frame living in Sargeson's army hut in 1955.³¹⁴ However, this approach of using writers to make the reader feel connected to the historical narrative does not work as well as in other genres of biography. The academic or writer seems to belong to an elite group that is often hard for the general reader to relate to. Moreover, the subject seems unattainable because a writer is supposed to reveal more accurately their inner dialogue through their writing. Hence the biographer is expected to find that inner truth, understand and decipher the subject's psyche better than they

³⁰⁸ Backscheider, p.227.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p.xiii.

³¹⁰ n.b. King's *Frank Sargeson* (1995) is 478 pages long including footnotes. While King's *Wrestling with the Angel* (2000) is 583 pages long.

³¹¹ King, *The Inward Sun*, p.6.

³¹² Jock Phillips in *History Man*, Hogg and Carlaw (2004), 70mins.

³¹³ i.e. in *Wrestling with the Angel* (2000) King has 34 pages of footnotes pp.528-564.

³¹⁴ King, *Frank Sargeson*, pp. 222-253 and p.329.

themselves have revealed in their own works. It is a monumental task that often leaves the reader, if they can bring themselves to read the whole work, bewildered. Accordingly it may serve to keep the identity of the ‘writer’ in an inaccessible category. So, while King’s work on both Sargeson and Frame was full of good scholarship, these books do not explain any more about their lives than we knew before. Unlike his other life history works, literary biography was not a genre of historical writing that helped King articulate his perceived importance of New Zealanders’ lives in a clear and relevant way to the reader. While this was in part a problem with the constraints of the genre King’s usual flair for life history narrative was lacking. In my opinion, this leads to the conclusion that King let his own perception of both the subject and himself as a writer of literary biography get in the way of good storytelling.

King’s ultimate goal when writing biographically on a subject, whether it be about himself or someone else, was not necessarily an evaluation of their life achievements, but instead to see the life itself as the achievement. He hoped the reader could find and assess for themselves the extent to which the subject’s life resembles their own experience or how their actions, and the consequences of those actions, could be used as learning tools for their present day situation. Even if the reader is unable to place himself or herself within the national narrative, despite King’s constant connections with time, space, landscape and people, at least he hoped to connect the reader to the narrative on a human level.³¹⁵ As he explained in *Te Puea*: ‘[t]his study is one in biography, not hagiography; in it Te Puea’s actions discredit her only to the extent that it is discreditable to be human.’³¹⁶ History is after all a narrative centred on human existence.

³¹⁵ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, 241.

³¹⁶ King, *Te Puea*, p.11.

Chapter Five

A Career Full Circle? A Discussion of *The Penguin History of New Zealand*

In 2003, after the publication of 33 books on New Zealand history, Michael King published his most marketable and successful book to date: *The Penguin History of New Zealand*. Ten days after its publication on 14 October 2003 the 10,000 copy print run had sold out.¹ In December of the same year the *New Zealand Herald* reported that '[t]he second run, also consisting of 10,000 copies was pre-sold by book stores before shipment arrived from Australia. The third is almost gone, and a fourth on its way.'² At this time, King's ambition to make a living out of being a writer in New Zealand was at its peak in terms of profit and readership. The immense quantity of sales coupled with the speed with which they sold was a reflection of King's loyal devotion to the general reader and their devotion to him. This extensive service to the New Zealand reader resulted in a rapport with his audience and they repaid him by seeing him as '[...]that teacher[,] a man whose insight we have come to trust.'³ King's production of a general history was timely, not just because it was his last work before his unexpected death in 2004, but after three decades of writing about his experiences as a Pākehā New Zealander he accumulated all that he had experienced and conceived about his association with New Zealand – mātauranga Pākehā, landscape and life histories – to write a general history for the 'curious and intelligent general readers'.⁴ Such a work is an embodiment of a career coming full circle because in the one work was the reflection of the whole repertoire of a historian's carefully considered theories, counter-arguments and personal insight, as well as a chance for reflection on peer critique and self critique using the gift of hindsight. Yet, while the sales of *History* suggested that King had succeeded in producing a work to this standard, critics of his approach – a general national history directed specifically at the general

¹ Press Release, [Penguin Books NZ](#), 24 December 2003, accessed from the Scoop: Independent News Website 8 December 2009.

² Tim Watkin, 'The 2003 Herald New Zealander of the Year: Michael King' *The New Zealand Herald* 20 December 2003, accessed from the New Zealand Herald Website 8 December 2009.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), p.11.

reader, in which its success in this space had lifted it to a ‘canonical status’⁵ – did not perceive the work’s achievement as commendable. King’s work was once more placed under the scrutiny of the criteria of what a national history should include to give the most accurate picture of a country’s past to its inhabitants. King’s general history was deemed to be, to its detriment, too optimistic, colonising and from a baby boomer outlook.⁶ As I will show, a close reading of King’s *History* finds this notion wanting. He had hitherto used the nation as a mobilising mechanism for the reader to engage with the New Zealand historical narrative on an individual basis.⁷ This was achieved more clearly in a general history because of its focus on a ‘whole’ history of place. Thereby King empowered the reader to make their own decisions about their place within the narrative as well as their participation in New Zealand society.

The focus of the discussion in this chapter examines both the praise and criticisms of King’s *History* in an attempt to assess the extent to which ideas developed in his previous works showed a trajectory in his career as a writer. In this chapter I will investigate the elements of his *History* that were produced as expected, according to themes and subjects, that King had previously tackled in his earlier works. This can be seen in how King sought to engage his readers through storytelling, style, tone and the historical devices discussed in previous chapters on such topics as landscape, biography and his separate approach to Māori and Pākehā histories. Furthermore, a discussion of how King ‘plotted’ his general history to achieve his desired narrative for the reader through the two overarching themes of biculturalism and an optimistic progressive national narrative will be evaluated. This is followed by examining the academic responses to King’s *History* and the concerns raised by historians about his ‘emplotment’ of New Zealand history. This analysis aims to show how the elements of King’s writing career led to the creation of his *History* and whether his career had come ‘full circle’.

In *History* King sought to engage his readers in four ways: through establishing an audience, through good storytelling, through style and or tone and through writing

⁵ Jaccob Pollock, *From Colony to Culture: Historiographical Discourse and Historical Identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand, 1883-2003* A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in History at the University of Auckland (2005), p.9.

⁶ cf. Chris Hilliard, ‘New Sinclair’ in ‘The Landfall Review’, *Landfall*, no.208 (2004), pp.176-180.

⁷ n.b. Through out his career King has tried to engage the reader through the literary devices of mātauranga Pākehā, identification with the landscape and the inclusiveness of life histories.

devices. For a general history the relationship between the author and his or her audience is one of the most important considerations next to the production and marketing of the text. As Robert Darnton has explained with regard to the history of reading, historians have to take into account the ways in which the text constrains readers as well as the ways in which readers take liberties with texts.⁸ The relationship between the reader and author is important because of the influence general histories can have in the public sphere. Keith Sinclair's *A History of New Zealand* (1959) remained in the public's consciousness from 1959 till 2000 – the year of its last republication as the stand alone text for a generation of New Zealanders wishing to understand their history and identity.⁹ The similarity between King's and Sinclair's approaches to New Zealand history has caused some historians to call King's *History* the 'New Sinclair'.¹⁰ This comparison was observed by Jacob Pollock in his exaggerated comment that '[t]he remarkable canonical status that many of these texts achieve in New Zealand is a testament to their function in society, as much as the literary skills of any individual author.'¹¹ The notion of a text's function in society is reflected in the process of publication and marketing of the text. Thomas Adams and Nicolas Barker make the basic point that without distribution the book cannot perform its essential function to communicate.¹² Hence, they note that '[t]he decision to publish, not the creation of a text, is, then, the first step in creation of a book.'¹³ Both King and Sinclair's histories were published and distributed by Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd. The international company, first founded in England in 1935, was established a book distributor in New Zealand in 1973 that would grow to become one of the most successful publishing companies in the country.¹⁴ For both Sinclair and King, being linked to Penguin and their large network of distribution and marketing power helped their works to be successful and achieve 'canonical' status through the sheer numbers of their books that were printed and reprinted for the New Zealand public.¹⁵

⁸ Robert Darnton, 'What is the History of Books?' (*Daedalus*, Summer, 1982), pp.65-83, quoted in David Finkstein and Alister McCleery, *The Book History Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2006), p.22.

⁹ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, Rev. ed. With Raewyn Dalziel (Auckland, 2000).

¹⁰ Hilliard, 'New Sinclair', pp.176-180.

¹¹ Pollock, *From Colony to Culture*, p.9.

¹² Thomas Adams and Nicolas Barker, 'A New Model for the Study of the Book', quoted in David Finkstein and Alister McCleery, *The Book History Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2006), p.54.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Penguin Group (NZ) Website, 'Company History', www.penguin.co.nz, accessed 15 October 2010.

¹⁵ Wolfgang Iser, 'Interaction Between Text and Reader', *The Reader in Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, Susan K. Suleiman and Inge Crossman (eds.) (New Jersey, 1980), pp.106-119, quoted in David Finkstein and Alister McCleery, *The Book History Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2006), p. 393.

After the text has been printed and distributed however, it is the reader that completes the circuit.¹⁶ Ultimately, King's intended audience for his histories influenced the way in which his *History* was written both before and after the completion of the work.¹⁷ In catering for a certain audience the text can be critiqued in two ways: the effect of society on his work as well as the impact of text on society.¹⁸ Throughout his career King's approach to national history, through a mātauranga Pākehā gaze, sought to have European New Zealanders understand their history in an autochthonous way – how an indigenous Pākehā culture developed through interaction with Māori things – so that they would be better able to understand themselves in terms of their past, present and future.¹⁹ In this respect it can be said that King's target audience was by and large European New Zealanders. While in the early stages of his career King wrote mostly on Māori subjects to give Māori a voice in New Zealand history that had been subjugated Māori were not his target audience.²⁰ While King was respectful of Māori protocol around oral histories and the collection of knowledge, his goal was to increase for Pākehā a better understanding of the Māori world in aid of better understanding their own identity.²¹

King had tried throughout his career to be as balanced as possible about portraying Māori and Pākehā culture within his histories. It is obvious that King strove to define what it meant to be Pākehā in New Zealand.²² In his *History* however, King makes another interesting distinction about the audience for whom he has written this work. He stated that he wrote for the 'curious and intelligent general readers'.²³ Or in other words, King wrote his *History* for those readers willing to learn and find out how and why their history shaped their identity as 'New Zealanders' through mātauranga Pākehā. Kerry Howe, however, also observed that King wrote his histories for another audience: 'King claims to be writing for the "curious and intelligent readers"[...]but

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Darnton, p.11.

¹⁸ Iser, p.391.

¹⁹ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity.

²⁰ Michael King, *Being Pākehā: An Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (Auckland, 1985), pp.161-164.

²¹ i.e. Michael King, 'Tangata Whenua: Origins and Conclusions', *Landfall*, no.121, vol.31 (March, 1977), p.39.

²² King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

²³ King, *History*, p.11.

he also disingenuously claims he is not writing for other historians. Nonsense [...] the book is highly instructive for historians.’²⁴ This point can also be made of his previous works in which he often implied within the subtext of his historical narrative a further intellectual element that could be discussed and critiqued. However, before this underplayed subtext of King’s narrative can be discussed it is imperative to first explain King’s way of storytelling and its impact on his style and tone of *History*.

King’s storytelling capability ensured a flowing and enjoyable narrative. He composed this storybook type narrative with turns of phrase that incorporated both references to fabled lands and heroic characters of New Zealand’s bicultural and global past. For example, King described the oral tradition of Māori tribal migration as a kind of ‘Arthurian world’ inhabited by Maui or the ‘celestial displays’ of the Taupo volcanic eruption (which he compared to the Indonesian Krakatoa eruption), which was similar to that seen by the subjects of Emperor Ling Ti in China and Roman Emperor Commodus.²⁵ The result of King’s amalgamation of descriptive detail with historical events meant that his narrative could be read like a novel rather than a history text. This emphasis on storytelling was evident in his previous works as well, especially in his biographies where the structure of a life from birth to death lends itself to a narrative organisation with a beginning, middle and end like a novel.²⁶ A telling example of this approach was in King’s biography of Whina where he linked the orbit of Halley’s Comet with her spirit and her belief in her own perceived importance in the New Zealand historical narrative.²⁷ As King explained, this neatly finished her story by linking the beginning of her life with the end:

She anticipated the joy of being one of the few people able to remember witnessing the spectacle twice, and she regarded it in the same light as she had 76 years before: as a sign from God of His power, and of the power of those who believed in Him. As she surveyed the course and achievement of her own life from that latter vantage point, she could see no reason to doubt her belief in those powers.²⁸

²⁴ Kerry Howe, ‘Michael King: The Penguin History of New Zealand’, *The New Zealand Herald* October 26 2003, accessed from the New Zealand Herald Website, 8 October 2009.

²⁵ King, *History*, p.17.

²⁶ Paula R. Backscheider, *Reflections on Biography* (Oxford, 1999), pp.102-103.

²⁷ Michael King, *Whina: a Biography of Whina Cooper* (Auckland, 1983), p.251.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

King continued to entertain the reader in the *History* with his storybook style narrative. However, the subtext of many of the examples that he used to explain New Zealand's past had just as much relevance for the academic reader as for the general reader.²⁹ King's ability to intertwine scholarship with storytelling was seen in his account of New Zealand's participation in the Gallipoli campaign during WWI in Turkey, which he compared to the ancient Spartan battle of Thermopylae 480A.D.³⁰ King placed the New Zealand experience of war alongside ancient Greek culture and history by linking the geographical space of the two events together through time and space. King stated that, '[t]he ANZACs were transported to Lemnos in the Aegean Sea, and from there to the major assault on the Dardanelles, the Hellespont of the ancient world[...]. The area, the boundary between Europe and Asia, was renowned for heroic battles. Troy had stood on the Asian side near the entrance to the straits, and Xerxes had built his bridge of floats over the narrows in the fifth century BC to mount the Persian invasion of Greece.'³¹ On a cursory reading of this statement King was merely setting the scene for the battle to come. Conjuring up the memories of Grecian battles of the past, he placed New Zealand history in a wider historical consciousness.

King, however, also chose the battle of Thermopylae as a comparison to the Gallipoli campaign for the specific intention of implying a deeper historical analysis of events. King wanted the reader to recognise that in both battles the men fought under the shared understanding that they were fighting for their homes against a foreign threat; that they both fought from land and by sea; they were both asserting their place on the world stage in terms of a burgeoning collective identity; and both campaigns incurred a high number of deaths that shaped the stories and myths of the men who fought and died for their homelands in the hearts and minds of their country men for centuries to come.³² There was no doubt that King wanted to generate a story of mythic proportions in making the comparison of New Zealand's 'baptism of blood' with the events of ancient Greece.

²⁹ Howe, 'Michael King: The Penguin History of New Zealand' (2003).

³⁰ King, *History*, p.269.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² q.v. Herodotus, *The Histories*, Aubrey De Selincourt (trans.) (Harmondsworth, 1954) and Peter Green, *The Year of Salamis: 480-479 BC* (London, 1970).

Interestingly this approach has been accused of being unacademic because it was stylistically too much a narrative and therefore lacking in deeper historical analysis.³³ However, there are times when this descriptive style becomes nothing more than a fact recounting exercise which I would argue is more academic in style than King's stylistic approach of good storytelling. For example, his account of the New Zealand Wars was merely a blow by blow account. It failed to give the reader any real insight, not because of its detail, but because it did not exhibit his personal touch of biography or the perception of a shared experience to make the narrative more exciting and/or relevant as in his previous works. Even the infamous 'guerrilla "general"'³⁴ Te Kooti vanished into King's even tone and narrative context. In fact, King's retelling in *Mori: a People Rediscovered* (1989) of the exploits that landed Te Kooti in jail on the Chatham Islands, his consequent escape and conversion to the Hauhau faith³⁵ was superior to his attempt in *History* which was essentially rehash of this previous work.³⁶

Further criticisms have been levelled against King for his non-academic stylistic conventions and his use of other historian's works without citation.³⁷ Moreover, King did not use footnotes for the text which was academically unheard of for a well established historian.³⁸ However, on both points King followed the same style he had always ascribed to: one that was simple and free from academic complication.³⁹ For this reason King rarely used footnotes in his works. The exceptions were *Te Puea* which was a product of his PhD at Waikato University and his literary biographies in which footnotes were used extensively.⁴⁰ As for using others' work without acknowledgement, he had done so throughout his career as a device for making the text more readable to the reader. In *Māori: a Photographic and Social History* (1983) King wrote about European writers who tried to put Māori oral tradition into a

³³ Annabel Schuler, *Michael King: Journalist. A Study of the Influence of Journalism on King's Later Writing*, A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Mass Communication in the University of Canterbury (2006), p.51.

³⁴ King, *History*, p.218.

³⁵ King, *Mori: A People Rediscovered* (Auckland, 1989), pp.107-109.

³⁶ King, *History*, pp.217-218.

³⁷ Daley, p.78.

³⁸ n.b. King did compile a suggested reading section with acknowledgments to writers who had inspired his formation of a New Zealand historical narrative: King, *History*, pp.519-523.

³⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.58.

⁴⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.129; Michael King, *Frank Sargeson: a Life* (Auckland, 1995), pp.434-456; and Michael King, *Wrestling with the Angel: a Life of Janet Frame* (Auckland, 2000), pp.528-564.

chronological order by taking great liberties with the stories used.⁴¹ Without any particular academic being specified, the informed reader thinks of Percy Smith and his *Lore of the Wharewanga* (1896), as well as its critique by David Simmons.⁴² Similarly in *New Zealanders at War* (1981) King wrote that some historians have claimed that the South African war was responsible for New Zealand's first stirrings of nationalism.⁴³ While this does not make clear which scholars King was following, he revealed Sinclair's influence when he explained Sinclair's argument that participation in the Boer War for the first time as the country of New Zealand was a contributing factor to a national identity that culminated in New Zealand not wanting to federate with Australia in 1901.⁴⁴

Alternatively, I also believe that King overlaid his engaging stylistic narrative with intellectual thought to stimulate an academic reader into further discussion about current historiography. This was not unusual of King's previous works either. For example, in *Te Ao Hurihuri: the World Moves on Aspects of Māoritanga* (1977) King stated that the bicultural relationship between Māori and Pākehā, in relation to learning about each other's culture and accommodating those cultural differences, was continuously being redefined through public policy: '[t]hat will be the ultimate justification or condemnation of the experiment we have begun.'⁴⁵ It is not difficult here to make a connection between King's use of the word 'experiment' in relation to public policy as a signpost to the meta-narrative of New Zealand as the 'social laboratory' for the rest of the Empire which was a long established historical myth about New Zealand's development as a nation.⁴⁶ As King himself explains about the Liberal era in his *History*'s chapter 'Party Politics Begins', '[t]he view has emerged that, with votes for women, old age pensions and labour legislation in particular, that Seddon's "God's Own Country" was, among other things, the social laboratory which other countries could study with envy and profit.'⁴⁷ The thesis that King alluded to

⁴¹ King, *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (Wellington, 1981), p.39.

⁴² cf. Percy S. Smith, *The Lore of the Wharewananga*, (New Plymouth, 1896) and David Simmons, *The Great New Zealand Myth The Great New Zealand Myth: a Study of the Discovery and Origin Traditions of Māori* (Wellington, 1976).

⁴³ Michael King, *New Zealanders at War* (Auckland, 1981), p.78.

⁴⁴ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Harmondsworth, 1959) pp.214-215 and pp.226-227.

⁴⁵ King, *Te Ao Hurihuri: the World Moves on Aspects of Māoritanga* (Auckland, 1977), p.16-18.

⁴⁶ n.b. Referring to New Zealand as a 'social laboratory' was a phrase originally used by Reeves in *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, vols. 1 & 2 (1902).

⁴⁷ King, *The Penguin History*, p.281.

about the progress of the New Zealand as a British colony is a long standing myth in New Zealand historiography about the country's sense of its own achievement. The myth of New Zealand's willingness to 'experiment' in order to attain a sense of moving forward as a nation was often recast and reused by New Zealand historians to explain an action or political stance taken by New Zealanders as individuals and by the government on their behalf to better their way of life.⁴⁸ Other examples of King's use of a progressive narrative as an undercurrent for historical debate was his discussion on an individual level of New Zealanders' no. 8 wire mentality⁴⁹ or his referral to New Zealand's status in the international community as a nuclear free country leading the world.⁵⁰ The idea of King's history being constructed through a progressive national narrative will be considered in more depth in the next section of this chapter. It is important to note here, however, that King used these examples of 'experimentation' as a tool for further debate. Nonetheless, his academic argument was embedded within an enjoyable and readable narrative that was, as Howe has suggested, multilayered for the curious and intelligent reader as well as the academic.⁵¹

King's *History* and its narrative emphasis on storytelling offered to the 'curious and intelligent reader' an alternative to a conventional academic style. He followed the same stylistic methods that he had employed in all his previous works, including a gripping narrative and an even tone in aid of engaging the reader.⁵² The connection between the author and his or her audience is achieved through narrative style and tone as well as the author's interpretation, assessment and carefully weighed arguments about the events in a country's history.⁵³ To underpin his enthusiastic storytelling style King employed an even tone that ensured his general history was not just easy to read but also that his arguments were received in the way in which he

⁴⁸ n.b. In the *New Oxford History of New Zealand*, Giselle Byrnes (ed.) (Melbourne, 2009) there are seven articles challenging this notion of New Zealand's policies and institutions as socially progressive. i.e. Melanie Nolan, 'Constantly on the Move, but Going Nowhere? Work, Community and Social Mobility', *NOHNZ* (2009), pp.357-388; Angela Wanhalla, 'Family, Community and Gender', *NOHNZ* (2009), pp.447-464; and Catherine Coleborne, 'Health and Illness, 1840-1990s', *NOHNZ* (2009), pp.487-510.

⁴⁹ King, *History*, pp.507-511.

⁵⁰ Michael King, in 'New Zealand Radio Interview with Kim Hill', 11/10/03 and Michael King, *Death of the Rainbow Warrior* (Auckland, 1986).

⁵¹ Howe, 'Michael King: The Penguin History', (2003).

⁵² Hilliard, 'New Sinclair', pp.176-177.

⁵³ Iser, p.394.

intended them.⁵⁴ King very rarely used intensive words or phrases to explain historical events; no matter what the context or circumstances of the event King maintained an even non controversial tone. Historian Chris Hilliard described this ability of King's tone to remain neutral of the emotive responses to certain events in history was to ensure the readers were well informed about the events that took place before they formed an opinion on the matter. For example Hilliard wrote that readers who are incensed by the Waitangi Tribunal's reference to the term 'holocaust' being used in reference to the lives lost during the Taranaki Wars might be unwilling to listen to a historical account of the event.⁵⁵ However, because King's writing style tried to maintain a tone of objectivity, those who previously may not have entertained being challenged on their understanding of the event might accept his 'sober, fact-studded retelling' of the same incident.⁵⁶ Hilliard continues that King's tone makes sure to minimise those '[...] Pākehā readers prone to feeling "discriminated against" will throw the baby of evidence out with the bathwater of tone.'⁵⁷ King was able therefore, to engage a larger audience by ensuring that they were included rather than excluded by the narrative by his refraining from extreme positions about historical events. Ironically King was often criticised for using the first person pronoun and being visibly present within the historical text as a device for increasing the individual reader's understanding of history through their own memories and understandings of the past.⁵⁸ Yet, King seldom used the device of personal experience in his *History* and opted for a much more narrative approach to his history of New Zealand.

King's storytelling was constructed with literary devices that helped to outline his approach to New Zealand history. King used the device of personal experience as he had in previous works.⁵⁹ However, in his *History* he achieved an element of personal experience without bringing himself into the narrative by the descriptive detail of his storytelling ability. King engaged the reader by evoking their personal memories to make them feel a part of the national narrative.⁶⁰ One of the more obvious examples

⁵⁴ cf. James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the end of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland, 1996), p.8.

⁵⁵ Hilliard, p.176.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Michael King, *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland, 1999), pp.9-10.

⁵⁹ c.f. Chapter Four of this thesis: 'King's People: the Life Histories of New Zealanders'.

⁶⁰ King, *History*, pp.9-11.

of this approach was in the chapter 'At War Again' on New Zealand's contribution to the Second World War. King wrote about the collective experience of the next generation of men then going to war in a distant locality in comparison with first World War soldiers before them: '[In Egypt] Another generation experienced the discomforts of the desert, the delights of Shepard's Hotel, the Muski, Groppi's and Shafto's, and had themselves photographed on camels with the Sphinx and the great pyramids of Giza in the background.'⁶¹ On the first level of analysis, it can easily be deduced that King was constructing a link between not only the two generations of men who fought in two world wars, but also he wanted to construct a similarity in experience for both groups. The optimism and excitement that filled New Zealand men leaving home to fight in unfamiliar settings and situations was a characteristic of both world wars.⁶² King symbolised this feeling through the hundreds of men who took their photographs in front of the monoliths of Egypt. This was a very clever literary device because many readers, including myself, have a photograph of their father, brother, grandfather or great-grandfather in front of the Sphinx or Pyramids with their arm around a fellow soldier excited about the adventure ahead. It made the reader think about their own family experience of war and let them place it within the larger national narrative.⁶³

King's even tone and non-judgmental assessment of New Zealand history should not come as a complete surprise to the reader. As Howe has rightly identified, King did avoid extreme positions throughout his career and *History* was no exception.⁶⁴ In his previous works there are only a handful of times that King's appraisal of history was confrontational and it was most often in defence of his assertion of an indigenous Pākehā identity. As explained in an earlier chapter, King had commented in *Pākehā: the Quest for Identity in New Zealand* (1991) that both peoples of New Zealand, Māori and Pākehā, have the right to a full participation in national life because they have the same rights no matter which group had been in the country the longest.⁶⁵ He continued with an uncharacteristic edge to his comment: '[...] we [New Zealanders]

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p.393.

⁶² King, *History*, p.293.

⁶³ Michael King, *Being Pākehā Now: Reflections and Recollections of a White Native* (Auckland, 1999), pp.24-26.

⁶⁴ Howe, 'Michael King: The Penguin History of New Zealand' (2003).

⁶⁵ Michael King, 'Being Pākehā', *Pākehā: the Quest for Identity in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1991), p.9.

would have to accept the matching precepts of Hitler's Germany, Enoch Powell's Britain and Idi Amin's Uganda.⁶⁶ By the 1990s King's defence of being Pākehā was at its most provocative. However, in his *History* his expression of being Pākehā was much more subdued and seemingly acceptable because King's sentiment about his identity was no longer as confrontational as in the previous decade.⁶⁷ This notion will be discussed more in depth later in this chapter.

In *History* there was a small amount of King's strongly expressed opinion that was seldom to do with his Pākehā identity. An example, which is in direct opposition to Hilliard's comment about King's tone, was King's approach to the inter-hapu skirmishes, mostly in the North Island, following the introduction of muskets through European trade in the early nineteenth century.⁶⁸ King likened the loss of life caused by the introduction of the foreign weapon to systematic mass killing. He wrote about the Taranaki region that: '[i]ndeed, if any chapter in New Zealand history has earned the label 'holocaust', it is this one.'⁶⁹ He went on to support this assertion by adding '[...]many hundreds of women and children were killed, and many more enslaved. Some small tribes were all but wiped out, with only one or two families surviving the fighting and its aftermath of executions.'⁷⁰ This emotive response to the devastation caused by iwi to other iwi during the Musket Wars was a position that King had adopted once before in relation to the history of the Moriori of the Chatham Islands in which he reinforced the Moriori sentiment that their god's had died:⁷¹ '[a]t least the Moriori who were killed fell into merciful oblivion. Those who survived the first killings were separated, moved around, and forced into slavery of the most onerous kind.'⁷² King's account of the invasion of Rekohu by Ngati Mutunga and Ngati Tama was accurate, as current historian Angela Ballara cites his work as a key source,⁷³ her explanation of the events were not as emotive.⁷⁴ Ballara recounted Moriori pacifism

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ cf. King, *History*, pp.503-518 in which King describes how Pākehā culture continues to learn and develop because of its interaction with Māori culture.

⁶⁸ King, *Ibid*, pp.131-139.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p.134.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p.135.

⁷¹ King, *Moriori*, p.67.

⁷² *Ibid*, p.66.

⁷³ Angela Ballara, *Taua: 'Musket Wars', 'Land Wars' or Tikanga? Warfare in Māori Society in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Auckland, 2003), pp.87; 119; 167.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, pp.87-88.

and ‘despair’ at their great loss of life.⁷⁵ As does Ron Crosby who states that Moriori paid ‘a terrible toll’.⁷⁶ Yet their rendering of events were more matter of fact and Ballara makes the distinction between the Musket Wars in New Zealand and similar campaigns in other parts of the world, she wrote: ‘[e]ven at their worst the Māori wars were far from total war, genocidal or scorched-earth campaigns seen in some other countries [...]’.⁷⁷

Along with good storytelling, and the style and tone of his approach to writing history, King employed certain devices within his *History* that he had developed throughout his writing career. These devices are linked with the discussions from the previous chapters concerning landscape, biography and King’s separate approaches to Māori and Pākehā histories. This thesis has shown that King’s primary concern was with the land and its people.⁷⁸ As stated earlier King saw New Zealand landscape foremost as a historical-geographical construction devoid of people.⁷⁹ In *History* King expressed this sentiment in his *History*’s ‘Prehistory: to 1000 AD’ chapter aptly titled ‘A Land Without People’.⁸⁰ He did this to show that New Zealand’s history stretched past human settlement to acquire for King a narrative of entrenched belonging of hundreds of thousands of years. The second part of this narrative was human occupation by both Māori and Pākehā.⁸¹

One point of difference in King’s landscape device in his *History* that he had not developed in earlier works was his concern that the human relationship with the land had not ended, that human ecological impact was not something that happened just at the time of arrival, and that it still continues today.⁸² King’s inclusion of an environmental aspect into his analysis of landscape in New Zealand history was an extension of his awareness of how human interaction had long term consequences for the country’s ecology and of how these consequences could impact on the ways New Zealanders interact and feel a sense of belonging to the landscape.⁸³ King infiltrated

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ R.D. Crosby, *The Musket Wars: A History of Inter-Iwi Conflict 1806-45* (Auckland, 1999), p.298.

⁷⁷ Ballara, p.119.

⁷⁸ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, pp.240.

⁷⁹ Michael King, *New Zealand* (Auckland, 1987), p.5.

⁸⁰ King, *History*, pp.15-28.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, pp.29-190.

⁸² Daley, p.77.

⁸³ King, *Being Pākehā Now*, p.

this approach throughout the *History*.⁸⁴ The text was laden with reminders of New Zealanders' tumultuous relationship with the eco-system. King wondered in his chapter 'Farmers in Charge', '[...]whether the extent and scale of grass farming that New Zealand had opted for was in fact sustainable in the light of the country's soils, climate and instability.'⁸⁵ While King tried to expand on his landscape device in *History* to include the ecological impact on the national narrative, I think his ideas on this topic had yet to be properly developed. It is most likely that living in the Coromandel in his later years that King was aware of the effect that open cast mining had had on the environment and his small community.⁸⁶ His concern on this issue would have contributed to his responsiveness to new studies appearing at this time on environmental history in New Zealand.⁸⁷

In *History* King continued to use short biographies as instructive tales about human involvement in the national narrative and therefore, as a device that helped the reader to feel a part of a shared narrative through tales of another individual.⁸⁸ King also used the device of biography to maintain the interest of the reader by using life histories of New Zealanders instead of other historical evidence.⁸⁹ In a general history it is a difficult task to include concise biographical sketches of historical characters without losing the narrative flow. King tried to maintain the balance between lengthy descriptions of historical subjects and thinly characterised accounts. For instance, King's one line summation of, at the time of publication, the then Prime Minister Helen Clark's time in parliament managed to encapsulate her now renowned strong personality and determined will.⁹⁰ King wrote, '[a]fter a shaky start as Opposition Leader, when it seemed more than once that her colleagues might replace her, she had developed into the most commanding figure in parliament.'⁹¹ Similarly, Hilliard also commented that King's portrayal of Michael Joseph Savage captured perfectly his

⁸⁴ q.v. King, *History*, pp.24-25,51, 53, 66-7, 433-439.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p.238.

⁸⁶ Michael King, *Coromandel* (Auckland, 1990), pp.24-25; pp.108-118 and p.136.

⁸⁷ cf. Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: the biological expansion of Europe* (Cambridge, 1986); Tim Flannery, *The Future Eaters: an Ecological History of the Australasian Lands and People* (Chatswood, 1994); J.R. McNeill (ed.), *Environmental History in the Pacific World* (Aldershot, 2001); and Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking (eds.), *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2002).

⁸⁸ cf. Chapter Four of this thesis: 'King's People: The Life Histories of New Zealanders'.

⁸⁹ Backscheider, p.xvii.

⁹⁰ Brain Edwards, *Helen: The Portrait of a Prime Minister* (Auckland, 2001), pp.303-316.

⁹¹ King, *History*, p.492.

popularity among New Zealanders.⁹² After Savage's death, King wrote, on the 27 March 1940, '[h]is body was returned to Auckland by train, with frequent stops en route for mourners to express their grief. He was buried at Bastion Point on 31 March after his cortege had driven along a route lined by 200,000 observers.'⁹³

While these examples are succinct, the larger biographical sketches are often of those subjects that King has already researched in great length. His inclusion of Te Puea and Whina's life stories are both, unsurprisingly, over two pages in length and span multiple entries.⁹⁴ Hilliard was also critical of King's use of biography within *History*, being disappointed by King's character sketches of persons from the nineteenth century which he found crude and not representative of his usual standard.⁹⁵ This is partly understandable because of the way in which King had chosen to construct his national narrative around political milestones, and therefore many of the biographical sketches presented in the text were merely used as a mechanism for this purpose. However, King made some interesting assessments about these 'nation making' characters. About Governor George Grey and his historical persona as a key figure of the New Zealand Wars he wrote, '[...h]e was no Apollonian hero or plaster saint. He had faults.'⁹⁶ This was a subtle reference to Sinclair's sketch and debunking of 'Good Governor Grey'.⁹⁷ Or, about former Premier John Ballance in comparison to his successor Richard John Seddon, '[h]e was not a charismatic man, nor a spellbinding orator. But he was, according to his biographer, "kindly, courteous and considerate and displayed great patience [...]".'⁹⁸ Whether or not these sketches were thin and crude or not, their inclusion shows King's intention to make New Zealand's history accessible to the reader and therefore to reflect human experience.

How King shaped his narrative in his *History* in regard to the plot and overarching themes of history is the next point of discussion for this chapter. This discussion is divided into two main parts. The first explains how a work of general history can be seen to have an implicit or underlying structure through what cultural historian

⁹² Hilliard, 'New Sinclair', p.177.

⁹³ King, *History*, p.394.

⁹⁴ q.v. *Ibid*, pp.301-302, 339-341,469 etc. and 337, 473, 475-477 etc.

⁹⁵ Hilliard, p.177.

⁹⁶ King, *History*, p.200.

⁹⁷ Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, pp.81-82.

⁹⁸ King, *History*, p.260.

Hayden White has called ‘emplotment’.⁹⁹ The second part of this section describes how King plots his history of New Zealand through the thematic structures of biculturalism and national progress.¹⁰⁰ What scholars of history expect in a general history is that its construction generally follows certain criteria. The paramount objective of a general history of a nation is that it must endeavour to encompass a whole history of a place. While this is practically impossible, it is the general historian’s task to try and present the most complete picture of place in what they conceive as essential to their narrative structure.¹⁰¹ A general history cannot encompass a whole past and this is why authors of such works often use the nation as the focus of their historical consciousness. White’s analysis of national histories, over a generation ago, was assembled from a deconstruction of the works of nineteenth-century European scholars¹⁰². His thesis of ‘metahistory’ focused on the various ways in which historians used certain types of ‘emplotment’ to order the knowledge that they had collected during the research process. White characterised the style of ‘emplotment’ for national histories through the structures of romance, tragedy, comedy and satire.¹⁰³ While this a simplistic explanation of his ‘metahistory’ thesis – which involved more intersections of historical narrative structure such as tropes, arguments and ideologies – what his modes of ‘emplotment’ showed was that national histories had a structure that can be identified and explained.¹⁰⁴

King’s style of ‘emplotment’ was driven by biculturalism and progress. In this respect, White would likely categorise King’s style of ‘emplotment’ as romantic because both modes of ‘emplotment’ exude a sense of optimism and forward thinking. King intersects these two ‘romantic’ plots through five crafted sections that signposted his intended ‘emplotment’ of a national narrative. King’s narrative begins with the section ‘Prehistory: to 1000 AD’ that sets the stage on which the narrative unfolds without human activity; next ‘Settlement: to 1850 AD’ explains Māori settlement in New Zealand followed by Pākehā; this is followed by ‘Consolidation: to

⁹⁹ cf. Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Baltimore, 1973).

¹⁰⁰ n.b. As previously discussed in chapter one of this thesis: “Being Pākehā’ in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand.

¹⁰¹ Belich, p.8.

¹⁰² White, pp.ix-xii.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p.29.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, pp.1-42.

1950’, in which notions of identity and the nation were formed separately by both Māori and Pākehā; in ‘Unsettlement: post 1950’ these formed identities are challenged; and in ‘Posthistory’ King ties together the narrative of past events with the present in order to explain the current climate.¹⁰⁵ In outlining a structure for his *History* in this way it can be seen how the two modes of ‘emplotment’ of progress and biculturalism are intimately intertwined. The following discussion, however, teases out the two concepts in order to understand their importance to King’s history of New Zealand.

For King, biculturalism in relation to the nation and its history meant the coming together of two cultures: European and Māori. The consequence of this interaction has shaped the current relationships and culture of both groups in New Zealand.¹⁰⁶ King’s perception of biculturalism is not that both Māori and Pākehā are fully immersed in each others’ culture and values, but that they strive to understand and accommodate the structures and practices of each others’ culture.¹⁰⁷ As King explained, by comparison to European New Zealanders, Māori were in the true meaning of the word bicultural because they speak English and Māori and live according to both a Western and traditional way of life. Europeans, conversely, had yet to embrace Māori culture and language.¹⁰⁸ It was for this reason that King was resolute in explaining to Europeans how valuable knowing about Māori culture was to their own identity. King believed that European culture had developed into a Pākehā culture because of its interaction with Māori things. However, King believed that many Pākehā had yet to realise this fact.¹⁰⁹ Hence, for King, biculturalism was not something that New Zealand had yet to achieve but, by acknowledging the importance of these bicultural exchanges, King presented a clearer picture of the past.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, King wrote mainly on Māori subjects early in his career to compensate for the previously European dominated historical narrative. This early work can be seen as an attempt by King to bring the status of Māori culture to the same level as European culture in New

¹⁰⁵ King, *History*, ‘Prehistory: to 1000 AD’, pp.15-28; ‘Settlement: to 1850 AD’, pp.29-190; ‘Consolidation: to 1950’, pp.191-410; ‘Unsettlement: post 1950’, pp.411-502; and ‘Posthistory’, pp.503-518.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, pp.503-518.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, pp.518-519.

¹⁰⁸ Michael King, *Māori: A Photographic and Social History* (Auckland, 1984), p.1.

¹⁰⁹ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

¹¹⁰ King, *Māori*, p.1.

Zealand historiography.¹¹¹ In this respect, King remained true to his perceived end point for the New Zealand story, which is a nation that has a better understanding of its two main cultures and for a more inclusive future.¹¹²

King's attempt to create a bicultural narrative has been preformed in two ways in the *History*. The first is through writing two separate narratives of a Māori and Pākehā history, which he proceeded at the end of the work to intertwine into one storyline as a embodiment of his understanding of biculturalism as a shared national experience.¹¹³ The second way King constructed his bicultural narrative was through continuing to develop his understanding of mātauranga Māori and mātauranga Pākehā.¹¹⁴ In regard to the first aspect for his bicultural 'emplotment', King created a narrative that separated Māori and Pākehā narratives of history. As discussed earlier, this was not an unusual construction for King's histories to take.¹¹⁵ King had opted throughout his career to write a separate Māori narrative from the European one in order to elevate the Māori voice to the same level of importance within New Zealand historiography.¹¹⁶ Although King was not Māori and therefore it could be argued he was writing from a dominant European position,¹¹⁷ he was trying to close the gap between Māori and Pākehā histories.¹¹⁸ In order to achieve this, his narratives were separate so that he was able to explain in more depth the Māori side to New Zealand history. As he demonstrated in *History* King strove to distinguish himself from Pākehā scholars who have written or collected Māori traditions and histories and had failed to critically assess their importance for Māori culture because they had used them only to assert European history and identity.¹¹⁹ King's history of the Moriori peoples of the Chatham Islands had also tried to restore this imbalance by titling one

¹¹¹ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: 'Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity'.

¹¹² King, *History*, pp.518.

¹¹³ i.e. *Ibid.* In King's explanation of history after 1840 he separated the Māori experience from the European: 'Māori Lifeways', pp.239-257; 'Māori Survival', pp.324-343; and 'Return of Mana Māori' pp.466-484.

¹¹⁴ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: 'Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity'.

¹¹⁵ cf. Michael King, 'Between Two Worlds', *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, W.H. Oliver and B.R. Williams (eds.) (Wellington, 1981), pp.279-301.

¹¹⁶ cf. Clare O'Leary, *Michael King: A Moment in Time* (2007), 40mins.

¹¹⁷ cf. Jacob Pollock's 'Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism: James Belich and Michael King's General Histories of New Zealand', *NZJH*, vol.41, no.2 (2007), p.195.

¹¹⁸ Hiwi Tauroa, 'Forward', *Kawe Korero: A Guide to Reporting Māori Activities* (Wellington, 1985), p. 6.

¹¹⁹ King, *History*, pp.40-47.

chapter ‘Moriōri Voices’¹²⁰ which is an allusion to post-colonial theory.¹²¹ He wrote ‘[I]ike Rekohu [Chatham Islands], the Moriōri and their history have been engulfed in mists, of fiction and mythology, since their first encounter with Europeans in the eighteenth century’.¹²² King continued the Moriōri narrative of redress in his *History* by including the Moriōri story where appropriate. He noted the Moriōri role on the Chatham Islands within the larger Māori narrative of European sealing stations in New Zealand during the early contact period as well as in the skirmishes between Ngati Tama and Ngati Mutunga during the Musket Wars on the Chatham Islands in 1840.¹²³

King has been criticised in his *History* for segregating Māori and European narratives into separate chapters; this was perceived to be contradictory to his inclusive bicultural narrative.¹²⁴ However, this critique does not take into account the approach of King’s previous works which (to reiterate) indicated that a separate discussion was a necessary narrative construction to highlight the lack of attention given to Māori history in general within New Zealand scholarship. King was influenced by decolonisation literature that aimed to elevate the stories and histories of the indigenous to an equal footing with that of the coloniser. To this end, as argued above, King focused on Māori subjects in many of his works through out his career.¹²⁵ However, he was always clear that Māori history must be understood in its own social context and his main thesis with regard to Māori status within New Zealand society was that since European contact they had by and large been a rural people.¹²⁶ It was not until the strain on land and resources from two world wars and economic depression that Māori had to reassess the merits of living with whānau on the marae versus living in the cities with the chance of gaining a more fruitful lifestyle.¹²⁷ King had likened the differences of culture in New Zealand society in the period before Māori urbanisation as being so vast that New Zealand had two separate worlds: one

¹²⁰ King, *Moriōri*, pp.110-122.

¹²¹ cf. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, Richard Howard (trans.) (London, 1967), pp.260-269 in which he describes the power nexus between the psychiatrist and the patient through: ‘silence’, ‘recognition by mirror’ and ‘perpetual judgment’.

¹²² King, *Moriōri*, p.9.

¹²³ King, *History*, p.120 and p.139.

¹²⁴ Daley, p.77.

¹²⁵ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: ‘Mātauranga Pākehā: King’s Construction of a New Zealand Identity’.

¹²⁶ King, *Māori*, p.195.

¹²⁷ King, *Māori*, p.250 and King, *Whina*, pp.166-170.

Māori and one Pākehā.¹²⁸ This thesis was carried through in many of his works and was often reinforced by the comment that the period of urbanisation was the first time since first contact that Māori and Pākehā had come in such a close association with one another.¹²⁹ He explained in *History* ‘[t]here were, in effect, two New Zealands at this time: the Pākehā one, served and serviced by national local government administration systems; and Māori New Zealand, served by a native schools system and little else, but ignored except when national or local government wanted to appropriate land, income (dog taxes, for example) or manpower.’¹³⁰ Therefore (in my opinion) it was only natural that King divided his *History* chapters into separate Māori and Pākehā narratives, only to intertwine them at the end as homage to a productive and inclusive future together. This mode of bicultural ‘emplotment’ was how King foresaw the future bicultural character of New Zealand. King achieved a narrative that was conducive to producing both a shared national consciousness as well as separate traditions for both Māori and Pākehā.¹³¹

Although King wrote separate narratives for Māori and Pākehā throughout his *History* by placing the both narratives alongside each other, his work can be nonetheless labelled as bicultural. Yet, it was not until the last chapters of *History* that King plotted the development of both Māori and Pākehā identity at the beginning of the millennium.¹³² During the course of New Zealanders’ interactions with one another King observed two very different patterns emerging surrounding Māori and Pākehā identity. For Māori, cultural practices had changed very little from the first ‘seeds of contact’.¹³³ The resilience of their traditions, especially those related to tangihanga and tribal competitiveness, reflected the deeply rooted nature of their culture in relation to their historical identity.¹³⁴ In this respect King reminded the reader of the importance that history can have in the individual’s life. He again used the terminology that he developed in writing on the landscape of New Zealand. In *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* (1992) King related the historical time embedded in the geographical space of the landscape in asserting, ‘[...] I was a part of nature and

¹²⁸ King, ‘Between Two Worlds’, pp.300-301.

¹²⁹ King, *History*, p.518.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p.246.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, pp.512-513.

¹³² *Ibid*, ‘Configurations Old and New’, pp.503-518.

¹³³ *Ibid*, p.505.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, p.516.

nature was a part of me.’¹³⁵ In *History* King used the same language to describe the strength of Māori culture even through generations of assimilation and change caused by European interaction and institutions. He quoted Arthur Schlesinger Jr. who commented that history’s ‘[r]hythms, patterns, continuities, drift out of time long forgotten to mould the present and to colour the shape of things to come.’¹³⁶ King saw the myths surrounding Māori and Pākehā culture and identity as important to how intertwined each other’s historical ‘rhythms, patterns and continuities’ were.¹³⁷

The way in which King reminded the Pākehā reader of how their histories were intertwined with Māori in *History* was to continue to use the narrative device of mātauranga Pākehā which explained Māori knowledge structures and cosmology in aid of better understanding the historical fabric of New Zealand’s past for Pākehā.¹³⁸ In *History* King began the Māori half of the bicultural partnership’s journey in New Zealand with their migration to his ‘land without people’ from Polynesia.¹³⁹ The construction of a migration narrative was part of his thesis of indigenisation, where Māori as the first indigenous peoples of New Zealand were to be followed by the second teina culture: Pākehā.¹⁴⁰ As King himself explained, ‘[i]t [New Zealand] would offer those human inhabitants a comprehensive place in the cosmos and a prospect of physical and spiritual security[...].’¹⁴¹ With the land settled he could then focus on its people and their stories. The difference in *History*, in comparison to his prior works was that he used to a greater extent oral traditions and Māori terminology. King’s rendition of Polynesian migration through the proverb, ‘E kore au e ngaro, te kakano I ruia mai i Rangiatea’ was (‘I shall not perish, but as a seed of Rangiatea I shall flourish’.)¹⁴² was followed by the tale of the navigator Ru, who was travelling from Raiatea to Aitutaki, when his vessel began to be sucked down by a whirlpool. The passengers were saved by this incantation to the god of the sea Tangaroa:

¹³⁵ King, *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* (Auckland, 1992), p.234.

¹³⁶ Arthur Schlesinger Jr. quoted in King, *History*, p.505.

¹³⁷ King, *History*, p.467. [n.b. King also used the phrase ‘rhythms, patterns and continuities’ in *Coromandel*, p.128].

¹³⁸ n.b. King’s understanding of Mātauranga Māori is especially evident in his chapters ‘Te Ao Māori’, pp.76-91 in which he outlines Māori society and knowledge structures before European settlement and ‘Māori Life Ways’, pp.239-257 in which he describes how Māori culture has adapted and retained its structure through European contact.

¹³⁹ King, *History*, pp.29-91.

¹⁴⁰ Michael King, ‘A Vision for the new Millennium’, *Tread Softly for you Tread on my Life* (Auckland, 2001), p.104.

¹⁴¹ King, *History*, p.74.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, p.35.

Tangaroa I te titi
 Tangaroa I te tata
 Whakawateangia te kare o te moana
 Kai tae au ki te whenua
 I tūmanakohia e au¹⁴³

King's inclusion of this tradition came with no English translation or explanation. This indicates that what was important was not the translation of the incantation, but rather the function of these oral traditions within Māori history and culture. King felt that the reader now understood the pedagogical context of these tales because of their understanding of Māori culture and therefore themselves through mātauranga Pākehā. It also indicates a change in New Zealand society towards more acceptance of Māori culture especially in regard to their language.

By the end of his career, King's concern for addressing the Māori voice within the national narrative was secondary to his need to help European New Zealanders recognise their own identity and culture.¹⁴⁴ King created an understanding of Pākehā culture through how he came to understand Māori historical knowledge. King saw similarities between mātauranga Pākehā and mātauranga Māori in the ordering of their worlds (around New Zealanders) according to their cultural myths, traditions and consciousness. He discussed this notion to the fullest extent yet in his *History*. His understanding of mātauranga Pākehā had influenced his construction of a bicultural present, commenting, '[w]hat was true of Māori culture was also true of that of the country as a whole. A myriad of echoes of old New Zealand still resonate within the contemporary culture.' He continued this argument by explaining that Pākehā were no longer tau iwi;¹⁴⁵ Pākehā had become the sibling culture to Māori that also needed to be recognised and protected with the same vigour as the first indigenous culture by government institutions and New Zealand as a whole.¹⁴⁶ In keeping with his mātauranga Pākehā model King acknowledged that this need by Pākehā to be recognised as an indigenous identity had sprung from studying and understanding the

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p.36.

¹⁴⁴ n.b. As indicated by his relinquishment of writing on Māori subjects in the 1980s so the new generation of Māori academics could speak for themselves historically.

¹⁴⁵ King, *History*, p.516.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p.507.

same concepts that caused Māori to claim their people as the tangata whenua.¹⁴⁷ He went on to emphasise this point by comparing examples of authoritative recognition of concerns over Māori place of wahi tapu (sacred places) with what he saw as the lack of concern or understanding of importance for Pākehā places of wahi tapu.¹⁴⁸ King objected to the unbalanced situation in 1998 that saw the national museum Te Papa Tongarewa refuse to remove a statue of the Virgin Mary covered by a condom from exhibition. Yet, the Waikato Museum of Art and History removed an exhibition of artist Dick Frizzell's depiction of the Four Square grocer wearing a moko at the request of Tainui elders.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, he was exasperated to note that Transit New Zealand stopped work on State Highway 1 near Mercer because local iwi believed it would disturb a taniwha. Conversely, the North Shore City Council were to widen the road to Takapuna which shaved six metres off the front of Frank Sargeson's section and thereby destroyed the famous 'hole in the hedge' and resting place of the writer's ashes.¹⁵⁰ King lamented:

[t]hey [Pākehā] did not want to see anything taken *away* from Māori, just to ensure that the measures of protection and respect extended from the one culture to embrace *both* cultures: to see wahi tapu of significance to Pākehā, such as Frank Sargeson's grave, given as much protection as wahi tapu of significance to Māori; and to have the history and experience of Pākehā New Zealanders valued by the country as a whole, and by its institutions, as much as those of Māori.¹⁵¹

King wanted the Pākehā reader to realise the value of their culture that had developed alongside Māori culture since the 'seeds of contact', beginning as early as 1769.¹⁵² As shown above, King perceived that Pākehā culture continued to borrow and learn from Māori and this was the basis of the 'bicultural reality'.¹⁵³

The progress of the nation was the second form of 'emplotment' that King used in his *History*. He formed this overarching structure through his optimistic treatment of bicultural histories and race relations, the role of state and the development of a

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.514.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pp.515-516.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p.515.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.516.

¹⁵² *Ibid*.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p.518.

postcolonial New Zealand.¹⁵⁴ While national progress encompasses biculturalism because of King's depiction of it as a growing relationship between the two main cultures of New Zealand, the prevalence of a progressive biculturalism within *History* has meant it needs to be considered on its own as a mode of 'emplotment'. However, there is a distinct overlap of ideas in regard to how King shapes the narrative of bicultural history and how he perceives national progress. As shown above, King structured his approach to history through a mātauranga Pākehā framework. Hence, the 'emplotment' of his optimistic progressive national narrative was influenced by this device. The conclusion of *History* reflected King's 'emplotment' of an optimistic progressive narrative regarding race relations in New Zealand:

And most New Zealanders, whatever their cultural backgrounds are good-hearted, practical, commonsensical and tolerant. Those qualities are part of the national cultural capital that has in the past saved the country from the worst excesses of chauvinism and racism seen in other parts of the world.¹⁵⁵

In an interview to the *New Zealand Herald* he was said to have read this quote aloud and smiled stating, '[these cultural traits ...] are a sound basis as any for optimism about a country's future.'¹⁵⁶ This statement reflected King's generational principles of wide-eyed optimism and change for the betterment of the nation.¹⁵⁷ As King himself explained, his moral values that were '[...] conditioned by the fact that I [King] was born in the mid-twentieth century New Zealand of Pākehā antecedents, raised a member of the Catholic Church and educated in Western traditions of thought.'¹⁵⁸ While many academics were surprised and disappointed by his conclusion, as sited above, King had taken this stance many times before in his career. In his previous work *New Zealand* (1987) King wrote a similar sentiment about the ethnic composition of New Zealanders and their relationships with one another. He wrote '[...]the hope [that is]shared by most New Zealanders [is] that people from differing ethnic backgrounds with differing styles could live the good life in harmony. By and large, they have managed to do so.'¹⁵⁹ In *History* King went as far as to rework his

¹⁵⁴ cf. Chapter one of this thesis: "Being Pākehā' in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand'.

¹⁵⁵ King, *History*, p.518.

¹⁵⁶ Watkins, 'The 2003 Herald New Zealander of the Year' (2003).

¹⁵⁷ King, *Being Pākehā*, pp.68-70.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.233.

¹⁵⁹ King, *New Zealand*, p.12.

early idea from *Being Pākehā: an Encounter with New Zealand and the Māori Renaissance* (1985) about the components of identity being attracted to an individual like iron filings to a magnet.¹⁶⁰ King realised that twenty-first century New Zealanders had encountered more cultures than just two through race relations and therefore broadened his net of identity to encompass those who did not fit his binary model of Māori and Pākehā.¹⁶¹ He explained, '[i]n that sense, the quality of being Māori, a Pacific Islander, a Gujarati or Jewish New Zealander may differ markedly in some contexts.'¹⁶² However, because King saw race relations in a positive light the differing contexts of accepting and valuing another person's identity was a part of a positive progression for race relations in New Zealand. King explained his overt optimism for historical progress in a New Zealand context in his memoir *Hidden Places* (1992):

[...history] is the an acute awareness of how high human aspirations can ascend and how far, like Icarus, they can fall [...] in the face of eternal disappointment, individual after individual and generation after generation is prepared to raise high the banner of hope and march toward some notion of a better world.¹⁶³

King's optimism in his histories was one of the points of debate for his detractors about the validity of his progressive nationalist 'emplotment'.¹⁶⁴ However King was aware of how reinforcing myths about New Zealand's past was detrimental to its future. While on the one hand King saw the relationship between Māori and Pākehā as being a positive one (as argued above), he also recognised that there were still factors in the relationship that required development. For example, the myth that New Zealand has had the best race relations in the world was one that King wanted to recast.¹⁶⁵ It is during the last chapter of *History* that King outlined how he believed this myth could be deconstructed. He saw the Treaty of Waitangi not just as a mechanism for redressing past grievances and transferring autonomy to iwi, but also as a framework for current and future relations between Māori and the Crown.¹⁶⁶ He

¹⁶⁰ King, *Being Pākehā*, p.177.

¹⁶¹ n.b. King, *Being Pākehā Now* (1999), p.237 he wrote that he no longer believed that New Zealand was a bicultural country: '[b]eyond the Treaty process, however, I no longer believe in the inevitability, or even the desirability, of a bicultural nation [...] I doubt now, though, that most Māori and most Pākehā want to define themselves in simple bicultural terms.'

¹⁶² King, *History*, p.513.

¹⁶³ Michael King, *Hidden Places: A Memoir in Journalism* (Auckland, 1992), p.240.

¹⁶⁴ Stephen Webster, 'Book Review: Michael King: Māori: A Photographic and Social History', *The Republican*, no.48 (December, 1983), pp.13-15.

¹⁶⁵ King, *History*, pp.468 - 469.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p.498.

wrote, '[t]hey [Pākehā] imagined that the special measures undertaken as a Treaty obligation to protect and strengthen *Māori* language and culture were necessary because of its vulnerability, and that such measures would not in any way threaten the viability of Pākehā culture.'¹⁶⁷ King viewed Māori not as victims of colonisation, but as responsive and influential partners of the bicultural future.

One of the most memorable assertions from *History* of what King perceived the bicultural relationship to look like in the future was his proposal that ANZAC Day should be New Zealand's national day instead of Waitangi Day. King pointed out the positive connotations of shifting the emphasis from 6 February to where he believed national consciousness actually resonated, 25 April.¹⁶⁸ He explained that this already widely known idea '[...]ought to be harnessed by making it the country's national day in preference to 6 February, Waitangi Day, which would always involve marking the score-card on race relations and a less than perfect verdict.'¹⁶⁹ King believed that the strong attendance at ANZAC Day ceremonies by both Māori and Pākehā demonstrated that the act of going to war had significance for all New Zealanders.¹⁷⁰ The commemoration of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, on the other hand, was seen by King as a divisive occasion, in which the tensions that still manifested themselves within his version of a progressive bicultural New Zealand were revisited and replayed for the next generation of Māori and Pākehā trying to make sense of their own identity and place within the nation.¹⁷¹ While he saw the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi as an important touchstone in New Zealand's history because the significant ties it reinforced with Britain in regard to a 'permanent and constitutional' relationship,¹⁷² he also described the document as the most contentious and problematic ingredient in New Zealand's national life.¹⁷³ King expressed this perception of a problematic bond for New Zealanders over the next 160 years through the words of Eddie Durie: '[...]the face of New Zealand life would from that time [1840] on be a Janus one, representing at least two cultures and two heritages, very

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p.514.

¹⁶⁸ King, *History*, p.299.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p.508.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p.507.

¹⁷¹ Michael King, 'A Vision For the New Millennium', pp.101-105.

¹⁷² King, *History*, p.152.

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, p.156.

often looking in two directions.’¹⁷⁴ While, at first, King’s comment about replacing Waitangi Day with ANZAC Day gave the impression that he was trying to erase the tumultuous past relationship between Māori and Pākehā, what he was actually trying to shape was a history where the two cultures of New Zealand featured equally in the narrative. King saw ANZAC Day was New Zealand’s first example of a non-Māori indigenous ceremonial.¹⁷⁵ Or in other words, King saw the country’s interest in ANZAC Day as organically constructed with no appropriation from Māori customs. There is room to debate how much of ANZAC day relates to Māori and how much of the ceremony is (despite its inclusion of both Māori and Pākehā elements) mostly an outpouring of Pākehā nationalism. Herein lies the problematic nature of King’s progressive national narrative: it was that his implication of ‘New Zealandness’ or nationalism is from a Pākehā perspective despite his intentions to maintain a bicultural narrative.

Howe described King’s approach to (Pākehā) nationalism as effective because ‘[t]here is none of the common postcolonial moralising about good Māori bad Pākehā, no selective morality, no sneering or snide opinions, no black arm-band views, no assumptions about colonial conspiracies.’¹⁷⁶ King’s approach to writing national history was always optimistic and while he did point to issues within New Zealand history that need to be negotiated (as discussed above), he was guilty of highlighting controversial events without explaining their significance in detail.¹⁷⁷ Perhaps the most frustrating instance of this lack of critical discussion in *History* was at the end of the chapter, ‘A Revolution Confirmed’ in which he wrote:

For the first time, all the country’s institutions were bending slowly but decisively in the direction of Māori needs and aspirations. The momentum of these changes would be maintained – but not without controversy.¹⁷⁸

Here the chapter ends with no explanation as to what exactly comprised the ‘controversy’ to which he referred, nor does a discussion surface in the following chapter. This was a ‘forward’ reading of New Zealand history, which as Howe

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p.167.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p.507.

¹⁷⁶ Howe, ‘Michael King’ (2003).

¹⁷⁷ King, *History*, pp.504-505.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p.499.

remarked does not make the ‘common mistake of reading it backwards and judging the past by today’.¹⁷⁹ It revealed, however, what King chose not to include: namely, the threads that contradicted a positive present. King’s key omission here were in important incidents in the ‘controversy’ surrounding race relations that persisted into the bicultural present. The ‘curious and intelligent reader’ would be able to recall events – such as Don Brash’s Orewa Speech or the Foreshore and Seabed legislation (2004) that will resound for my generation – that divided loyalties and left a negative impact on the national psyche.¹⁸⁰ Advocates of King’s work such as Howe have said that his ‘[...]story is not all good, but neither is it all bad.’¹⁸¹ Yet, it is understandable why King’s detractors question his ability to give a balanced argument when they believe the story is not all bad, but neither is it all good.

These sections of the *History* ‘A Revolution Begun’, ‘Return of Mana Māori’ and ‘A Revolution Confirmed’ were designed to highlight the many changes in New Zealand society from the 1960s to the 1980s when ‘new directions were confirmed’.¹⁸² It helped to determine the ‘emplotment’ for King’s postcolonial New Zealand as progressive and reassuringly positive. These ‘new directions’ that King perceived the nation to be taking were developed from King’s understanding of how a young nation had found its feet and formed alliances. Through his Pākehā nationalist narrative King aimed to stress New Zealand’s reluctance to leave the British Empire and to find its own historical roots as a new nation and create a collective culture.¹⁸³ King created an argument that although Europeans were the second indigenous culture to inhabit New Zealand it was their narrative that was always dominant. Accordingly, King took a much more traditional approach to ‘nation-building’ by explaining how the systems of government developed and how national policy and/or international relations prompted New Zealand as a nation-state to grow and change. With chapter titles such as ‘A Functioning Nation?’ and ‘Party Politics Begins’ it was no surprise that King intended to use the mechanisms of politics and the actions of politicians to explain the progress of the nation.¹⁸⁴ The obvious beginning for this narrative was the

¹⁷⁹ Howe, ‘Michael King’, (2003).

¹⁸⁰ Hekia Parata, ‘Where Brash is Wrong’, *The Christchurch Press* (April, 2003), and Bruce Ansley, ‘Who Are You’, *The Listener*, (September 13 2003), pp.18-21.

¹⁸¹ Howe, ‘Michael King’, (2003).

¹⁸² King, *History*, p.485.

¹⁸³ King, *Kim Hill Radio NZ Interview*, (2003).

¹⁸⁴ King, *History*, pp.224-238 and pp.258-282.

appointment of Captain William Hobson to draft what became the Treaty of Waitangi, followed by the ‘new settlers taking control’ which they achieved both demographically and politically.¹⁸⁵

King retold how in 1907 New Zealand became a dominion, ceasing to be a colony, at which time, the first indicators of a ‘double-patriotism’ of pride in being both simultaneously British and being a Pākehā New Zealander surfaced.¹⁸⁶ King saw the strongest indications of this through rugby and war: this was a narrative he carried through to his bicultural present.¹⁸⁷ Simultaneously however, King argued that New Zealand was reluctant to take up the varying degrees of independence offered by Britain throughout the twentieth century, ‘[...] in demonstrating this reluctance [to sign the Treaty of Versailles (1919) and join the League of Nations] he [PM William Massey 1912-1925] was setting a precedent for a theme that would characterise New Zealand’s behaviour for another three decades: being offered increasing degrees of independence from Britain that New Zealand neither sought nor wanted.’¹⁸⁸ He continued this argument by explaining that constitutionally New Zealand was not an independent nation until it ratified the Statute of Westminster in 1947 (this position was originally offered by Britain after WWI and was taken up by many British dominions in 1931).¹⁸⁹ For King, even though New Zealand politicians felt a strong allegiance to Britain and saw advantages to being a part of that metropolis he saw an evolution from complete dependence to an independent nation.

King followed the ‘emplotment’ of progress for the nation-state of New Zealand through the following decades from the 1940s onwards. He outlined the building of a relationship with America, signposting the change in allegiance from Britain, through the ANZUS (1951) and SEATO defence pacts (1954) and the nation’s participation in the American led Vietnam War (1965).¹⁹⁰ King characterised the 1960s as a decade in which New Zealand turned away from those traditional allegiances and the 1980s as

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.191.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.280.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.383 and 413; Michael King, *New Zealand: It’s Land and It’s People* (Wellington, 1979), p.125; *One of the Boys?*, p.146-150.

¹⁸⁸ King, *History*, p.305.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.420.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.424.

a period when the nation's new aspirations and new directions were confirmed.¹⁹¹ New Zealand turned its attention to the responsibilities within their own neighbourhood: considering the Pacific in terms of defence and Asia in terms of trade.¹⁹² The close proximity of these places and the impact and influence they commanded was more important to New Zealand than a mother or uncle figure of Britain or America.

The chapter brought together the threads that King crafted through the text by highlighting the engrained aspects of national life that had changed or began to change in the last three decades. His examples pointed to a change in attitude within politics by the new generation of politicians who would bring about rapid changes (economically and environmentally) in the New Zealand.¹⁹³ His many examples included: the establishment of 'mixed member proportional' system in 1996, New Zealand's dissolution of a close relationship with America (especially after the sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior* 1985 and the refusal to let American nuclear ships enter New Zealand waters), the changing approach to bi-lateral defence as an active member of the United Nations as peacekeeping troops, the demographic shift that saw an increase in people of Asian descent, the Waitangi Tribunal producing outcomes for those iwi who participated in its processes and the crafting of the Treaty of Waitangi into 'principles' that provided a framework for a further relationship with Māori and crown – reflected in the 1993 Sealords Deal – the two treaty partners.¹⁹⁴

Fundamentally King's two main modes of 'emplotment' of biculturalism and optimistic progress worked in combination to explain his Pākehā perspective on New Zealand history.¹⁹⁵ Although King explained 'New Zealandness' in terms of nationalism his approach in his *History* – through his engagement of readers with literary devices and over arching themes or 'emplotment' – sought to explain Pākehā identity to Pākehā readers.¹⁹⁶ While King's narrative was not solely a Pākehā narrative (because he was inclusive of Māori as a one of the two entities of the bicultural relationship) his intention was to provide a perspective on New Zealand's

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.485.

¹⁹² *Ibid*, pp.495-496.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, pp.495-502.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, pp.485-502.

¹⁹⁵ cf. Webster, pp.13-19.

¹⁹⁶ cf. Chapter Two of this thesis: Mātauranga Pākehā: King's Construction of a New Zealand Identity.

past that would explain his perceived present.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, by being obvious about his personal presence in the text King strove to engage the Pākehā reader within the historical narrative. While many historians frown upon authors being visible within a text¹⁹⁸ on the grounds that their presence alters the objectivity of the narrative,¹⁹⁹ in King's case his blatant presence makes it easy to understand his intentions within his general history. Moreover, King's presence in the text lets the reader make their own decisions about past events that shaped the present.²⁰⁰ King believed this present was one working towards a positive relationship between the two cultures of New Zealand, which could only occur if Pākehā understood their own identity by having an appreciation of Māori culture and historical grievances.²⁰¹

The critics' response to King's *History* was both positive and negative. In the last section of this chapter I will examine the main concerns that New Zealand historians had with King's approach to his general history in regard to it being 'old fashioned', overly optimistic, gender blind and a tool for continuing colonisation through text. Much of the critical response to King's *History* stemmed from the structure of the text as an optimistic progressive bicultural national narrative. Unsurprisingly then the most common response to King's *History* was that it lacked historiographical originality and failed to be anything more than a product of King's generational perception about history.²⁰²

King's use of political milestones to indicate the development of a burgeoning nation-state was a very traditional way to express New Zealand's place in the world. For this reason King's *History* was rightly compared with Sinclair's *History* (1959). Hilliard

¹⁹⁷ Webster, pp.15-16.

¹⁹⁸ Jacob Pollock, *From Colony to Culture: A Historiographical Discourse and Historical Identity in Aotearoa/New Zealand* in partial fulfilment of a Master of Arts at the University of Auckland (Auckland, 2005), p.13.

¹⁹⁹ c.f. Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author' quoted in David Finkelstein and Alister McCleery, *The Book History Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2006), pp.277-280 and Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author?' quoted in David Finkelstein and Alister McCleery, *The Book History Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2006), pp.287-291.

²⁰⁰ n.b. Since his first work *Moko: Māori Tattooing in the Twentieth Century* (1972) King has approached history from his own point of view and through his experiences with the people of New Zealand. His intention for using the first person pronoun in his text has been to give instruction to the reader to maintain their understanding of his historical narrative: i.e. *Being Pākehā* (1985).

²⁰¹ King, *History*, pp.517-519.

²⁰² cf. Chapter one of this thesis: "Being Pākehā' in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand'.

has gone to the extent of dubbing King's work as the 'New Sinclair'²⁰³ despite one reviewer claiming, '[...] for all its positive features, it fails to eclipse Sir Keith's earlier book in some important respects. In his volume, Sir Keith imparted greater authority as a historian through his carefully honed judgements and more precise and considered use of language.'²⁰⁴ To an extent I think that King's detractors have a valid argument for illuminating similarities between the two histories. Both works were commissioned by the Penguin Publishing Company and both were commercially successful during their print run. Both men aimed, within the confines of their generational preconceptions about the past, to write the Māori story into the national narrative.²⁰⁵ By the same token their aim to indigenise Pākehā culture as a legitimate expression of New Zealand identity was to validate culturally that it had the same equivalent 'native' status to that of Māori.²⁰⁶ Also, both authors perceived that there was a transition in building the New Zealand nation, with its own institutions and political milestones, firstly, as part of Britain and then apart from Britain.²⁰⁷ With their matching goals and narrative structure King's and Sinclair's general histories have many similarities. Hence Daley asserted that *History* is a '[...]sober, old-fashioned general history... for the most part it could easily have been published at least ten years ago.'²⁰⁸ Similarly, Hilliard links King's work to Sinclair's by stating, '[i]n this methodology and its narrative style, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* could have been written in 1959.'²⁰⁹ The year of publication of Sinclair's *History*. Daley continues this argument with her disdain for the fact that King did not attempt to include new historical knowledge, except perhaps in his work on environmental histories (which Daley believes was heavily copied from Eric Pawson's and Tom Brooking's 2002 work: *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*)²¹⁰ and instead

²⁰³ Hilliard, 'New Sinclair', pp.176-180.

²⁰⁴ David Mitchell, 'New History of New Zealand Flawed but Worthy', *The Nelson Mail*, 31 December 2003, accessed from the Nelson Mail Website 8 December 2009.

²⁰⁵ cf. Chapter one of this thesis: "Being Pākehā' in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand'.

²⁰⁶ cf. Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity* (Wellington, 1986).

²⁰⁷ Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, p.233.

²⁰⁸ Daley, p.79.

²⁰⁹ Hilliard, 'New Sinclair', p.177.

²¹⁰ n.b. Pawson and Brooking's [(eds.), *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (2002)] is a comprehensive, multi-authored collection of papers on the ecological impact caused by New Zealanders on the landscape throughout its history. Daley's concern that King has copied too closely this same line of inquiry is quelled when one is reminded of his same ecological concerns in *Coromandel* in regard to the open cast mining (pp.108-118) As previously stated. King does not take-up fully the implications of environmental history until the *History* (2003). *Coromandel* was published

relied on scholars of his own generation as authorities.²¹¹ With regard to King's acknowledgements to these authors she writes: '[...]hat if you are over the age of 50 and/or a cultural nationalist, chances are you will be named. Other members of the profession remain anonymous.'²¹²

King did attempt to explore areas of inquiry that he had not paid much attention to in his previous works. One of these was his effort to place New Zealand history within a wider historical context. While this approach was brief it cannot be discounted as insignificant, especially in relation to Daley's accusation that if you are not a cultural historian over 50 years old that you do not warrant a mention by King.²¹³ In fact, King's comparative historical view can be seen as more reminiscent of Belich's approach to writing history and therefore, in my opinion shows some intellectual growth on King's part.²¹⁴ At the beginning of his chapter 'Māori Engage the World', he placed Māori within a context of global historical currents.²¹⁵ Howe has commented that, '[... this] is an interesting chapter because it highlights how Māori were not an isolated native people living in the South Pacific, but that they were in fact savvy participants in the British Empire.'²¹⁶ This approach was very similar to that of Belich's in *Making Peoples: a History of New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the end of the Nineteenth Century* (1996).²¹⁷ King's first expression at this approach was in his chapter 'Distance Perforated' where he places the Māori narrative within a larger world context. He noted that if Māori had known about the rest of the world in the seventeenth century they would have found it strange and unbelievable.²¹⁸ He asked a series of questions about the influence of those on the other side of the globe on Māori: '[w]hat about the ancient culture of China, which as recently as the fifteenth century had possessed an enormous navy? What of the

in 1993 and therefore he would have had time to develop further thoughts on environmentalism of his own volition by 2003 without copying Pawson and Brooking's text.

²¹¹ King, *History*, pp. 552-553.

²¹² Daley, p.79.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ cf. James Belich, *Making Peoples*, pp.7-9.

²¹⁵ King, *History*, pp.115-117.

²¹⁶ Howe, 'Michael King', (2003).

²¹⁷ i.e. Belich compared Māori isolation from other peoples in the Middle Ages with the vibrant trade places like Asia and Europe had during the Byzantine, Mongol and Islamic Empires. Therefore, leaving Māori open for European 'discovery'. He then brings in the narrative of explorers including Greek theory and Marco Polo [Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.117].

²¹⁸ King, *History*, p.92.

Tamils, the Mogul, the great civilisations of the Middle East, all of them older and geographically closer to the South Pacific than Europe?’²¹⁹

Likewise, King incorporated a comparative history approach that placed Māori in a world historical narrative in relation to European expansion. He placed European trade with Māori alongside the setting up of penal colonies in Port Jackson 1788, Norfolk Island 1798 and Hobart in 1803.²²⁰ Detractors like Daley and Hilliard of King’s progressive national narrative would see his attempt to add a comparative historical element to *History* as merely an exhibition of King’s narrative being defined by an attachment to the metropolis and eventual decline in belonging due to the growth of national awareness.²²¹ Nonetheless he had not previously tried to place New Zealand within a larger historical context. The broader frame of reference in *History* showed an attempt by King to widen his perspective and analysis of New Zealand history.

While the previous example endeavours to show how King tried to expand his earlier generational notions about New Zealand history, critics found more examples of how ‘old fashioned’ King’s approach continued to be through his work.²²² Hilliard supports Daley’s criticism of King’s final ‘stocktaking’ chapter as being especially disappointing, because he used the tired device of discussing national heroes.²²³ The emotive drive behind naming national heroes as exemplars of ‘national identity’ does imply a step backwards in the theoretical advances of the historical discipline beyond a focus on ‘big man’s history’ and the role of great men in creation of the nation-state. Katie Pickles’ post-colonial critique on national icons argues that national icons were a device for continuing an imagining of British colonialism in New Zealand through what she sees as a process of re-settlement.²²⁴ King often referred to Sir Edmund Hillary as the embodiment of ‘New Zealandness’.²²⁵ Pickles has countered this notion in her study of Barry Crump and Hillary that suggests:

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.115.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, pp.503-505.

²²² cf. Chapter One of this thesis: ‘Being Pākehā’ in the Historiographical Dialogue of Nation and Identity in New Zealand’.

²²³ Hilliard, ‘New Sinclair’, p.179.

²²⁴ Katie Pickles, ‘Kiwi Icons and the Re-Settlement of New Zealand as a Colonial Space’ *New Zealand Geographer*, vol.58, no.2 (2002), pp.5-16.

²²⁵ King, *New Zealand in Colour*, p.6 and *History*, p.509.

[a]ccounts of both men's lives draw upon discourses of public space and territorial control, appealing to, and perpetuating the theme at the heart of New Zealand's historical geography, ownership and control of land, and its subsequent settlement. Today, at a time when grand and sweeping narratives of territorial expansion and settlement are challenged by voices of difference, and amidst demands for Māori redress and autonomy, narratives for Hillary and Crump continue to be based upon settlement of New Zealand as colonial space.²²⁶

However, it was not surprising that King began his list of heroes in *History* with the man that he believed had reached iconic stature in the mind of 'New Zealanders'.²²⁷ In 2007, for a seminar in the New Zealand history honours class I employed the same device to ascertain what national myths my generation embodied to explain New Zealand's national character. I asked the class to write down the first three names that came to mind when they thought of an iconic New Zealander. Some fairly typical names appeared: Hillary was one, the others included Peter Blake, Peter Jackson, Paul Holmes, Apirana Ngata, Ernest Rutherford, Richie McCaw and others. Interestingly, all participants identified Helen Clark as an icon.²²⁸ From these results the class deduced the national myths that were embodied by these icons: be it sporting prowess, masculinity and the 'man alone', the 'social laboratory', feminism, talented New Zealanders can only succeed in exile and so on. Most evident was that within the small class their answers revealed their own perception of their identity within the national narrative. I believe that King's list of heroes was constructed for the same purpose for him to unpack his own identity. He did this because he believed that his construction of identity could be used as a teaching tool for the reader.²²⁹ Clearly King wrote from the perspective of a Pākehā for a Pākehā audience.

Individual identification with the past, as King had shown across his career, does not alter the reader's identification with the nation on a collective level. In fact, individual notions of nationalism can reinforce binding myths.²³⁰ As an illustration, my own choices in the above exercise of Helen Clark, Kate Sheppard and Donna Awatere

²²⁶ Pickles, p.10.

²²⁷ King, *History*, p.509.

²²⁸ Halie McCaffrey, 'What can we Learn from J.G.A. Pocock's Oceanic, Archipelagic Perspective on New Zealand History?', Seminar HIST 443, 11 September 2007.

²²⁹ Kerry Howe, 'Forward', *Being Pākehā: The Recollections and Reflections of a White Native*, 2nd edn. (Auckland, 2004), p.viii.

²³⁰ King, 'New Zealand Radio Interview with Kim Hill', (2003).

revealed to me that my gender was a large part of my personal identification in relation to others in the nation and the construction of national character. King's list, which included Colin Meads, Charles Upham, Howard Kippenberger, Peter Blake, Peter Snell and Jonah Lomu was a fairly typical representation of male identity in the form of sportsmen or war veterans.²³¹ But, what King's long list of heroic New Zealanders did reveal, as it grew into those who were innovative and represented the 'number eight wire mentality', even that it represented New Zealand on the national stage and included scientists, scholars, women and Māori; it reflected King's own generational perception of his own identity, rather than that of the nation as a whole.²³² He commented in a Radio New Zealand interview with Kim Hill that his generation of baby-boomers have 'no great binders' of national consciousness (like a world war). However, he believed that in the decades to come his generation might be remembered as the one that participated in anti-apartheid protesting and the campaign for nuclear disarmament, a generation that showed concern about what was going on in the rest of the world as well as in their own backyard.²³³ Hilliard's criticism of King's list of heroes is that younger readers would not be able to relate to his *History*. As he explained, '[m]any readers in their early twenties (and older) will find it difficult to imagine their way into the outlook of a mid-twentieth-century meat-and-three-veg Pākehā'.²³⁴ While it is true that some readers might find it hard to identify with King's generational look at New Zealand's history, the list of heroes provides a clear indication of his position as a baby-boomer writing history because of the icons he chose as a representation of national myths. For example, WWI veteran Charles Upham embodied for King's generation of New Zealanders the 'average kiwi bloke' who preformed extraordinarily in extraordinary circumstances.²³⁵ For the later generations of New Zealanders who have neither witnessed nor endured the repercussions of war find it hard to relate to a soldier that fought courageously for their country.²³⁶ King did not try to deceive the reader into believing that he was – in

²³¹ King, *History*, pp.509-510.

²³² *Ibid*, pp.509-512.

²³³ King, 'New Zealand Radio Interview with Kim Hill', (2003).

²³⁴ Hilliard, 'New Sinclair', p.179.

²³⁵ cf. Kenneth L. Sandford, *Mark of the Lion: the Story of Capt. Charles Upham, V.C. and Bar* (London, 1962).

²³⁶ n.b. Hilliard makes a comment about how younger readers would find it hard to relate to King's *History* because it is written through his own generational framework. Therefore, the younger generation of New Zealanders, like myself, find it difficult to accept heroes who go to war for New Zealand. While in recent times Sir William Apirana Ngata has become a national folk hero for his

his own words – anything more than an ‘old-fashioned liberal’.²³⁷ Personally, I don’t believe that any historian living or dead can escape the trappings of their own generational tropes, but historians provide readers with better insight by explaining their position as a writer clearly to the reader rather than hiding voiceless within the text.²³⁸

With King’s presence visible within the *History* the optimism that he holds for New Zealand’s future, as previously discussed, was identifiable within his narrative devices and forms of ‘emplotment’: biculturalism and progress. More recent generations, nonetheless, have been more cynical in their response to the state of New Zealand in the late twentieth century. However the discipline of history in New Zealand has never produced ‘black-armband’ histories in response to politicised events like its Trans-Tasman neighbour.²³⁹ Critics of King’s approach still saw his conclusion in *History* that asserted that ‘New Zealanders’ are all ‘good-hearted, practical, commonsensical and tolerant’²⁴⁰ as an affront to the real issues that were, and still are, occurring in this country to produce racial disharmony between Māori and Pākehā. While historians and readers alike should be asking the hard questions required to critique of King’s ‘emplotment’, their judgements should also be weighed and balanced by the realisation that optimistic histories do not necessarily gloss over the difficult details of race relations. For King, national progress was infused with the optimism of a shared future between Māori and Pākehā.²⁴¹

At the time of publication of King’s *History*, Pākehā New Zealanders were becoming more aware of Māori political concerns. King remarked in a later interview that he regretted that he could not include the 2004 Foreshore and Seabed Act in his final chapter, because he believed that it would have made a better example of where our nation was going and how the two cultures still interact.²⁴² His reasoning was that while he believed ‘New Zealanders’ are by and large bicultural because they share

leadership and bravery in Iraq he is not a national figure I can (or I believe many young people) can relate to in regard to national pride.

²³⁷ King, in ‘New Zealand Radio Interview with Kim Hill’, (2003).

²³⁸ Foucault, ‘What is an Author’, p.284.

²³⁹ cf. Mark McKenna, ‘Metaphors of Light and Darkness: The Politics of “Black Armband” History’, *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, vol.25 (1998), pp.67-84.

²⁴⁰ King, *History*, p.518.

²⁴¹ King, ‘Vision for the New Millennium’, p.104.

²⁴² King, in ‘New Zealand Radio Interview with Kim Hill’, (2003).

cultural traits,²⁴³ public opinion varies from the one end of the political spectrum to the other. Nationalism advocates believe that we are all New Zealanders and therefore no one should have ‘special rights’ while champions of cultural rights believe that Māori are tangata whenua and require preferential treatment with regard to national resources because of customary title.²⁴⁴ Māori and Pākehā alike were unsure of how or why the national assets of beaches and kaimoana were proposed to be distributed and accessed. It was this uncertainty that caused tensions about collective and indigenous identity to arise.²⁴⁵ King himself said that ‘[i]f we [Pākehā] have lingering symptoms of insecurity, that’s [race relations] one of them. It’s partly driven by fear of some Pākehā about what concessions to Māori mean.’²⁴⁶ King wanted ‘New Zealanders’ to have a better understanding of current politics through historical knowledge. However, this concern was secondary for his critics because his history was over loaded with optimism. Detractors felt that King failed to give a whole picture to race relations in New Zealand because of his positive affirmations of New Zealand’s future.²⁴⁷

While King’s optimistic future for New Zealand was inclusive of Māori and Pākehā cultural traits, his approach to gender within *History* was lacking the same kind of balance when it came to male and female histories.²⁴⁸ King’s narrative for his histories throughout his career can be described as masculine. King wrote history from his own personal experiences and therefore his narrative often reflected a masculine perspective in historical events. King’s editorial contribution to *One of the Boys?: Changing Views of Masculinity in New Zealand* (1988) was the most obvious example of his own views on masculinity in New Zealand. As I have explained in the previous chapter, his introduction and chapter contribution ‘Contradictions’ reflected his up-bringing as Irish Catholic in New Zealand which led him to focus on Catholic sexuality and moral uncertainties of masturbation, sex before marriage and

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ n.b. The same debate and tensions have re-arisen in 2010 with the acceptance of the [Foreshore and Seabed Act \(Repeal\) Bill](#) (2006). The bill is a result of the National Governments coalition relationship with the Māori Party and their promise to review the act. In 2010 the legislation is being reviewed by select committee and public submissions to be replaced by new legislation [Christopher Finlayson, ‘Repeal of the Foreshore and Seabed Act Announced’, Press Release by the Attorney-General, 14 June 2010, accessed from the Official Website of the New Zealand Government 15 October 2010].

²⁴⁶ King, *History*, p.515.

²⁴⁷ Webster, p.19.

²⁴⁸ Daley, p.78.

monogamy.²⁴⁹ He also focused on rugby and alcohol consumption as a cultural trait of New Zealand men.²⁵⁰ Although these stereotypes do not define all New Zealand men and their masculinity it was clear that King's own construction of masculinity existed in his works. Conversely, in *History* King made little attempt to expand his narrative to encompass a feminist perspective. King's retelling of the nineteenth century Women's suffrage movement was organised in an old fashioned narrative format according to political legislation and the motivations of politicians.²⁵¹ King did not even attempt a short biography of the movement's most well-known character Kate Sheppard of the Women's Temperance Union which was one of his literary devices for reader engagement and a tool for a personal understanding of history.²⁵² He was willing, however, to include a detailed account of the Women's Liberation movement from the 1960s reflecting his generational perspective of a world that was changed by new waves of thought.²⁵³ This suggests a more inclusive approach from his earlier works like *New Zealanders at War* in which he refused to try and portray the female story: '[i]f there is a noticeable gap it is that there is disproportionately little about women [...]it is partly a consequence of biology and the manner in which wars have been fought [... the] supportive role of women in wartime has not been anywhere near adequately documented [... t]his massive gap in the country's social history awaits the energetic attention of future researchers, preferably female.'²⁵⁴

In King's *History* his presence in the text as a Pākehā male was constant, though, the narrative was not purposefully masculine. King shaped this work in the same way as his earlier works with an unconscious omission of femininity and female stories within the nation's past. This was epitomised in his biographies of Te Puea Herangi and Whina Cooper who were both women and both, in King's eyes, important iwi leaders.²⁵⁵ For him the inclusion of their life stories to the shared historical landscape was important for Pākehā to understand Māori culture and the fact that both these leaders were women was an after thought. For Daley having women's history as an

²⁴⁹ King, 'Contradictions', pp.150-152.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp.146-149 and pp. 152-155.

²⁵¹ King, *History*, pp. 264-266.

²⁵² *Ibid*, p.266.

²⁵³ *Ibid*, pp.455-461.

²⁵⁴ Michael King, *New Zealanders at War* (Auckland, 1981), pp.4-5.

²⁵⁵ n.b. Feminists have praised King's biographies of women for his inclusion of their lives to the national cannon. i.e. Na Vapi, Kupenga, 'The Feminist Eye: Te Puea', *Broadsheet*, no.55, (December, 1977), pp.35-36.

after thought was not a plausible explanation for a lack of gender balance within his general history especially since he had previously endeavoured to explain masculinity.²⁵⁶ She argued that King was consciously refusing to tackle female history and his thinly spread focus on femininity during the twentieth century narrative of his *History* was just as bad as a complete omission of female participation within New Zealand history.²⁵⁷ For King achieving a gender balanced narrative was not his objective. Yet in hindsight of new general histories such as Philippa Mein Smith's *A Concise History of New Zealand* (2005), in which the embedding of a female gendered narrative into the nineteenth and twentieth century of New Zealand's historical past seems effortless,²⁵⁸ King's disregard for gendering his narrative was obviously absent. His omission of gender is especially noticeable in comparison to his commitment to a shared Māori and Pākehā past.

Pollock was a follower of Peter Gibbons cultural colonization thesis which argued that Pākehā settlers colonised Māori not just with tools, weapons and laws, but also by naming, textualising and producing knowledge.²⁵⁹ Pollock viewed King's bicultural mode of 'emplotment' as unfavourable in light of Gibbon's cultural colonisation thesis. Pollock believed that King did not successfully adopt an equal status for Māori history in his *History* because his primary focus was on the indigenous identity of Pākehā which took a dominant position within the text.²⁶⁰ Pollock's main argument for this was that because King made Māori and Pākehā both indigenous through Māori being the first New Zealanders, and Europeans the second people of New Zealand, the act of European colonisation was erased in favour of the development of these two cultures as one entity.²⁶¹ Therefore, Pollock believed that King erased the act of colonisation by making Māori and Pākehā both colonists whose future was built on a bicultural relationship distinct from the colonial past.²⁶²

²⁵⁶ Daley, p.78.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*

²⁵⁸ i.e. Philippa Mein-Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge, 2005), p.11; p.88; pp.102-105;p. 132; pp.188-191; and pp.238-240

²⁵⁹ Peter Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization and National Identity', *NZJH*, vol.36, no.1 (April, 2002), p.9.

²⁶⁰ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonisation and Textual Biculturalism', p.185.

²⁶¹ *Ibid*, p.190.

²⁶² *Ibid*, p.187.

Before Pollock's article New Zealand historians had rarely extended this idea of the continuing process of colonisation in text beyond the colonial era. While Sinclair's history has been considered in this regard, Pollock was the first to bring attention to the applicability of cultural colonisation to more recent historical texts.²⁶³ However, by his own admission, Pollock sees his critique of both King and Belich's general histories as not an exercise in intellectual history, that took into account these historians' biographies or intellectual heritage, but rather a contextual reading of their narrative structures and historical arguments.²⁶⁴ I would argue that this is a pivotal point of difference between Pollock and myself because as my thesis has shown you cannot discount the intellectual influences and personal experiences of the historian and how that impacts on why and how they construct their histories.

Other critics of King's dismissal of cultural colonisation in New Zealand history would disagree with my argument. The advocates of Gibbon's 'cultural colonisation thesis' have been perplexed that King did not include a reference to Gibbon's thesis in *History* especially in regard to New Zealand landscape.²⁶⁵ Giselle Byrnes had successfully used Gibbon's thesis in examining Tauranga street names to explain how Europeans had colonised the area through naming and claiming.²⁶⁶ King, however, engaged in no such discussion and instead, in the eyes of Daley, perpetuated traditional colonial myths about the landscape instead of applying the insights of current historiography. Daley lamented, '[p]erhaps disappointed is more accurate than surprised, since in this book King joins South Island poets and mountain climbers in asserting Pākehā connection to the land'.²⁶⁷ His narrative did explain Europeans taking over of the landscape by surveying, colonizing flora and fauna, building churches, halls and houses.²⁶⁸ Nevertheless, what King did not do intentionally – as Pollock claimed he had – was to belittle the importance of Māori settlers naming in comparison to Pākehā settlers renaming them.²⁶⁹ Pollock believed that King did this by indigenising Pākehā. Pollock wrote, '[b]y making British settlers "foreign" [i.e.

²⁶³ Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonisation and National Identity', p.6.

²⁶⁴ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonisation and Textual Biculturalism', p.181.

²⁶⁵ Daley, p.77.

²⁶⁶ Daley, *Ibid* and Pollock, 'Textual Biculturalism', p.190; Byrnes, "'A Dead Sheet Covered with Meaningless Words?'" , pp.18-35.

²⁶⁷ Daley, p.77.

²⁶⁸ King, pp.191-194.

²⁶⁹ Pollock, 'Cultural Colonization and Textual Biculturalism', p.190.

ironically foreign: because Pākehā are through settlement native], rather than ‘foreign’[from Britain], King lifts the term outside of the text. In this way, he undermines any objection to the settlers’ appropriation of the land by making their status within the text ironic – they are ‘foreigners’ but they are to become indigenous through migratory process.²⁷⁰ As explained above, Pollock sees the indigenisation of Europeans from ‘foreigners’ to Pākehā or “foreigners” as detrimental to an equal status between Māori as tangata whenua needed to write a bicultural history because implies a dominance by Europeans and dismissal of the processes of colonisation all together. As Pollock explained, ‘[b]y claiming that Pākehā can be and are indigenous, Pākehā historians appropriate claims of Māori as tangata whenua so that those claims become a part of the end of the colonial process rather than a critique of it’.²⁷¹ King denied that this was his intention because, put plainly, without Māori culture and interaction there would be no people or culture called Pākehā.²⁷²

While Pollock has only focused on the *History* for his critique and not on the corpus of King’s works I believe he has missed King’s intention for writing a general history. King did not want to replace old myths for new autochthonous ones and therefore continue a process of colonisation of Māori by not acknowledging the impact of the colonial past as Pollock suggested.²⁷³ What King aimed to achieve was not a narrative where colonial New Zealand can be explained away by Māori and European settlement and the creation of a nation-state, but that colonial past was a part of the building blocks of his bicultural present. Again, because King’s *History* was optimistic and based on progress within a national setting did not mean that he was insensitive to the impact of colonisation on Māori and European histories. While King was more empathetic to the negative aspects of colonisation on Māori and the repression of their history and culture, his approach to writing a national history from his own point of view was his way of showing how he understood the impact of colonisation on Māori. His understanding of how Māori history developed was through his device of mātauranga Pākehā. This narrative device in itself can be debated as to the level of appropriation of Māori things there was to reshape and recast into an understanding of Pākehā things. I acknowledge that this device of

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.195.

²⁷² King, *History*, p.505.

²⁷³ Pollock, ‘Cultural Colonization and Textural Biculturalism’, p.195.

mātauranga Pākehā can then be perceived as a form of cultural colonisation through text because it takes Māori indigenous knowledge and recasts its meaning to fit European ways of thinking thereby making Māori concepts no longer their own. Yet, I believe it is unfair to assume that a bicultural historian continues colonisation of Māori culture through text because the style of ‘emplotment’ includes progress from colonisation to a shared partnership. The acknowledgement of Māori history in King’s Pākehā narrative negates the suggestion that he was not sensitive to the impact of colonisation that he would not have included Māori at all. Moreover, Pākehā historians cannot be assumed to automatically be cultural colonisers because they identify as being Pākehā and therefore write their history from this point of view. If historians are going to be fundamentalists about the parameters of cultural colonisation then King would fit this label because he does express an indigenous European identity through appropriating Māori knowledge. However, this approach does not detract from King’s intention to write history that was usable to the reader and made it easier for them to identify with the past. By understanding King’s intellectual framework of knowing his own identity as a Pākehā in New Zealand concessions can be made for understanding why certain devices and modes of ‘emplotment’ were developed throughout his career and ultimately used to construct his *History*. What is important to understand about using cultural colonisation to critique King’s work was that his intention was not to colonise Māori through text but to get their voice heard within a national setting. King has achieved this throughout his career and to a lesser extent within his *History*. Contemporary scholars may disagree, which is their prerogative, but it must not be forgotten that modern theories can also overshadow what was really going on at the time of writing for a certain generation of historian. King’s writing career represented a crossover of new and traditional ideas about history writing and the end result was an amalgam that was much more complex than simply being labelled a cultural colonisation through text.

In conclusion, *History* can be seen as King’s career coming full circle. Many of his theories and ideas from his previous works are collated and re-examined in this work which in the words of one reviewer, ‘[s]ucceeds in the goal of equipping “curious and intelligent readers” with a substantial and up-to-date working knowledge of New

Zealand history.²⁷⁴ King captured the reader through storytelling technique and tone, as well as historical devices that he had developed over his career in regard to landscape, biography and separate Māori and Pākehā histories. This literary devices helped to mould his modes of ‘emplotment’ for constructing his general history of New Zealand. The result was a history that his audience found palatable and easy to digest. While some of King’s ideas had come through a gamut of refinement and re-evaluation his core belief about New Zealand history in regard to Pākehā identity did not waiver: Māori and Pākehā had a shared past and without interaction with one another Pākehā notions of collective and individual identities would not have developed in the way he experienced them. King acknowledged, like himself, that contemporary New Zealanders were active participants in the historical narrative and should be treated in this manner. This was achieved by King through inclusion of their experiences through his personal style within the text as well as making his *History* accessible to their sensibilities. In this matter ‘King has a better sense of this audience than most New Zealand historians.’²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ Howe, ‘Michael King’, (2003).

²⁷⁵ Hilliard, p.176.

Conclusion

Michael Row the Boat Ashore

King was the most read and recognisable historian of his generation because he successfully catered for a general New Zealand audience. In doing so King sustained a profitable career as a writer in New Zealand. From this position he was able to communicate his histories of New Zealand from his self-appointed position of *kawekorero*. King mediated between the peoples of New Zealand and their histories by maintaining a simple literary framework for his texts that made them readable without being constrained by academic nuances and jargon. This made his approach to history writing not only easier for a general audience to trust, because of his even tone and inclusive personal narrative, but it also made the reader feel that they were a part of the historical process: a part of history that was their own.

The history that King presented for the general reader however, was one of his own construction. Early on in his career, through his interaction with Māori and his immersion in their *tikanga* and life ways, he was able to address the political climate in New Zealand – during the 1970s and to the end of the 1980s – that excluded Māori stories from the main narrative of New Zealand history. During his exploration of Māori culture through his application of life history writing King discovered something unexpected: a point of comparison for his own identity. King deduced from *mātauranga Māori* a European equivalence of indigenous status that had been fostered and grown because of the Māori elements it had encountered.

This sense of belonging was only strengthened through the association with the landscape. As the landscape is a constant ingredient in the life of all human beings, King used the power of this mechanism to embed further his belonging to New Zealand not just in an imagined way through being *Pākehā*, but also by physically belonging to the geographical space. These spaces were constructed on a personal and collective level. These stylistic devices ensured a history of Māori and *Pākehā* settlers that was imbued an organic and ancient belonging to the landscape. Also, King saw the landscape as a place of interaction where the ‘seeds of contact’ began to take root.

Hence, his use of life histories in the form of memoir, biography and autobiography reinforced the relationships that New Zealanders had with one another and the landscape. This focus on the individual within the national narrative was a way in which King made the reader feel like a part of their own history by inviting them to acknowledge their own experiences and memories as a part of history through identification with the examples of other New Zealand subjects. King's purpose for wanting the reader to think about their own construction of self was so they could realise that they could and still should identify on an individual level in many diverse ways, but simultaneously feel a strong sense of belonging to the nation of New Zealand without guilt or apology.

In his general history of New Zealand King presented to his people of New Zealand, in one work, all these themes he had incorporated through his career to aid their understanding of history and themselves within it. While academics have critiqued the 'sober old-fashioned' style of the text King has always been forthright about his place within the narrative. King wrote from his own generational perception of what it meant to be an Irish Catholic male in New Zealand. This generation of baby boomers wanted to break free from the social conservatism of their parents' generation and find their own meaning towards current affairs and social situation in New Zealand. This led King to approach the writing of New Zealand history through his own experiences which were altered by his study of Māori subjects and his perception of mātauranga Pākehā through interaction with the landscape and peoples of New Zealand.

Those scholars who no longer see the validity in the nation as the meta-narrative of a country's history think that it obscures diversity. As the contributors to the *New Oxford History* have argued: 'At best, therefore, the nation may be defined as an historical category and a matrix through which to view and explain the past; at worst, it is seen to be implicit in continuing, rather than addressing, the colonial project.'¹ Hence, their aim was to offer new frames of reference from which to explain New Zealand's past and deconstruct its previous histories. Yet King has shown that even through an optimistic progressive narrative there was opportunity to incorporate

¹ Giselle Byrnes, 'Introduction: Reframing New Zealand History', *New Oxford History of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2009), p.9.

individual experiences and explore minority identities that make up the ‘iron filings’ of differing cultures, experiences and identifiers of individuals to the larger placeholder of the nation.

Through understanding King’s emphasis on the nation in his histories as a placeholder for reflection on other more personal historical narratives, his contribution to New Zealand history can be rethought by historiographers as something other than totalising and culturally dominant. Historians like those who have contributed to the *NOHNZ* (2009) wish to dislodge the nation from the centre of New Zealand history, in order to explore more pathways for academic study that are more inclusive of diversity. However, King has shown that not only was the nation a safe collective identifier for many New Zealanders, but it was only one of many parts of their historical past. While a focus on the nation as an identifier has problematic implications with regard to inclusivity and exclusivity so too do other identifiers such as ethnicity, gender, sex, age and class. King saw the most productive way to present New Zealanders’ history to its people was to present them with a recognisable framework – the nation – for understanding their identity.

From this thesis there are a number of different options for new research. The first relates to a more in depth study of King’s career. By using this thesis as a base it can be built on to include all of King’s published works from magazines, newspapers and other media. It would be a great PhD topic. In the same vein this study could be used to compile either a literary biography or biography proper of King. Most importantly however, this thesis has shown that the nation is not a redundant category for history writing. Collective notions of identity are important for firstly gaining an elementary understanding of a historical past that then can be overlaid by the historian, refined and critiqued. Historians should not view the framework of nationhood as restrictive and totalising, but as a placeholder that is malleable and inclusive of many histories. King has shown that you do not have to de-centre the nation from the New Zealand historical narrative to achieve a more complex history. Recasting King’s work from a culturally dominant bicultural Pākehā narrative, to a much more complex approach to New Zealand histories in which the many individual identities – (‘iron filings’) that attach themselves to the larger identifier of the nation (‘magnet’) – are at the core of his construction of New Zealand’s historical past. King’s career historiographically

was an approach that had multiple narratives rather than one singular discursive framework. Yet this approach should be viewed and critiqued as one of the many historical interpretations of New Zealand's past, present and future.

Here in the place of posts
I think I can just make him out

a man in a boat
rowing across the last half-mile of twilight²

² Bill Manhire, 'Opoutere', *Lifted* (Wellington, 2005), quoted in *Moonlight: New Zealand Poems on Death and Dying* (ed.) Andrew Johnston (Auckland, 2008), pp.125-129.

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