

2020 Joan Cook Memorial State of the Pākehā Nation Essay

Treaty education group Network Waitangi Whangārei has commissioned annual reflections on the State of the Pākehā Nation since 2006. Founding member the Rev. Joan Cook died in 2010 and the essays since that time commemorate her pioneering Treaty and anti-racism work. As an Australian she was so intrigued by the racial and cultural contradictions of her adopted country that she learned and then taught us our hidden history over several decades.

The speeches and essays are free to download from the NWW website nwwhangarei.wordpress.com, along with Treaty of Waitangi Questions & Answers. The group co-published with Te Kawariki an independent panel report on Stage I of the Ngāpuhi claim (WAI 1040), called Ngāpuhi Speaks, available as an e-book from meBooks.co.nz or hard copies from reotahi2@gmail.com.

About the author

Tim McCreanor

Senior researcher at Whāriki Research Group, Tim McCreanor is a Pākehā social scientist who has been studying Pākehā discourse for several decades analysing the role talk and texts play in maintaining colonial power relations of Aotearoa so these can be critiqued and challenged.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Introduction

My parents Helen and Jack were the children of immigrants from Ireland and Scotland so I am a second generation Pākehā. I grew up in Whanganui a Tara but have lived with my partner in Tāmaki Makaurau for decades. Our 4 kids are grown and flown and we have two baby grandsons who are bringing lovely chaos back to our home!

I work at Whāriki Research Group, a Māori public health research organisation. Under the leadership of Professor Helen Moewaka Barnes, Whāriki has established a tino rangatiratanga research ethos and track record. The centre works in an aspirational *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* partnership with SHORE, a Pākehā public health research group led by Professor Sally Casswell. I am a senior Pākehā qualitative researcher, increasingly involved with community action projects around social and environmental justice.

In this essay I provide a brief context around colonisation and the Māori proposal *Matike Mai*¹ that seeks equitable relationships with all other New Zealanders through a programme of constitutional transformation. The central issue is decolonisation and I want to discuss the importance of talk, text and language that Pakeha New Zealanders in particular use in relation to Māori and Māori/Pakeha relations. I will draw on research studies of this topic to outline a series of patterns or themes in such talk that can only be used to attack, undermine and marginalise Māori and discuss tentative possible alternatives. Finally I return to *Matike Mai* to argue that dealing with these racist ways of talking and thinking is crucial to taking up the Māori invitation into the decolonising relationship that can ensure that fair and just futures become a possibility for all New Zealanders.

Like many others adopting the kupu taonga Pākehā as an identity marker, I seek to mindfully acknowledge a fundamental cultural politics that places the relationship between Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti, between Māori and later settlers, at the centre of national life. The term Pākehā is highly contested, but I find it useful to refer to those mainly British settlers and the Crown, who entered into agreements with Tangata Whenua in the early years of colonisation. In the breaches and gross dishonouring of those agreements, Pākehā as those who gained from these transgressions, need to be identifiable to take up the responsibility for working to right these foundational wrongs.

Among Pākehā there are many who reject such positioning for diverse reasons, so to speak of us as a nation glosses over historical and political complexities and risks incoherence. Nevertheless experience, observation and research suggest there is sufficient common ground among Pākehā as beneficiaries of colonisation, to think of us as a group and build an

¹ Mutu, M et al (2016) He Whakaaro Here Whakaumu Mo Aotearoa; The Report of *Matike Mai* Aotearoa. www.converge.org.nz/pma/MatikeMaiAotearoaReport.pdf

argument for a significant change in the ways we conduct ourselves in relation to Tangata Whenua.

What I can offer here rests on the wisdom, energies, support and encouragement of many activists, workers and researchers – Māori and Tangata Tiriti – around the country. In particular, Māori research colleagues and the activists of Tāmaki Treaty Workers, alongside others from wider te Tiriti networks, are my touchstones and mentors.

Colonisation

In early 2020 so many crises are crowding the public consciousness that the nation's oldest calamity is relegated to the back shelves once again, despite the energies, vision and inspirations of Maori. From 1840, colonisation tore up the established, internationally recognised Māori society of Aotearoa, grabbing land, resources and power from Tangata Whenua, halving the population by 1890, dragging injustice and intergenerational trauma in its wake. In the contemporary setting, the depth, breadth and longevity of the continuing assault on the Māori world means that the daunting, comprehensive challenges of decolonisation, disparities and social justice, go to the very heart of our identity and self-worth as a nation.

In this context the issues begin with the European enlightenment mindsets that inspired belief in destiny, patriarchy, racism, acquisitive exploration, terra nullius, the doctrine of discovery and unbridled capitalism. As Anne Salmond has recently reiterated, race is a key dimension of such understandings of the world which spring from a European schema called the Great Chain of Being:

...God at the apex, followed by archangels and angels, divine kings, the aristocracy and successive ranks of humans from 'civilised' to 'savage', followed by animals, plants, minerals and the earth in descending order². (p35)

This worldview assisted by proselytising religious ideology, fuelled, the first waves of global exploitation and colonisation from the West. Colonisation brought disease pandemics, environmental degradation and socio-political exclusion of Māori that combined with land alienation, economic takeover, mass immigration, racism and ruinous military violence, severely damaged Māori social orders.

Despite the undertakings of the British Crown in the 1830-40s and strong Māori dissent from colonial development, European worldviews were imposed and continue to dominate society. Those understandings woven into a seamless web of Pākehā-centric culture, knowledge, practices and institutions – mostly conveyed by talk, text, narrative and stories – constitute the particular version of ongoing colonisation as applied and developed in Aotearoa. Colonisation remains as a constant but evolving driver of society in ways that continue to shape and the strangle lives and potentials of individuals, communities and nation.

² Salmond, A. (2017) *Tears of Rangi: Experiments across worlds*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.

Matike Mai

Recognition of these sources of social injustice, their threats to social sustainability and the need for change have, in the last decade raised interest around shortcomings in the constitutional arrangements that underpin the operation of key institutions of society. With multiple interests in play in this domain, the government, in 2010, announced a review. The subsequent report from an expert panel in 2013 advised the Crown to continue the conversation with the people. In the same year, independently but cognisant of these actions, the Iwi Chairs forum promoted what came to be the Working Group on Constitutional Transformation, under the leadership of Professor Margaret Mutu and Dr Moana Jackson.

The Working Group report *Matike Mai* was published in 2016 after expansive discussions through hundreds of hui, with thousands of participants, complemented by written submissions, focus groups and interviews, gathered throughout the motu. From this deeply grounded process came the substance of findings that frame both an underlying kaupapa and suggested new arrangements of constitutional relations that could honour the rights, contributions and aspirations of all people of Aotearoa.

Matike Mai incorporates understandings of the independence of hapū and iwi, alongside their interdependence through whakapapa, within the wider Māori polity, as the basis for constitutional authority. It constructs a similar dynamic between Māori and the Crown where just constitutional relations require the independence of both to make decisions for their peoples, while acknowledging their interdependence under *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* in the life of the nation. The report draws upon history, tikanga Māori, *He Whakaputanga o Te Rangatiratanga o Niu Tirenī*, *Te Tiriti* and the United Nations *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People*, to conceptualise linked but distinct domains of political life:

We call those spheres of influence the “rangatiratanga sphere”, where Māori make decisions for Māori and the “kāwanatanga sphere” where the Crown will make decisions for its people. The sphere where they will work together as equals we call the “relational sphere” because it is where the Tiriti relationship will operate. (p9)

To enact this vision, to be able to ‘work together as equals’ in the light of the realities of colonial history, its unresolved injustices and disparities, the Crown needs to be able to match the radical generosity of Māori and bring to the table a mighty commitment from Tangata Tiriti. As a group we are so far behind our te Tiriti partner because collectively we are ignorant of our history, we are destructive of careless in regard to our environment, insecure in our identity and deeply privileged in our lives.

These traits and habits tend to make us uninterested in the disparities and historical trauma inflicted on Māoridom via the processes of colonisation. While beneficial to an elite of Pākehā, but aspired to by many, these outcomes of colonisation encourage us to resist social transformation and believe that the status quo is fair, liveable and sustainable. *Matike Mai* articulates tikanga Māori, values and interests with great clarity while also explicitly acknowledging the rights of Tangata Tiriti and inviting all of us to do the same. This is fundamental to paving the way for that work in the relational sphere by which progress can

be made toward 'conciliatory and consensual democracy' as a key goal of constitutional transformation sought by our te Tiriti partner.

Decolonisation

Even before Matike Mai there was no shortage of encouragement to do such work. Ranginui Walker argued that Māori:

“...cannot achieve justice or resolve their grievances without Pākehā support. For this reason, Pākehā are as much a part of the process of social transformation in the post-colonial era as radical and activist Māori”.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith pointed out:

“The intellectual project of decolonizing has to set out ways to proceed through a colonizing world. It needs a radical compassion that reaches out, that seeks collaboration, and that is open to possibilities that can only be imagined as other things fall into place.”

A decade ago at Waitangi, Canon Hone Kaa reminded the nation about the importance of power in the identity politics of this country:

“It's good that you Pākehā *are* who you are, and it's important that you *know* who you are...but you need to understand *how* you are who you are – and how *powerfully* you are who you are.”

Kaa's is a critical challenge to Pākehā to address the construction and exercise of power, as a part of our voyage to pro-Tiriti futures.

Mitzi Nairn has reminded us of the words of Paulo Friere:

“Decolonisation requires different tasks of the descendants of the colonised and the descendants of the colonisers”

Just and equitable relationships between Māori and Tangata Tiriti are of vital importance to national identity, social sustainability, economic vitality and liveable futures in Aotearoa. Tangata Whenua are sovereign peoples who have made their expectations and aspirations very clear, through decades of ongoing enterprise, resistance, adaption and creativity. We anglophone settler peoples less so; from the outset our talk and actions have been ambiguous and destructively double-edged in relation to Tangata Whenua. It is we who have manipulated and dominated the developing relationships and it is our actions, narratives and discursive frameworks that lie most heavily upon society. In what may be referred to as the Pākehā colonial project, we wrote, promoted, and signed Te Tiriti. We then proceeded, using civil war, British laws and immigration, to re-interpret and enforce the understanding of it that best served our interests.

Without hierarchical beliefs about the 'natural' inferiority of Indigenous people, there is no justification for the transformation of territory, resources and social orders. The underlying

ideology about the superiority of upper and middleclass, Christian, capitalist, Englishmen, the wholesale appropriation of Aotearoa from Māori, would have been too obviously self-serving to have prevailed.

Sticks and stones

Despite being badly neglected in academic and public life, the fundamental importance of language, talk and text, has long been central to the communication and enactment of power dynamics, meanings and material outcomes of our everyday experience. People prefer not to engage with the idea that language does not simply reflect our realities but rather, actively and decisively constructs them. The 20th century change from the use of generic male gender pronouns in English, is a graphic and accessible example of ways in which words make worlds. The use of 'he' or 'his' to characterise the actions or aspirations of both women and men, is increasingly rare and widely unacceptable. Moving beyond those binary gender pronouns, provides a contemporary example of ways in which linguistic change can both lead and follow liberating social movement. Anglophone cultures in particular maintain that 'actions speak louder than words', that despite what we can see, understand and think about the world around us, language is somehow less important, not real in its effects; that 'sticks and stones may break my bones, but names can never hurt me'.

The study of such discourse in all its astonishing, banal, patterned flexibility provides important insights into how we are who we are, how we know what we know and how we do what we do; into the web of relationships, narratives and actions that constitute the Pākehā cultural project.

Standard Story

Our discourses produce, reproduce and enable a self-serving 'standard story' of Māori/Pākehā relations and our research at Whariki Research Group, suggests that such practices are a critical component of colonisation. This standard story forms a kind of 'collective unconscious' or 'commonsense', dominated by a limited number of familiar and durable patterns of speech. As such it is 'always on' and 'natural' to Pākehā speakers and listeners for the narration and interpretation of everyday events or issues in Māori/Pākehā relations.

The standard story and its recurring themes are widely drawn on in harmful, racist accounts of Māori/Pākehā relations in Aotearoa and we urgently need alternative ways of talking and thinking to help break their stranglehold. Like the generic pronouns referred to above, these themes construct the realities of the field, limiting and channelling our ways of understanding what is happening around us.

From the mid-1980s, Ray Nairn, Jenny Rankine and I have worked on various contemporary linguistic databases, to detail and expand on the key patterns in Pākehā talk about Māori and Māori/Pākehā relations referred to above. Latterly with Angela Moewaka Barnes and Belinda Borell, as a bicultural research group Kupu Taea, our studies have come to include focus group data, individual interviews, literature, film, professional practice, and mass media coverage including print, radio and television.

Our research has concluded that using these patterns can only denigrate Māori, advantage Pākehā and undermine honourable relationships between te Tiriti partners. I note that there is some overlap with Ray Nairn's Joan Cook Memorial essay from 2019 and with publications downloadable from the Treaty Resource Centre website³ where all themes are covered in more detail.

I will explore some of the themes and their effects, before turning to unpack some of the alternatives. Four of the patterns – *Treaty of Waitangi*⁴, *Pākehā as norm*, *Privilege* and *Good Māori/Bad Māori* – are particularly relevant to understanding the discursive force and some drivers of Pākehā talk about Māori. These are fleshed out a little here but for brevity mostly I cover the others in a sentence or so since a key goal for the essay is to articulate possible alternatives more clearly.

Treaty of Waitangi

This theme that we refer to as *Treaty of Waitangi* marshals multiple and complex arguments to disparage, discredit and discount *te Tiriti o Waitangi*, while simultaneously declaring that it legally conveyed a cession of Māori sovereignty, had its beginnings in 1840. Despite powerful, well-documented and accessible evidence to the contrary, especially through the Waitangi Tribunal and the work of Māori and other scholars, this theme pushes the notion that te Tiriti is divisive, legally meaningless, and of historical interest only.

In the face of growing criticisms nationally and internationally, the Crown first placed the Treaty into statute in 1975, amending the law to take in historical grievances in 1985. Always seeking to minimise the scope of the changes, this damage control included insistence on adversarial, legalistic processes within the Waitangi Tribunal, Crown promotion of a set of generalised 'Treaty Principles' – partnership, participation and protection – to stand for te Tiriti in policy and regulation. Further limitation was achieved through the establishment of unscrutinised negotiation processes between Iwi and the Crown, via the Office of Treaty Settlements.

Despite restitution, compensation and even apologies, the OTS processes have ensured that settlements are controlled by those who breached the Treaty. As such they are sensitive to racialised political pressure, limiting them to what the Pākehā polity can accept rather than appropriate legal, economic or ethical considerations, to ensure that the full significance of te Tiriti is never addressed.

Pākehā as norm

This pattern is vitally important despite being primarily characterised by absences and silences about the ethnic identity of the most powerful individuals and groups in our society. Although Pākehā are rarely named as a group they are always present, constructed as the nation, the ordinary, the community, against which other ethnic groupings are

³ <https://trc.org.nz/alternatives-anti-Māori-themes-news-media>

⁴ Here I use Treaty of Waitangi because this references the English language text which has been used throughout colonial history to claim cession of sovereignty by Māori signatories. Elsewhere throughout the essay I use Te Tiriti o Waitangi to refer to the authoritative text that was written and agreed to in te reo Māori.

viewed and measured. For example mass media rarely identify community leaders, violent offenders, politicians, clerics, child abusers, business people, fraudsters, sportspeople, academics, professionals or other newsmakers as Pākehā and yet commonly make such identifications in relation to Māori. A parallel dearth of overt reference to Pākehā in everyday conversation and politics is countered by numerous cues to their powerful presence. There are the pronouns – *us, we, our* – denote Pākehā, while Māori are marked and distanced by the third person plural – *they, them, their*. Proxies for Pākehā include: ‘all New Zealanders’; ‘the Crown’; ‘the Government’; ‘the country’; ‘national interest’; and ‘the public’, all of which ensure the country’s interests and desires are effectively those of the most powerful group.

Underpinning these constructions are a number of contradictory but powerful assumptions about identity, audience and merit that are widely accepted in this synergy of power and belief. First, there is the notion that our society is equitable, just and open which links to the idea that Pākehā culture is an unproblematic foundation for the nation and enables ongoing colonisation as a ‘natural’ process. Second, because Pākehā norms are naturalised, the constant judgement of Māori people, institutions, and practices by these standards is seen to confirm Pākehā understandings of Māori weakness, dependence, and inferiority. Māori challenges to being rendered invisible and the masking of Pākehā dominance, trigger defensive reactions about our power and control, and intensify opposition to identifying Pākehā as an ethnic/cultural group. This makes preference for masking labels such as ‘New Zealander’ and ‘Kiwi’ more likely.

Māori Privilege

Against a backdrop of supposed egalitarianism, the widely heard claim that Māori are unfairly privileged, casts them as adrift from the commonplaces of national identity – the fair-minded, hard-working individual whose achievements are well earned. It also smokescreens the realities of conferred advantage that have made Pākehā dominant and ensure that they remain so. We think that this double manoeuvre is critical to the psychosocial make up of contemporary Pākehā society. Research by Belinda Borell, suggests it is a largely unreflective, repressed, defence mechanism that hides potentially debilitating guilt and feeds racism against Māori.

Good Māori/Bad Māori

The *Good Māori/Bad Māori* pattern has truly ancient roots within conflicted European thinking about the ‘noble savage’, which in the case of Aotearoa, has even longer usage than the *Treaty of Waitangi* pattern. Its application here is evident within a seemingly inconsequential text, linked to the earliest organised colonisation of the country by British commercial interests. The book *Information Relative to New Zealand*⁵, was first published by the New Zealand Land Company in 1839 and given its many reprints, must have been influential in persuading colonists to emigrate whilst creating expectations about their destination. The narrative juggles Pākehā constructions of Māori inferiority, primitivity and brutality against nobility, sophistication and innovation in an account that could at once be used to appreciate and criticise Māori character, behaviour and actions. Stepping ashore

⁵ Ward, J. (1839) *Information Relative to New Zealand*.

into environments very different to their homelands, settlers could draw upon the positive depiction of Māori to understand the shelter, sustenance and support offered by tangata whenua. As the strength of settler establishments began to grow, the negative portrayals of Māori could be used to rationalise rejecting Māori interests, asserting settler superiority and dominance.

Published findings show the themes of Pākehā talk at work in a wide range of public and private interchanges. From this and related work we have constructed textual collages to show how the elements can link together to constitute the standard story and to highlight the toxicity and harm of these discursive foundations.

Here is how a standard story version might sound:

This country needs to get over this politically correct rubbish about colonisation. We used to have the best race relations in the world before a few radicals started stirring up trouble with the Maoris, filling their heads with ideas and hopes that are completely unrealistic. All this nonsense about the Treaty, which is ancient history that I wasn't party to, has gotten even the good Maoris, riled up, demanding and troublesome, thinking that they should get land and compensation. The problem is that Māori culture can't foot it in the modern world and it's being swept aside the same way the Māori did to the Moriori. Māoris are pretty upset about this but they've started ramming their language and their powhiris and their tangis down our throats. They need to move on and forget about losing what they never owned, pick up the spade, put on the suit and put their shoulder to the common wheel for the national good. We're one people now, kiwis, and we don't want Māori rights for this and that privileging them and dividing our country.

I am not saying we would ever hear such an account in this exact form and many Pākehā would be cautious about openly stating such views. However, when Pākehā discuss issues pertinent to Māori/Pākehā relations, variants of this standard story can be shown to be shaping and resourcing thoughts, comments and understandings. In an effort to counter this populist version of Māori/Pākehā relations we have built an alternative story, incomplete and tentative, but a Tangata Tiriti attempt to speak directly to the power of the hegemonic.

Alternatives

To shift the standard story renditions about the *Treaty of Waitangi* it is essential that reformed relations be founded on te Tiriti o Waitangi, the authoritative text that was signed between rangatira Māori and the Crown in 1840-41. Of critical importance here is the assertion of Māori authorities over the decades and eventually in the Waitangi Tribunal judgement WAI 1040 in 2014, that Māori signings of te Tiriti of Waitangi do *not* effect a cession of sovereignty to the Crown. There are huge learnings required of Pākehā in order to first accept but then begin to understand and interpret what the removal of the long-held Crown assumption of sovereignty means in theoretical, political and practical terms. Major engagement with and commitment to this alternative theme by Pākehā is required to generate the momentum toward decolonisation.

Alternative framings of *Pākehā as norm* with the potential to change the tenor of the relationship between Māori and Pākehā, are not so difficult to construct. For example, we could celebrate Pākehā culture as one among many adding to the richness and diversity of Aotearoa/New Zealand rather than dominating it. Pākehā culture should be understood as a regional variant of Western culture – itself a combination of influences, elements and traditions. In news reporting and other narratives or conversations, the even-handed use of ethnic labelling would routinely ‘flag’ ethnic achievement, issues and misbehaviour in ways that produced better understanding of all ethnicities and contributed to social cohesion and mutual respect.

Valuable advances in relation to the *Privilege* theme, could be secured by exploring the realities of entrenched Pākehā privilege and better explanation of contexts within which any allocations to redress disparities between Pākehā and Māori are set. For instance, the legitimacy and efficacy of the Māori seats in parliament are constantly challenged by Pākehā, although the seats were originally established by the settler government to limit Māori representation and the possibility that Māori would democratically dominate parliament.

In the case of the *Good Māori: Bad Māori* theme, more constructive understandings would include the recognition that Māori are, like any group, diverse, with a range of lifestyles, experiences and opinions. Pākehā judgements of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ are fickle and defined by their own interests so it would be useful to reject the divide-and-rule approach or adopt it in an even-handed fashion so that Pākehā are similarly represented.

Other Themes and alternatives

The *One People* theme which entrenches monoculturalism through the assumption of Pākehā as the norm, can be challenged by a notion of unity in diversity. Here rather than demanding that ‘one size fits all’, the rich, varied adaptability of many traditions will enhance social equity and sustainability.

The theme of *Rights* draws heavily on English common law and adversarial processes to discount and marginalise Māori legal codes and practices. As well as acknowledging the rights enshrined in te Tiriti, alternative framings of rights can emphasise the benefits of more consensual, communitarian and restorative approaches taken by Māori.

A pair of concepts make the theme *Hypersensitivity and Ignorance* in which Pākehā routinely claim ‘they didn’t know’, arguing that Māori were too busy being offended to share the needed information, works to blame Māori and excuse Pākehā for conflict in interactions. For Pākehā better understandings of Māori values and aspirations can resolve tensions and encourage reflection on constructive engagements.

The theme that we have long called *Stirrers* (as in ‘trouble-makers’) is used to undermine Māori articulation of their rights and resistance to injustice by isolating those who make a stand. What is needed in this space is acknowledgement of the injustices underlying the myriad of grievances and recognition that Māori leadership is diverse, but grounded in the knowledge and support of their people in ways that are vital to their survival and thriving.

A theme of *Māori Crime/Violence* has long been a staple element of the standard story that has consistently ignored the context of colonial destruction that created and maintains the conditions of deprivation in which desperation or alienation drives offending. Elimination of poverty, racism and the constructive acknowledgement of Māori strengths and contributions to society can help to reset social relations in ways that work better for all sectors of society.

The theme *Māori Culture* mocks and marginalises tangata whenua in particularly hypocritical ways given that we selectively use aspects of the culture to represent New Zealand society to the world. Underpinning such ambivalence with genuine expressions of Pākehā values that are complementary to tikanga Māori as expressed in Matike Mai and elsewhere could enhance the mutual respect.

The *Māori Inheritance* theme, particularly through dusty old populist notions of 'blood fractions' (removed from statutes in 1975) is often used to undermine the diverse identities and authenticity of Māori peoples and communities. Recognition and valuing of the diverse heritage of all groups in society can underpin and flesh out the alternative of unity in diversity.

The theme of *Māori Resources* as guaranteed in te Tiriti are widely attacked within the colonial project as selfishly advantaging Māori and blocking commercial enterprise. Acknowledging Māori interest and control over lands, forests and waters will assist in the equitable and sustainable development of those resources in ways that help eliminate poverty and disparity, while helping us all in efforts to restore the natural world.

Māori Success is a theme that appropriates or demeans the efforts and initiative of Māori communities and individuals, perpetuating damaging narratives of failure. Appropriate acknowledgement and celebration of positive outcomes in Māori ventures alongside those of other groups and individuals can contribute to more respectful narratives around respective contributions to society and the common good.

A number of Pākehā researchers have contributed to our understandings of new ways in which to approach understandings of Māori/Pākehā relations. Studies by Ingrid Huygens have surfaced a number of highly affirmative patterns among progressive Pākehā that converge with what is offered here. Two of these themes are *Right relationships* which concerns the foundations of social change programmes and *Māori authority* which calls for recognition of Māori knowledge and leadership in decolonisation. The former asserts that, working for social change with Māori, all need to be clear about and working from a tino rangatiratanga/kāwanatanga base. Jen Margaret's conception of *Working as Allies* provides a frame for progressive collaboration exemplifies valuable alternative discursive framing and her publications such as *Ngā Rerenga o Te Tiriti* provide working case studies of such change at organisational level.

Gathering these understandings from multiple sources we can create and extend a narrative based on such alternatives might sound like this:

We can decolonise Aotearoa to create justice and social equity among the peoples of this nation to honour the vision articulated through He Wakaputanga o Te Rangatiratanga o Niu Tirenī and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. In doing so we constantly acknowledge and enact the Treaty and the indigenous rights of Tangata Whenua as tools to redress the wrongs and as guides to the ways forward. Pākehā culture includes very strong strands of commitment to social justice and sustainability but these are currently eclipsed by competitive, privileging ideologies that deny Māori equitable opportunities. Fairly resourced, Māori culture is the vehicle for Māori values, beliefs and aspirations, that will support its people as our society adapts to an ever-changing global world. Māori leaders need to be acknowledged as change agents, innovators and visionaries for a just society. Māori people as community, iwi and nation are inspiring, leading and supporting the development of sustainable futures for all peoples of Aotearoa. Pākehā in particular can educate ourselves to understand, endorse and collaborate in the development of Māori aspirations and self-determination, to create a national identity based on the diverse strengths of all groups that make up our society.

Despite our efforts, this version struggles, it jumps about, does not flow smoothly, as if self-consciously we know it will be 'hard to hear' and always at risk of interjection, rebuttal and rejection, from different quarters. In contrast to the standard story, it was hard work to put together, requiring conscious effort to find the words, create alternatives to articulate the issues and generate the flow. This struggle and perception of deficiency arises in part from the strength and dominance of the standard story, even among those who have some knowledge and determination to work for change.

As Pākehā, as te Tiriti partners, as change workers, we must recognise the importance of this troubling domain of discourse to the wellbeing of Māori, of Tauīwi and indeed of our nation. It is critical that we acknowledge the standard story and the role that it plays in reproducing the status quo of unjust and exploitative relations between Pākehā and Māori. Without this recognition along with conscious, systemic efforts to challenge and supplant it, we are like other deniers of injustice, complicit in both the colonising acts and the ongoing colonial traumatic syndrome that continues to stifle Māori advancement, blight Pākehā development and contribute to unjust and unsustainable futures.

Ray Nairn has referred to the need for a decolonising speech community that, from a different set of understandings, articulates very different, pro-Treaty narratives about Māori/ relations in all areas of national and community life. Margaret Mutu noted in her recent summary of the requirements for decolonisation:

At every stage of the journey we have been supported by Europeans who have also seen through the myths and have fought beside us to tear them down.

For Pākehā change workers a challenge here is to bring these resources together, to animate them with our ideas, experience, hopes and dreams, to explicitly name them as tools for decolonisation.

While the language is a critical part of the needed change, much else needs to be tackled. Alongside this analysis, Heather Came's work which takes a critical te Tiriti o Waitangi and social determinants of health/wellbeing approach, has pointed to a series of key domains

within which Pākehā understanding and action is needed. In order to build momentum on decolonisation and meet the challenges raised in Matike Mai and other Māori analyses, these must include dealing with historical racism, the ongoing climate of race relations, systems change, and popular mobilisation.

The establishment and entrenchment of colonial systems over 150-plus years have created a racist legacy that must be dealt with for there to be progress. The Waitangi Tribunal represents one avenue for articulation of claims, but it can only deal with fractions of loss in fragmented ways and is unhelpfully constrained by a hostile Pākehā polity. While Tribunal processes have encompassed some important aspects of redress including Crown apologies and latterly arrangements such as recognition of the rights of whenua and awa, for the most part the focus is on the return of material resources. We need more honest and fulsome ways of proceeding to address historical racism. These must take account of the loss, pain, suffering and crimes entailed, while opening constructive avenues for Māori tino rangatiratanga as source of identity and wellbeing. The Crown needs to invest resources into transforming public sector management, systems, and processes to ensure that no further breaches of Te Tiriti occur, while continuing to negotiate the just and timely resolution of historical breaches. To begin to address the issues of intergenerational trauma arising from decades of institutional racism, we will need to look to a social transformation process like that of the 'truth and reconciliation' approach that was used in the rebuilding of South Africa after the elimination of Apartheid. Matike Mai envisages renewed efforts by both Māori and Tangata Tiriti in their respective domains of action to bring about such change through working as equals in the relational sphere.

In terms of the climate of race relations, most citizens, through consumption and reiteration of mass media constructions, mainstream political discourse and everyday social interactions that maintain a particular understanding of Māori/Pākehā relations, are deeply implicated. The point that Pākehā identity and ideology have long been wound into self-congratulatory stories of fair-mindedness and egalitarianism, means a lot is at stake for us as we attempt to grapple with the colonial present in contemporary society. The flexibility of the discursive resources of the standard story means that personal prejudice and presentation are readily managed, to minimise discomfort, without embracing change. It means that, rather than risk a direct challenge through overt discrimination, Pākehā prejudice can be diverted into passive aggression, micro-assaults and subtle processes of excluding difference, with inevitable negating and damaging impact on its targets.

The mass media, and increasingly social networking platforms, are particularly powerful instruments and sites in the maintenance of institutional and interpersonal racism. They draw heavily on the resources of the standard story to simultaneously achieve the symbolic annihilation and negations of Māori via under-representation and damaging racialised representations. Full and fair coverage of the Māori world is relegated to specialist services such as Māori Television Service or Māori radio where Pākehā audiences are less likely to engage. To enhance the racial climate, accurate information about the Pākehā colonial project and balanced accounts of Te Ao Māori. Anti-racism/diversity education including access to alternative discursive resources, needs to be embedded at all levels of the education system. Investing in independent anti-racism education will nurture conscientisation and strengthen citizen-led decolonising and anti-racism praxis.

Within societal systems, power is exercised through policy frameworks, decision-making, agenda setting, secrecy, prioritisation, and by imposing worldviews, all of which are social practices mediated by discursive transactions. Far from being fixed, such features of institutional racism are highly amenable to change through policy development and restructuring, that are commonplace in contemporary society. In a social determinants approach, best practice is to target and eliminate racial disparities by addressing the systems, structures and policies that generate and maintain those inequities, rather than focusing on the intentions and motivations of individuals as the key to understanding racism.

To mobilise the changes mooted requires that across civil society a range of individuals, networks, and organisations find racism abhorrent and are interested in working towards a society free of discrimination. This human progressive goodwill and capacity presents an enormous resource and opportunity to transform both every-day and institutional racism. We consider that the key opportunities to harness this dispersed energy for change lie in better collaboration among such groups and individuals and in the use of existing human rights instruments to raise the profile and standing of the work for change.

Collective action as a social movement relies on collaborating organisations, a shared agenda, agreed monitoring systems, joint activities and good communication, all of which are either currently operative or underway for Stop Institutional Racism⁶ (STIR). In this group a commitment to systems change, using te Tiriti and anti-racist human rights instruments, especially the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to help to move Crown practice and outcomes, is already established as an ongoing activity.

Pākehā and Matike Mai

So what has any of this go to do with the constitutional arrangements of the country particularly as articulated via Matike Mai? As they stand these provisions are built from incremental but dynamic aggregates of ‘commonsense’, practices, conventions and policies (many of which were direct imported from England), as well as interpretations of key documents including te Tiriti and the English Laws Act⁷. The point here is that the everyday talk and discourse that is described above is utterly part of these processes at a ‘micro’, interactional level. Despite scepticism and denial, this is the domain in which quite small changes at this level can painlessly produce the kinds of tectonic shifts necessary to achieve decolonisation. The structures of colonialism so skewed and unbalanced due to the distorted nature of the existing foundations, can be transformed and righted by working on this base.

This seems to me to be a critical contribution that Matike Mai brings to bear on the challenge it addresses and the envisaged timeframe of roughly one generation between 2016 and 2040, suggests that despite the harms and insults already endured by Māoridom,

⁶ The ELA, which was arguably the first key breach of te Tiriti, transferred English common law to Aotearoa en block in 1858, retrospective to 1840.

⁷ The ELA, which was arguably the first key breach of te Tiriti, transferred English common law to Aotearoa en block in 1858, retrospective to 1840.

that perseverance and a certain gradualism, is a great strength. In this context the planned changes to the education curriculum introduced in 2019 to commence in 2022, could be a very welcome development (depending on who does the writing, the support schools are given, the inclusion of staff and the openness of the process) to help move beyond the factual sterility of the standard story. Successive cohorts of children growing up in our society with a fairer understanding of 'how we are who we are' and 'how powerfully we are who we are', will mean that the polity of 2040 is far better equipped to discuss, debate and transform the constitutional arrangements of the country than are the existing generations.

If those knowledges, understandings and critiques have been widely dispersed among the population and embedded into a new commonsense for the nation, then transformation will come. Pākehā and Tangata Tiriti workers, families, professionals, politicians, community leaders, decisionmakers and administrators will populate the kāwanatanga sphere with a set of discourses that relate to colonisation, tino rangatiratanga and decolonisation. These changes will enable a proper participation of Tangata Tiriti in the relational sphere with Māori in fresh and constructive ways that contribute to the more just and equitable form of democracy that Matike Mai has envisioned.