THE FUTURE OF NEW ZEALAND STUDIES: LOCAL AND GLOBAL, MAORI AND PAKEHA

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[The following is Richard Hill's contribution to the final seminar of the Stout Research Centre's 25th anniversary 'The Future of New Zealand Studies' seminar series, held on 3 June 2009. The seminar was co-presented with Peter Adds, Head of School, Te Kawa a Maui/School of Maori Studies, who led off the presentation. When 'we' is used in the first two sections of this contribution, it refers to an agreed position of the co-presenters, as worked out in the planning of the seminar.]

Why Local and Global, Maori and Pakeha?

Peter Adds and I are aware that the title of our seminar might imply that, in suggesting both a local *and* a global approach for New Zealand Studies, we are trying to have it both ways. Or indeed, we might be accused of having it multiple ways, for we also argue for the need to study the spaces in between the global and local. Essentially, however, we would argue that the international and the local are inextricably linked. ('The local' here means any scholarship about New Zealand, from locality to national, from single item to broad brush concerns.) We would argue that the most relevant and fruitful future for New Zealand Studies lies in exploring *both* New Zealand-based and international phenomena. You cannot have local without global, and vice versa. And you add value to both by exploring, not just the geographical, but also the conceptual and other linkages in the spaces between.

Some might think, too, that by specifying Maori *and* pakeha, we are again avoiding the hard issues. But we are insistent that New Zealand Studies needs to concern itself with both peoples, given our increasingly bicultural nation. And also (and in fact especially) it needs to analyse the interconnecting spaces between indigenous and non-indigenous. Further, in view of burgeoning multiculturalist developments in New Zealand and the escalation of indigenous assertion worldwide, New Zealand-focussed scholars need also to analyse Maori and pakeha relations with other ethnicities. By studying Maori and pakeha, and their relationships to each other and other ethnicities, we can enhance the scholarship we offer to both ourselves and the rest of the world.

In advocating the combining of local and global, western and indigenous studies, we are linking with a worldwide scholarly trend towards studying the spatial and conceptual interconnections between things – towards interrogating, and casting off if necessary, inherited assumptions. Kerry Howe has said New Zealanders are not good at coping with complexity. If true, that is all the more reason for New Zealandist scholars to re-examine, complexify and re-pattern our perspectives. A common denominator among many international attempts to seek new knowledge

is to produce it within third spaces of existence between western and indigenous. One promising, if challenging, way of doing so is to develop 'third way' modes of scholarship which are neither western nor indigenous, but which combine elements of both to enhance the insights derived from each.

Interdisciplinarity

In sum, we need local and global, indigenous and western studies; and we also need to develop scholarship on the linkages between all of these, including examining encounters at those sites of contestability and cooperation which thrive in the middle grounds between perceptions, spaces and peoples. In the current New Zealand state of knowledge this might need to involve not just *more* disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, but also *targeted* interdisciplinary research, particularly in the very difficult terrain of cross- and inter-cultural studies. It is in these areas, which are currently liminal in scholarship but might one day transcend liminality in societal terms, where the role of New Zealand Studies, and of the Stout Research Centre in particular, might perhaps best make its mark in the next 25 years.

Why New Zealand Studies?

Charlotte Macdonald intriguingly argued in this series that the first New Zealand studies centre was established in the first decade of the colony. It involved Maori and pakeha, and – being an imperial institution – bringing enlightenment and 'civilisation' to supposed 'benighted savages'. In also aiming to understand 'the New Zealand mind', founder George Selwyn was already in effect investigating how 'exceptional' New Zealand was, within both empire and the Pacific. The discourse of exceptionalism has been with us ever since, an echo of that elsewhere – including in the American Studies milieu which, as Jock Phillips noted, helped inspire setting up 'the Stout'. In Simon Schama's most recent book you can see 'being American' depicted as a 'go-get' rather than a territorial state of mind, one bent on an exceptionalist mission – the consequences of whose application we all live with today.

James Belich's work has shown that a key element in New Zealand's exceptionalist discourse relates to prototypal nationalist developments in pakeha New Zealand being superseded after the 1880s by reversion to economic and therefore cultural dependence on 'the Mother Country'. As a result, for almost a century autochthonous pakeha culture was assigned to the marginalisation already allocated Maori culture. To the extent that exceptionalism existed, it was a very skewed phenomenon – that of a 'Better Britain' rather than an 'Admirable Aotearoa'.

Incipient pakeha nationalist assertion from the 1930s became overwhelming after Britain joined Europe in 1973, around the time of the beginning years of the modern Maori Renaissance. The Stout Research Centre arose in these twin contexts – the casting off of the 'colonial cringe' and the modern efflorescence of Maori culture. As a research centre founded to challenge received wisdom, as Phillips noted, its scholarship fed into both of these developments in our society. In examining the concept of exceptionalism, a number of scholars associated with the Stout were able to cast aside the triumphalism which had previously been inherent in exceptionalist argument.

Balance
Obviously, and correctly, the balance of scholarship at the Stout has been weighted towards in depth examination of New Zealand issues at national or sub-national level. The centre was created essentially to facilitate research on what was unique and exceptional in this country, and there was a lot of that in the last sizeable land mass to be settled by people – and the last of the classical 'settler colonies'. A great deal has been done in building up New Zealand studies at the Stout and elsewhere.

But … to the future. New developments at the Stout, and elsewhere among New Zealandist scholars, are now increasingly discernible. In particular, there has been a tentative change in *balance*, a moving of New Zealand studies outside of the geographical and conceptual parameters within which so much of pioneering work in the field has been done. Such change has been manifested in two principal ways:

- In-depth, lateral-thinking investigation into often difficult and uncomfortable New Zealand topics, such as ethnicities and the relationships between them;
- Production of scholarship which interrelates New Zealand and global issues – avoiding the fetishising of boundaries of all types, and instead exploring their porousness.

These major trends need further development. In discussing this, I first cover local issues, those orientated internally to New Zealand.

Scholarship about the Local
In focussing on the local for over twenty five years, kiwi-based scholarship has been helping create the building blocks for better understanding our society and its degree of uniqueness or otherwise. There is a lot more needed even now. In this series we have heard from Charlotte Macdonald of the need for research into religion, from Brad Patterson a plea to interrogate the notion of Britishness, from Roger Blackley to look at the realities and discomforts of colonial art, from Hilary and John Mitchell about the tribal imperative for whakapapa-based histories. There are many, many neglected subjects, including – astonishingly – in aspects of gender and particularly of class. There is a total absence of work on popular entertainment such as wrestling, and scarcely much more on subjects of key significance to past and present life in New Zealand, such as surveillance and intelligence.

More work on the building up of the edifice of New Zealand studies, then, is required. The most micro of studies can add value. I think here of William Faulkner's dictum: 'to comprehend the world you have to understand a place like Mississippi'. Some of these building-block studies will be discipline based, some interdisciplinary. The most useful will be those which incorporate theoretical perspectives, whether these have been developed here or imported/adapted – but perhaps especially those combining theory produced both locally and globally.

Local research also needs to be more innovative in its methodologies, if the quality of local studies and their potential contribution to international debates is to be enhanced. Maria Bargh pointed to the need for pakeha scholars to come to

terms with 'te Ao Maori', and challenged them to appreciate the insights that can be gained from both Maori research methodology and matauranga Maori. Teresia Teaiwa challenged us to look at things through Pacific lenses, arguing that a Pasifika concept of three navels might provide greater analytical scope than a western uni-'navel gaze'. The Mitchells elaborated on the way Maori move into the future with their face to the past, and pakeha scholars wanting to incorporate insights from this can look to similar concepts in some western scholarly traditions – some works of Walter Benjamin's, for example.

In stressing both the huge amount of source-based work yet to be done in this country, and the significance of interrelating it to theory, the Stout Research Centre's Director Lydia Wevers expanded on the richness of 'the archive' into which we can now delve – a concept much elaborated from the meaning of the word 'archive' when I started work as an archivist. The 'new archive' constitutes disparate human and material resources; it hosts sites of contested power; it is a citadel from which to police or liberate according to circumstances. Lydia Wevers' exampled archive, ostensibly inhabiting a tiny and remote corner of the empire, turns out to be intimately connected to both power and place – not just elsewhere in New Zealand but in the world. Which provides my segue to the global.

Scholarship about the Global

Roger Blackley's presentational device of utilising Macaulay's 'New Zealander' reminds us of the links between local and global in the very first year of the colony: a Maori in a future London, a figure selected for being exotic – but selected, nevertheless, because of the familiarity with Maori by the readership of the world's then greatest metropolitan power.

Even as different groups of scholars in this country were hosting New Zealand Studies seminars and exploring the concept of a centre for them, one of the 20th century's most globally influential scholars, the kiwi JGA Pocock, was proclaiming the need to develop research into the emergence of a 'British world' of mutual interaction – an inter-cultural world of clash and cooperation, of rejection and intermixing, of coloniser and colonised.

While gradually taking up research into what was seen as the primary, Atlantic nexus of this world, scholars also began examining other interconnected worlds, including the 'Pacific world' and the 'Tasman world'. With the advent of the works of Frederick Cooper and others before and after him, the centres and peripheries of empires and post-empires were being seen as important as each other: colony and empire, and their aftermath, were believed to be most usefully viewed within a single framework of interconnecting pieces.

Rebalancing

But trans-national comparative history remains in its infancy, partly because it constitutes such difficult conceptual terrain. This is where New Zealand studies can offer a significant contribution. I envisage a rebalancing mechanism operating at the Stout and elsewhere in studies on New Zealand subjects in the future: namely, research building on the achievements of the last quarter century that will put New Zealand scholarship back into the world and the world back into New

Zealand Studies. This time, however, New Zealandist scholars will be doing so on their own terms – not those of the colonial-cringe scholarship which still prevailed when I went to university in the later 1960s.

Jock Phillips' initial founding theses for the Stout included internationalism, but obviously, and urgently, a quarter of a century ago the focus had to be on the local. Now, the emphasis can – indeed should – move more firmly towards internationalising New Zealand studies. What, then, might this mean?

1. Firstly, and most obviously, we need to re-stress impacts upon New Zealand from outside our borders – our membership of not just the British world, but of the global community. This can assist understanding of ourselves and our past. In his recent fine biography of Sir Donald McLean, for example, Ray Fargher, wondering how a Maoriphile man of letters can also be an arch dispossessor of Maori, in effect concludes that there are two McLeans. A reading of some international scholarship can lead one to another, to my mind more satisfactory conclusion: that there was just one McLean, a typical imperial official who conflated culture, learning, scientific curiosity and empathy with indigenes on the one hand, with a 'civilising mission' that was prepared to go as far, if necessary, as Kurtz's words in *Heart of Darkness*: 'exterminate the brutes'.

2. Secondly, we need to re-examine the role of New Zealand as a player in the world. One just needs to mention the deliberate decision to omit foreign affairs from the 1981 *Oxford History of New Zealand* to indicate how far the New Zealandist pendulum had once swung, even before the founding of the Stout.

In this series, Teresia Teaiwa covered these first two points – bringing the world to bear on NZ and vice versa – with reference to the interpenetration of New Zealand and the Pacific.

3. Thirdly, NZ Studies scholars can add value to macro scholarship, and international comparative research. I will mention just three such ways:
    - We can feed in empirically-based evidence from New Zealand;
    - We can introduce research techniques using technology developed within what used to be called our 'knowledge economy' (such as use of mass digitisation);
    - Most importantly perhaps, we can apply both innovative theories and methodologies developed within New Zealand to issues of international concern.

Adding value to analysis of issues of global import is already the direction in which scholarship at the Stout is moving. Both Lydia Wevers' current study on the library at Brancepeth, involving intersections of literature, class and empire, and James Belich's book which is about to be published by Oxford University Press, use sources from the expansive archive and techniques and ideas developed within New Zealandist scholarship to tackle concerns that are of international resonance.

The title alone of the latter work is evocative of taking New Zealand-derived academic theory boldly onto a world stage: *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld 1783-1939*. Covering great chunks of the globe over a 156 year period, this is the kind of work that Jared Diamond calls 'large-scale history…offering profound new insights'. One description of the book says that '[i]t is a story that has such crucial implications for the histories of settler societies, the homelands that spawned them, and the indigenous peoples who resisted them, that their full histories cannot be written without it.' Those who are acquainted with its author's New Zealand-based outputs will find many resonances in his new book.

My own next major project is one of international comparative history, also based on New Zealand-derived research findings and analyses. It aims at a two-century sweep of policing techniques across not only colonial but imperial boundaries.

In Between

All three projects at the Stout which I have mentioned involve, among other things, scrutinising the spaces in between the local and the global, the indigenous and the western. I now turn to these geographical and conceptual 'spaces between'. Teresia Teaiwa reminded us that among alternative ways of looking at the world to those which the majority of New Zealanders know, are Pacific ways; that we are inextricably linked to the Pacific; that here boundaries are permeable; and that the Pacific is in us and that we are in the Pacific, with the 'us' who are Maori being linked in by genealogy too.

It might be said that the Pacific constitutes third space for both Maori and pakeha. That its porous boundaries link us to Asia and beyond, to the Americas and beyond – on to both the old imperial metropolises, and to former colonies which experienced the same kind of exploitation as the indigenes and landscapes of New Zealand.

Third Space in New Zealand

Jock Phillips, founding director of the Stout Research Centre, began this series by acknowledging the scholarship of Geoff Park, a former JD Stout Fellow at this Centre, who had died the day before. He had conducted pioneering, interdisciplinary work in tracing the troubled interface between land and people in Aotearoa. He undertook his research on a number of planes – be it going deep into rugged New Zealand bush for weeks on end, or travelling through the flat and tamed fenlands of East Anglia, where the 19th century drainers of our swamps learnt their trade.

Maria Bargh's contribution challenged us to make New Zealand Studies 'more deeply of this place'. One way of doing so is to try to meld 'western' and Maori methodologies and ways of seeing things. Both pakeha and indigenous scholars can interact with and learn from each other, and there have been discussions on possible research collaborations between the Stout and Maori Studies. One of Geoff Park's last major projects was to work for the Stout Research Centre's Treaty of Waitangi Research Unit in a Marsden-funded project aiming to meld western and indigenous modes of scholarship. He was working with the Ngati Hine tribe on the pre-1840 relationship between Maori and pakeha, flora and

fauna, in the Bay of Islands. He was – and we still are – testing hypotheses which go to the heart of Article Two of the Treaty of Waitangi, which may have ramifications for the way we all perceive rangatiratanga itself.

In another Stout Research Centre project, doctoral candidate Taingahue Walker, of Ngati Porou, is interrogating the concept of whanau, exploring the intersections and differences between the ways her tribal informants see whanau, and the way western scholars and policymakers see it.

Merging methodologies is incredibly challenging, and tends to be resisted by scholarly 'establishments' and disciplinary gatekeepers. Revisionist scholarship which disturbs or challenges mainstream popular *and* academic 'wisdom' is, moreover, likely to be met with not just academic but popular rejection as well – even hysteria, as we were reminded when hearing about the reception of James Belich's book and TV documentary about 'the New Zealand Wars'.

Prospects

But Belich also pointed out that recent developments in kiwi society can also encourage development of breakthrough ideas and methods in at least ethnic-related scholarship – more so here than in than in some other places, including the Australia of the 'history wars'. So, the concept of the search for third spaces between conventional subjects, methodologies, boundaries and disciplines might prove to be more viable here than other societies.

In that search, we can call in the help of theoreticians who explore the interconnectedness of events, phenomena and people. Theories of indigenous orality can be useful, or Homi Bhabha's hybridisation theses, or Gramscian notions of hegemony and Foucauldian elucidations of surveillance-discipline regimes – a vast list could be compiled. Recourse to discourses of interconnectedness can help us avoid essentialism, or reclaim agency for the indigenous and the exploited, or acknowledge the porousness of boundaries between places and people, metropole and colony (or postcolony).

But we cannot rely on theory alone: after reading some theoretically constructed academic outputs on indigeneity in the western world, one has to remind oneself that actually the indigenous *were* conquered and dispossessed. It all comes back to the balance I was referring to above – a balance often found in the liminal or in-between or third spaces.

In elaborating on balance and melding, I will just mention recent work in the education field by Wally Penetito. He detects, as one result of increasing pakeha acceptance of the fruits of the Maori Renaissance, an emerging biculturalist approach to the world in society, academia and policy making. This manifests itself, among other things, in pakeha willingness to take on board Maori tikanga, initiatives and worldviews. Where application of kaupapa Maori, Maori knowledge and philosophy, once used to be considered radical and fringe in mainstream society or academic and professional life in New Zealand, this is now decreasingly so.

Wally Penetito sees hope in an emerging sense of shared belongingness among New Zealanders – perhaps even some movement towards what was once believed by pakeha to be 'the truth', that race relations were better here than elsewhere: '[i]t simply makes good sense to work together'. If good sense does prevail, it *would* make us rather exceptional in a world of ethnic and culture clash, somewhere to learn from. And I note that some academic work on reparative historical justice already sees our Treaty of Waitangi resolution processes as world leaders.

Some of the above might seem to go close to 'scholarship in support of a cause'. My own view on this, however, is to echo sociologist Norbert Elias: all scholars need to find their own balance between involvement and detachment, but at least an attempt at objectivity is a necessary part of that balance. Without trying to find out what really happened, and why, the outputs of scholarship will not only be impaired, they will be of lesser use in whatever cause the scholar is advocating – the necessity of debate on any significant public issue, for example, or the liberation of peoples. People will not respect, say, a blatantly presentist work of history, or academic dismissal of a literary or artistic oeuvre as nothing more than covert support for enslavement or imperial conquest.

Conclusion

This takes me back to standards. When the Stout Research Centre was established, its reflection of 'cultural nationalism' within academia at the time did not preclude the application of rigorous standards – indeed, if it were to succeed it *required* them, as Jock Phillips pointed out in the first seminar of this series.

Looking back over the books, seminar series and conferences generated from within the Stout, one can see that it has clearly produced an extraordinary amount of fine academic outputs (as of course have a number of other New Zealand-focussed scholars during its 25 years). I have suggested that a primary exercise now before us is to put New Zealand back into the world and the world back into New Zealand; to find third-space ways of doing so; and/or to give due weight to Maori subjects and methodologies along the way. All of this may require even greater rigour than in the past. Perhaps such matters might fruitfully be discussed further at the Stout's twenty-fifth conference later this year.