

of domination, struggle and emancipation. She uses a dual framework – the *whakapapa* of Maori knowledge and European epistemology – to interpret and capture the world of reality for a moment in time. Thus the search for truth in complex human relations is a never-ending quest.’ RANGINUI WALKER, FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF MAORI STUDIES DEPARTMENT AND PRO-VICE CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND.

‘We have needed this book. Academic research facilitates diverse forms of economic and cultural imperialism by shaping and legitimating policies which entrench existing unjust power relations. Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s powerful critique of dominant research methodologies is eloquent, informed and timely. Her distinctive proposals for an indigenous research agenda are especially valuable. Decolonization, she reminds us, cannot be limited to deconstructing the dominant story and revealing underlying texts, for none of that helps people improve their current conditions or prevents them from dying. This careful articulation of a range of research methodologies is vital, welcome and full of promise.’ LAURIE ANNE WHITT, PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY.

‘A brilliant, evocative and timely book about an issue that serves to both define and create indigenous realities. In recent years, indigenous people, often led by the emerging culturally affirmed and positioned indigenous scholars, have intensified the struggle to break free from the chains of colonialism and its oppressive legacy. In writing this book, Linda Tuhiwai Smith makes a powerful and impassioned contribution to this struggle. No budding researcher should be allowed to leave the academy without reading this book and no teacher should teach without it at their side.’ BOB MORGAN, DIRECTOR, JUMBUNNA CAISER, CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS, UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY.

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## Decolonizing Methodologies Research and Indigenous Peoples

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## CHAPTER 2

## Research Through Imperial Eyes

Many critiques of research have centred around the theory of knowledge known as empiricism and the scientific paradigm of positivism which is derived from empiricism. Positivism takes a position that applies views about how the natural world can be examined and understood to the social world of human beings and human societies. Understanding is viewed as being akin to measuring. As the ways we try to understand the world are reduced to issues of measurement, the focus of understanding becomes more concerned with procedural problems. The challenge then for understanding the social world becomes one developing operational definitions of phenomena which are reliable and valid. The analysis in this chapter begins with a much broader brushstroke. Most indigenous criticisms of research are expressed within the single terms of 'white research', 'academic research' or 'outsider research'. The finer details of how Western scientists might name themselves are irrelevant to indigenous peoples who have experienced unrelenting research of a profoundly exploitative nature. From an indigenous perspective Western research is more than just research that is located in a positivist tradition. It is research which brings to bear, on any study of indigenous peoples, a cultural orientation, a set of values, a different conceptualization of such things as time, space and subjectivity, different and competing theories of knowledge, highly specialized forms of language, and structures of power.

In this chapter I argue that what counts as Western research draws from an 'archive' of knowledge and systems, rules and values which stretch beyond the boundaries of Western science to the system now referred to as the West. Stuart Hall makes the point that the West is an idea or concept, a language for imagining a set of complex stories, ideas, historical events and social relationships. Hall suggests that the concept of the West functions in ways which (1) allow 'us' to characterize and *classify* societies into categories, (2) condense complex images of other

societies through a *system of representation*, (3) provide a standard *model of comparison*, and (4) provide *criteria of evaluation* against which other societies can be ranked.<sup>1</sup> These are the procedures by which indigenous peoples and their societies were coded into the Western system of knowledge.

Research contributed to, and drew from, these systems of classification, representation and evaluation. The cultural archive did not embody a unitary system of knowledge but should be conceived of as containing multiple traditions of knowledge and ways of knowing. Some knowledges are more dominant than others, some are submerged and outdated. Some knowledges are actively in competition with each other and some can only be formed in association with others. Whilst there may not be a unitary system there are 'rules' which help make sense of what is contained within the archive and enable 'knowledge' to be recognized. These rules can be conceived of as rules of classification, rules of framing and rules of practice.<sup>2</sup> Although the term 'rules' may sound like a set of fixed items which are articulated in explicit ways as regulations, it also means rules which are masked in some way and which tend to be articulated through implicit understandings of how the world works. Power is expressed at both the explicit and implicit levels. Dissent, or challenges to the rules, is manageable because it also conforms to these rules, particularly at the implicit level. Scientific and academic debate in the West takes place within these rules. Two major examples of how this works can be found in Marxism and Western feminism. Arguably, Western feminism has provided a more radical challenge to knowledge than Marxism because of its challenge to epistemology: not just the body of knowledge and world view, but the science of how knowledge can be understood. Even Western feminism, however, has been challenged, particularly by women of colour, for conforming to some very fundamental Western European world views, value systems and attitudes towards the Other. Indigenous peoples would probably claim to know much of this implicitly but in this chapter some fundamental ideas related to understandings of being human, of how humans relate to the world, are examined. Differences between Western and indigenous conceptions of the world have always provided stark contrasts. Indigenous beliefs were considered shocking, abhorrent and barbaric and were prime targets for the efforts of missionaries. Many of those beliefs still persist; they are embedded in indigenous languages and stories and etched in memories.

### The Cultural Formations of Western Research

Forms of imperialism and colonialism, notions of the Other, and theories about human nature existed long before the Enlightenment in

Western philosophy. Some scholars have argued that the key tenets of what is now seen as Western civilization are based on black experiences and a black tradition of scholarship, and have simply been appropriated by Western philosophy and redefined as Western epistemology.<sup>3</sup> Western knowledges, philosophies and definitions of human nature form what Foucault has referred to as a cultural archive and what some people might refer to as a 'storehouse' of histories, artefacts, ideas, texts and/or images, which are classified, preserved, arranged and represented back to the West. This storehouse contains the fragments, the regions and levels of knowledge traditions, and the 'systems' which allow different and differentiated forms of knowledge to be retrieved, enunciated and represented in new contexts.<sup>4</sup> Although many colonized peoples refer to the West, usually with a term of their own, as a cohesive system of people, practices, values and languages, the cultural archive of the West represents multiple traditions of knowledge. Rather, there are many different traditions of knowledge and moments of history in which philosophical ideas are sometimes reformed or transformed, in which new knowledges lead to new sets of ideas.

Foucault also suggests that the archive reveals 'rules of practice' which the West itself cannot necessarily describe because it operates within the rules and they are taken for granted. Various indigenous peoples would claim, indeed do claim, to be able to describe many of those rules of practice as they have been 'revealed' and/or perpetrated on indigenous communities. Hall has suggested that the Western cultural archive functions in ways which allow shifts and transformations to happen, quite radically at times, without the archive itself, and the modes of classifications and systems of representation contained within it, being destroyed. This sense of what the idea of the West represents is important here because to a large extent theories about research are underpinned by a cultural system of classification and representation, by views about human nature, human morality and virtue, by conceptions of space and time, by conceptions of gender and race. Ideas about these things help determine what counts as real. Systems of classification and representation enable different traditions or fragments of traditions to be retrieved and reformulated in different contexts as discourses, and then to be played out in systems of power and domination, with real material consequences for colonized peoples. Nandy, for example, discusses the different phases of colonization, from 'rapacious bandit-kings' intent on exploitation, to 'well-meaning middle class liberals' intent on salvation as a legitimization of different forms of colonization.<sup>5</sup> These phases of colonization, driven by different economic needs and differing ideologies of legitimization, still had real consequences for the nations, communities and groups of indigenous people being colonized.

These consequences have led Nandy to describe colonization as a 'shared culture' for those who have been colonized and for those who have colonized. This means, for example, that colonized peoples share a language of colonization, share knowledge about their colonizers, and, in terms of a political project, share the same struggle for decolonization. It also means that colonizers, too, share a language and knowledge of colonization.

### The Intersections of Race and Gender

David Theo Goldberg argues that one of the consequences of Western experiences under imperialism is that Western ways of viewing, talking about and interacting with the world at large are intricately embedded in racialized discourses.<sup>6</sup> Notions of difference are discussed in Greek philosophy, for example, as ways of rationalizing the essential characteristics and obligations of slaves.<sup>7</sup> Medieval literature and art represent fabulous monsters and half-human, half-animal creatures from far-off places. According to Goldberg, concern about these images led to 'observers [being] overcome by awe, repulsion and fear of the implied threat to spiritual life and the political state'.<sup>8</sup> Goldberg argues that whilst these early beliefs and images 'furnished models that modern racism would assume and transform according to its own lights', there was no explicit category or space in medieval thought for racial differentiation.<sup>9</sup> What did happen, according to Goldberg, was that the 'savage' was internalized as a psychological and moral space within the individual that required 'repression, denial and disciplinary restraint'.<sup>10</sup> In Goldberg's analysis, modernity and the philosophy of liberalism (which underpins modernist discourses) transformed these fragments of culture into an explicit racialized discourse. Race, as a category, was linked to human reason and morality, to science, to colonialism and to the rights of citizenship in ways that produced the racialized discourse and racist practices of modernity.<sup>11</sup>

Western concepts of race intersect in complex ways with concepts of gender. Gender refers not just to the roles of women and how those roles are constituted but to the roles of men and of the relations between men and women. Ideas about gender difference and what that means for a society can similarly be traced back to the fragmented artefacts and representations of Western culture, and to different and differentiated traditions of knowledge. The desired and undesired qualities of women for example, as mothers, daughters and wives, were inscribed in the texts of the Greeks and Romans, sculptured, painted and woven into medieval wall hangings, and performed through oral poetry. Different historical ideas about men and women were enacted through social institutions

such as marriage, family life, the class system and ecclesiastic orders.<sup>12</sup> These institutions were underpinned by economic systems, notions of property and wealth, and were increasingly legitimated in the West through Judaeo-Christian beliefs. Economic changes from feudal to capitalist modes of production influenced the construction of the 'family' and the relations of women and men in Western societies. Gender distinctions and hierarchies are also deeply encoded in Western languages. It is impossible to speak without using this language, and, more significantly for indigenous peoples, it is impossible to translate or interpret our societies into English, French or Castilian, for example, without making gendered distinctions.

The process of en-gendering descriptions of the Other has had very real consequences for indigenous women in that the ways in which indigenous women were described, objectified and represented by Europeans in the nineteenth century has left a legacy of marginalization within indigenous societies as much as within the colonizing society. In New Zealand many of these issues are the subject of a claim brought by a group of prominent Maori women to the Waitangi Tribunal. The Waitangi Tribunal was established to hear the claims by Maori relating to contraventions of the Treaty of Waitangi.<sup>13</sup> Before this Tribunal, the Maori women taking the claim are having to establish and argue, using historical texts, research and oral testimonies, that the Crown has ignored the *rangatiratanga*, or chiefly and sovereign status, of Maori women. To argue this, the claimants are compelled to prove that Maori women were as much *rangatira* (chiefs) as Maori men. At a very simple level the 'problem' is a problem of translation. *Rangatiratanga* has generally been interpreted in English as meaning chieftainship and sovereignty, which in colonialism was a 'male thing'.

This claim illustrates the complexities which Stuart Hall raised. Several different and differentiated sets of ideas and representations are to be 'retrieved' and 'enunciated' in the historically specific context of this claim. In summary these may be classified as: (1) a legal framework inherited from Britain, which includes views about what constitutes admissible evidence and valid research; (2) a 'textual' orientation, which will privilege the written text (seen as expert and research-based) over oral testimonies (a concession to indigenous 'elders'); (3) views about science, which will allow for the efficient selection and arrangement of 'facts'; (4) 'rules of practice' such as 'values' and 'morals', which all parties to the process are assumed to know and to have given their 'consent' to abide by, for example, notions of 'goodwill' and 'truth telling'; (5) ideas about subjectivity and objectivity which have already determined the constitution of the Tribunal and its 'neutral' legal framework, but which will continue to frame the way the case is heard; (6) ideas

about time and space, views related to history, what constitutes the appropriate length of a hearing, 'shape' of a claim, size of the panel; (7) views about human nature, individual accountability and culpability; (8) the selection of speakers and experts, who speaks for whom, whose knowledge is presumed to be the 'best fit' in relation to a set of proven 'facts'; and (9) the politics of the Treaty of Waitangi and the way those politics are managed by politicians and other agencies such as the media. Within each set of ideas are systems of classification and representation; epistemological, ontological, juridical, anthropological and ethical, which are coded in such ways as to 'recognize' each other and either mesh together, or create a cultural 'force field' which can screen out competing and oppositional discourses. Taken as a whole system, these ideas determine the wider rules of practice which ensure that Western interests remain dominant.

### Conceptualizations of the Individual and Society

Social science research is based upon ideas, beliefs and theories about the social world. While it is acknowledged that people always live in some form of social organization (for example, a family unit, an efficient hunting and gathering unit, a pastoral unit, and increasingly larger and more effective and sophisticated variations of those basic units), Western forms of research also draw on cultural ideas about the human 'self' and the relationship between the individual and the groups to which he or she may belong. Such ideas explore both the internal workings of an individual and the relationships between what an individual is and how an individual behaves. These ideas suggest that relationships between or among groups of people are basically causal and can be observed and predicted. Some earlier accounts of how and why individuals behave as they do were based on ideas which often began with a creation story to explain the presence of people in their specific environment and on understandings of human behaviour as being connected to some form of external force, such as spiritually powerful beings, 'gods' or sacred objects. Human activity was seen to be caused by factors outside the control of the individual. Early European societies would not have made much distinction between human beings and their natural environment. Classical Greek philosophy is regarded as the point at which ideas about these relationships changed from 'naturalistic' explanations to humanistic explanations. Naturalistic explanations linked nature and life as one and humanistic explanations separate people out from the world around them, and place humanity on a higher plane (than animals and plants) because of such characteristics as language and reason.<sup>14</sup> Socrates, Plato and Aristotle

are regarded as the founders of this humanistic tradition of knowledge.

Human nature, that is, the essential characteristics of an individual person, is an overarching concern of Western philosophy even though 'human' and 'nature' are also seen to be in opposition to each other. Education, research and other scholarly traditions have emerged from or been framed by debates relating to human nature. The separation between mind and body, the investing of a human person with a soul, a psyche and a consciousness, the distinction between sense and reason, definitions of human virtue and morality, are cultural constructs. These ideas have been transformed as philosophers have incorporated new insights and discoveries, but the underlying categories have remained in place. From Aristotle and Plato, in Greek philosophy, the mind-body distinction was heavily Christianized by Aquinas. French philosopher Descartes developed this dualism further, making distinctions which would relate to the separate disciplines required to study the body (physiology) and the mind (psychology). His distinctions are now referred to as the Cartesian dualism. Hegel reasoned that the split was dialectical, meaning that there was a contradictory interplay between the two ideas and the form of debate required to develop these ideas. It must be remembered, however, that concepts such as the mind or the intellect, the soul, reason, virtue and morality are not in themselves 'real' or biological parts of a human body. Whilst the workings of a mind may be associated in Western thinking primarily with the human brain, the mind itself is a concept or an idea. In Maori world views, for example, the closest equivalent to the idea of a 'mind' or intellect is associated with the entrails and other parts of the body. The head was considered *tapu* for other reasons.

What makes ideas 'real' is the system of knowledge, the formations of culture, and the relations of power in which these concepts are located. What an individual is – and the implications this has for the way researchers or teachers, therapists or social workers, economists or journalists, might approach their work – is based on centuries of philosophical debate, principles of debate and systems for organizing whole societies predicated on these ideas. These ideas constitute reality. Reality cannot be constituted without them. When confronted by the alternative conceptions of other societies, Western reality became reified as representing something 'better', reflecting 'higher orders' of thinking, and being less prone to the dogma, witchcraft and immediacy of people and societies which were so 'primitive'. Ideological appeals to such things as literacy, democracy and the development of complex social structures, make this way of thinking appear to be a universal truth and a necessary criterion of civilized society. Although eighteenth- and nineteenth-century forms of colonization brought Christian beliefs

about the soul and human morality to indigenous peoples, these concepts were discussed in Western traditions prior to Christianity. Christianity, when organized into a system of power, brought to bear on these basic concepts a focus of systematic study and debate which could then be used to regulate all aspects of social and spiritual life.

The individual, as the basic social unit from which other social organizations and social relations form, is another system of ideas which needs to be understood as part of the West's cultural archive. Western philosophies and religions place the individual as the basic building block of society. The transition from feudal to capitalist modes of production simply emphasized the role of the individual. Concepts of social development were seen as the natural progression and replication of human development. The relationship between the individual and the group, however, was a major theoretical problem for philosophy. This problem tended to be posed as a dialectic or tension between two irreconcilable notions. Hegel's dialectic on the self and society has become the most significant model for thinking about this relationship. His master-slave construct has served as a form of analysis which is both psychological and sociological, and in the colonial context highly political.

Rousseau has a particular influence over the way indigenous peoples in the South Pacific came to be regarded, because of his highly romanticized and idealized view of human nature. It is to Rousseau that the idea of the 'noble savage' is attributed. This view linked the natural world to an idea of innocence and purity, and the developed world to corruption and decay. It was thought that the people who lived in the idyllic conditions of the South Pacific, close to nature, would possess 'noble' qualities from which the West could relearn and rediscover what had been lost. This romanticized view was particularly relevant to the way South Pacific women were represented, especially the women of Tahiti and Polynesia. The view soon lost favour, or was turned around into the 'ignoble savage', when it was found that these idealized humans actually indulged in 'barbaric' and 'savage' customs and were capable of what were viewed as acts of grave injustice and 'despicability'.

Just as in the psychological traditions the individual has been central, so within sociological traditions the individual is assumed to be the basic unit of a society. A major sociological concern becomes a struggle over the extent to which individual consciousness and reality shapes, or is shaped by, social structure. During the nineteenth century this view of the individual and society became heavily influenced by social Darwinism. This meant, for example, that a society could be viewed as a 'species' of people with biological traits.<sup>15</sup> 'Primitive' societies could be ranked according to these traits, predictions could be made about their

survival and ideological justifications could be made about their treatment. Early sociology came to focus on the belief systems of these 'primitive' people and the extent to which they were capable of thought and of developing 'simple' ideas about religion. This focus was intended to enhance the understandings of Western society by showing how simple societies developed the building blocks of classification systems and modes of thought. These systems, it was believed, would demonstrate how such social phenomena as language developed. This in turn would enable distinctions to be made between categories which were fixed – that is, the structural underpinnings of society – and categories which people could create, that is, the cultural aspects of the life-world. It also reinforced, through contrasting associations or oppositional categories, how superior the West was.

### Conceptions of Space

Similar claims can be made about other concepts, such as time and space. These concepts are particularly significant for some indigenous languages because the language makes no clear or absolute distinction between the two: for example, the Maori word for time or space is the same. Other indigenous languages have no related word for either space or time, having instead a series of very precise terms for parts of these ideas, or for relationships between the idea and something else in the environment. There are positions within time and space in which people and events are located, but these cannot necessarily be described as distinct categories of thought. Western ideas about time and space are encoded in language, philosophy and science. Philosophical conceptions of time and space have been concerned with: (1) the relationships between the two ideas, that is, whether space and time are absolute categories or whether they exist relationally; and (2) the measurement of time and space.<sup>16</sup> Space came to be seen as consisting of lines which were either parallel or elliptical. From these ideas, ways of thinking which related to disciplines of study emerged (for example, mapping and geography, measurement and geometry, motion and physics). These distinctions are generally part of a taken-for-granted view of the world. Spatialized language is frequently used in both everyday and academic discourses.

Henri Lefebvre argues that the notion of space has been 'appropriated by mathematics' which has claimed an ideological position of dominance over what space means.<sup>17</sup> Mathematics has constructed a language which attempts to define with absolute exactness the parameters, dimensions, qualities and possibilities of space. This language of space influences the way the West thinks about the world beyond earth

(cosmology), the ways in which society is viewed (public/private space, city/country space), the ways in which gender roles were defined (public/domestic, home/work) and the ways in which the social world of people could be determined (the market place, the theatre).<sup>18</sup> Compartmentalized, space can be better defined and measured.

Conceptions of space were articulated through the ways in which people arranged their homes and towns, collected and displayed objects of significance, organized warfare, set out agricultural fields and arranged gardens, conducted business, displayed art and performed drama, separated out one form of human activity from another. Spatial arrangements are an important part of social life. Western classifications of space include such notions as architectural space, physical space, psychological space, theoretical space and so forth. Foucault's metaphor of the cultural archive is an architectural image. The archive not only contains artefacts of culture, but is itself an artefact and a construct of culture. For the indigenous world, Western conceptions of space, of arrangements and display, of the relationship between people and the landscape, of culture as an object of study, have meant that not only has the indigenous world been represented in particular ways back to the West, but the indigenous world view, the land and the people, have been radically transformed in the spatial image of the West. In other words, indigenous space has been colonized. Land, for example, was viewed as something to be tamed and brought under control. The landscape, the arrangement of nature, could be altered by 'Man': swamps could be drained, waterways diverted, inshore areas filled, not simply for physical survival, but for further exploitation of the environment or making it 'more pleasing' aesthetically. Renaming the land was probably as powerful ideologically as changing the land. Indigenous children in schools, for example, were taught the new names for places that they and their parents had lived in for generations. These were the names which appeared on maps and which were used in official communications. This newly named land became increasingly disconnected from the songs and chants used by indigenous peoples to trace their histories, to bring forth spiritual elements or to carry out the simplest of ceremonies. More significantly, however, space was appropriated from indigenous cultures and then 'gifted back' as reservations, reserved pockets of land for indigenous people who once possessed all of it.

Other artefacts and images of indigenous cultures were also classified, stored and displayed in museum cases and boxes, framed by the display cases as well as by the categories of artefacts with which they were grouped. Some images became part of the postcard trade and the advertising market or were the subject of Western artistic interpretations of indigenous peoples. Still other 'live' and performing examples were put

'on stage' as concert parties to entertain Europeans. Indigenous cultures became framed within a language and a set of spatialized representations.<sup>19</sup>

A specific example of the colonization of an indigenous architectural space and of indigenous spatial concepts can be found in the story of the Mataatua, a carved Maori house built in 1875 as a wedding gift from one tribal group to another. The New Zealand Government negotiated and gained agreement to send the Mataatua to the British Empire Exhibition at Sydney in 1879. The house was displayed according to the aesthetic and economic sense of the exhibition's curators:

Finding that it would cost at least 700 pounds to erect it in the ordinary manner as a Maori house, the walls were reversed so that the carvings showed on the outside; and the total cost, including painting and roofing with Chinese matting was reduced to 165 pounds.<sup>20</sup>

A 'Maori House', displayed inside-out and lined with Chinese matting was seen as an important contribution by New Zealand to the Sydney Exhibition. As argued by its original owners,

the house itself had undergone a transformation as a result of being assimilated into a British Empire Exhibition. It changed from being a 'living' meeting house which the people used and had become an ethnological curiosity for strange people to look at the wrong way and in the wrong place.<sup>21</sup>

Having gained agreement for this single purpose, the New Zealand government then appropriated the house and sent it to England, where it was displayed at the South Kensington Museum, stored for forty years at the Victoria and Albert Museum, displayed again at the Wembley British Empire Exhibition in 1924, shipped back to New Zealand for a South Seas Exhibition in Dunedin in 1925, and then 'given', by the government, to the Otago Museum. Ngati Awa, the owners of this house, have been negotiating for its return since 1983. This has now been agreed upon by the New Zealand government after a case put to the Waitangi Tribunal, and the 'door lintel' of the Mataatua has been returned as a symbolic gesture prior to the return of the entire house over the next two years.

Space is often viewed in Western thinking as being static or divorced from time. This view generates ways of making sense of the world as a 'realm of stasis', well-defined, fixed and without politics.<sup>22</sup> This is particularly relevant in relation to colonialism. The establishment of military, missionary or trading stations, the building of roads, ports and bridges, the clearing of bush and the mining of minerals all involved processes of marking, defining and controlling space. There is a very specific spatial vocabulary of colonialism which can be assembled

around three concepts: (1) the line, (2) the centre, and (3) the outside. The 'line' is important because it was used to map territory, to survey land, to establish boundaries and to mark the limits of colonial power. The 'centre' is important because orientation to the centre was an orientation to the system of power. The 'outside' is important because it positioned territory and people in an oppositional relation to the colonial centre; for indigenous Australians to be in an 'empty space' was to 'not exist'. That vocabulary in New Zealand is depicted in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 The spatial vocabulary of colonialism in nineteenth-century *Aotearoa*

The Line	The Centre	The Outside
maps	mother country	empty land
charts	London	<i>terra nullius</i>
roads	magistrate's residence	uninhabited
boundaries	redoubt, stockade, barracks	unoccupied
pegs	prison	uncharted
surveys	mission station	reserves
claims	Parliament	<i>Maori pa</i>
fences	store	<i>Kainga</i>
hedges	Church	<i>Marae</i>
stone walls	Europe	burial grounds
tracks	port	background
genealogies	foreground	hinterland
perimeters	flagpole	

### Conceptions of Time

Time is associated with social activity, and how other people organized their daily lives fascinated and horrified Western observers. The links between the industrial revolution, the Protestant ethic, imperialism and science can be discussed in terms of time and the organization of social life. Changes in the mode of production brought about by the industrial revolution, an emerging middle class able to generate wealth and make distinctions in their lives between work, leisure, education and religion, and a working-class evangelical movement which linked work to salvation contributed to a potent cultural mix. In Africa, the Americas and the Pacific, Western observers were struck by the contrast in the way time was used (or rather, not used or organized) by indigenous peoples. Representations of 'native life' as being devoid of work habits, and of native people being lazy, indolent, with low attention spans, is

part of a colonial discourse that continues to this day. There were various explanations advanced for such indolence; a hot climate, for example, was viewed as a factor. Often it was a simple association between race and indolence, darker skin peoples being considered more 'naturally' indolent.

An example of how integral time is to social life can be found in the journals of Joseph Banks. Banks accompanied Cook on his first voyages to the South Pacific. The Royal Society supervised the Greenwich Observatory which eventually set the world-wide standard of time measurement (Greenwich mean time) and was instrumental in organizing Cook's voyage to Tahiti in 1769 to observe the transit of Venus. Throughout this journey Banks kept a detailed diary which documents his observations and reflections upon what he saw. The diary was a precise organization of his life on board ship, not only a day by day account, but an account which included weather reports, lists of plants and birds collected, and details on the people he encountered. Life on board the *Endeavour* was organized according to the rules and regulations of the British Admiralty, an adaptation of British time. Not only did the diary measure time, but there were scientific instruments on board which also measured time and place. As an observer, Banks saw the Pacific world through his own sense of time, his observations were prefaced by phrases such as, 'at daybreak', 'in the evening', 'by 8 o'clock', 'about noon', 'a little before sunset'.<sup>23</sup> He confessed, however – after describing in detail such things as dress, ornaments, tattooing, house construction and lay-out, clothing, gardens, net making, the women, food, religion and language, and after describing visits he and a companion made at particular times to observe the people eating, carrying out their daily activities and sleeping – that he was unable to get a 'complete idea' of how the people divided time.

The connection between time and 'work' became more important after the arrival of missionaries and the development of more systematic colonization. The belief that 'natives' did not value work or have a sense of time provided ideological justification for exclusionary practices which reached across such areas as education, land development and employment. The evangelical missionaries who arrived in the Pacific had a view of salvation in which were embedded either lower middle-class English or puritanical New England work practices and values. It was hard work to get to heaven and 'savages' were expected to work extra hard to qualify to get into the queue. This also meant wearing 'decent' clothes designed more for hard labour in cold climates, eating 'properly' at 'proper' meal times (before and after work) and reorganizing family patterns to enable men to work at some things and women to support them.

Lineal views of both time and space are important when examining Western ideas about history. Here, the Enlightenment is a crucial point in time. Prior to this period of Western development was an era likened to a period of 'darkness' (the 'Age of Darkness') which 'coincided' with the rise of power to the east. This era was followed by reformation within the Church of Rome. During these periods of time, which are social 'constructions' of time, society was said to be feudal, belief systems were based on dogma, monarchs ruled by divine authority, and literacy was confined to the very few. People lived according to myths and stories which hid the 'truth' or were simply not truths. These stories were kept alive by memory. The Enlightenment has also been referred to as the 'Age of Reason'. During this period history came to be viewed as a more reasoned or scientific understanding of the past. History could be recorded systematically and then retrieved through recourse to written texts. It was based on a lineal view of time and was linked closely to notions of progress. Progress could be 'measured' in terms of technological advancement and spiritual salvation. Progress is evolutionary and teleological and is present in both liberal and Marxist ideas about history.

Different orientations towards time and space, different positioning within time and space, and different systems of language for making space and time 'real' underpin notions of past and present, of place and of relationships to the land. Ideas about progress are grounded within ideas and orientations towards time and space. What has come to count as history in contemporary society is a contentious issue for many indigenous communities because it is not only the story of domination; it is also a story which assumes that there was a 'point in time' which was 'prehistoric'. The point at which society moves from prehistoric to historic is also the point at which tradition breaks with modernism. Traditional indigenous knowledge ceased, in this view, when it came into contact with 'modern' societies, that is the West. What occurred at this point of culture contact was the beginning of the end for 'primitive' societies. Deeply embedded in these constructs are systems of classification and representation which lend themselves easily to binary oppositions, dualisms, and hierarchical orderings of the world.

One of the concepts through which Western ideas about the individual and community, about time and space, knowledge and research, imperialism and colonialism can be drawn together is the concept of distance. The individual can be distanced, or separated, from the physical environment, the community. Through the controls over time and space the individual can also operate at a distance from the universe. Both imperial and colonial rule were systems of rule which stretched from the centre outwards to places which were far and distant. Distance again separated the individuals in power from the subjects they governed. It



was all so impersonal, rational and extremely effective. In research the concept of distance is most important as it implies a neutrality and objectivity on behalf of the researcher. Distance is measurable. What it has come to stand for is objectivity, which is not measurable to quite the same extent.

Research 'through imperial eyes' describes an approach which assumes that Western ideas about the most fundamental things are the only ideas possible to hold, certainly the only rational ideas, and the only ideas which can make sense of the world, of reality, of social life and of human beings. It is an approach to indigenous peoples which still conveys a sense of innate superiority and an overabundance of desire to bring progress into the lives of indigenous peoples – spiritually, intellectually, socially and economically. It is research which from indigenous perspectives 'steals' knowledge from others and then uses it to benefit the people who 'stole' it. Some indigenous and minority group researchers would call this approach simply racist. It is research which is imbued with an 'attitude' and a 'spirit' which assumes a certain ownership of the entire world, and which has established systems and forms of governance which embed that attitude in institutional practices. These practices determine what counts as legitimate research and who count as legitimate researchers. Before assuming that such an attitude has long since disappeared, it is often worth reflecting on who would make such a claim, researchers or indigenous peoples? A recent attempt (fortunately unsuccessful) to patent an indigenous person in the New Guinea Highlands might suggest that there are many groups of indigenous peoples who are still without protection when it comes to the activities of research.<sup>24</sup> Although in this particular case the attempt was unsuccessful, what it demonstrated yet again is that there are people out there who in the name of science and progress still consider indigenous peoples as specimens, not as humans.

### Notes

- 1 Hall, S. (1992), 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power', Chapter 6 of *Formations of Modernity*, eds S. Hall and B. Gielben, Polity Press and Open University, Cambridge, pp. 276–320.
- 2 Bernstein, B. (1971), 'On the Classification and Framing of Knowledge', in *Knowledge and Control. New Directions for the Sociology of Education*, ed. M. F. D. Young, Collier Macmillan, London, pp. 47–69.
- 3 See for example, Bernal, M. (1991), *Black Athena, The Afroasiatic Roots of Civilisation*, Vintage, London.
- 4 Foucault, M. (1972), *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. Sheridan Smith, Pantheon, New York.
- 5 Nandy, A. (1989), *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*,

- Oxford University Press, Delhi, p. xi.
- 6 Goldberg, D. T. (1993), *Racist Culture, Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning*, Blackwell, Oxford.
  - 7 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
  - 8 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
  - 9 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
  - 10 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
  - 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 41–60.
  - 12 Erler, M. and M. Kowaleski (1988), *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, University of Georgia Press, Athens.
  - 13 The Treaty of Waitangi was signed between Maori chiefs and the British Crown in 1840. The Waitangi Tribunal was established by Parliament under The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975. This Act established the Tribunal with the brief of hearing claims by Maori that the Crown had contravened the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. This applied to recent grievances. The Tribunal was given powers to recommend actions to the Crown. The Act was amended in 1985 in order to extend the scope of claims back to 1840.
  - 14 Brennan, J. F. (1991), *Racist Culture, The History and Systems of Psychology*, third edition, Prentice Hall International, New Jersey.
  - 15 Goldberg, *Racist Culture*, pp. 62–9.
  - 16 In the fifth century Zeno, for example, posited a series of paradoxes which centred around two ideas, one which suggests that space and time are continuous, and one which suggests that they are made up of divisible parts. Others have argued since Zeno that there can be no such thing as 'empty' space because, if it is empty, it does not exist.
  - 17 Lefebvre, H. (1991), *The Production of Space*, Blackwell, USA.
  - 18 See for example, Williams, R. (1973), *The Country and the City*, Paladin, London. See also Fanon, Frantz (1967), *The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin, London, p. 30. Fanon talks about 'zones' where natives live and 'zones' where settlers live. For him, the border between the two are clear and there is no possibility of reconciliation.
  - 19 See also, Gidley, M., ed. (1994), *Representing Others, White Views of Indigenous Peoples*, University of Exeter Press.
  - 20 Appendices to the Journals of the New Zealand House of Representatives, 1880, H5: 2.
  - 21 Te Runanga o Ngati Awa (1990), *Nga Karoretanga o Mataatua Whare. The Wanderings of the Carved House, Mataatua*, Ngati Awa Research Report 2, Whakatane, New Zealand.
  - 22 Massey, D. (1993), 'Politics and Space/Time', in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds M. Keith, and S. Pile, Routledge, London, pp. 141–61.
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  - 24 See account of this attempt in *Third World Resurgence*, No. 63, p. 30.

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- 23 Beaglehole, J. C. (1962), *The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney.
- 24 See account of this attempt in *Third World Resurgence*, No. 63, p. 30.

## CHAPTER 3

# Colonizing Knowledges

*We have a history of people putting Maori under a microscope in the same way a scientist looks at an insect. The ones doing the looking are giving themselves the power to define.*

Merata Mita<sup>1</sup>

In the previous chapter the metaphor of an archive was used to convey the sense by which the West drew upon a vast history of itself and multiple traditions of knowledge which incorporate cultural views of reality, of time and space. This chapter argues that the form of imperialism which indigenous peoples are confronting now emerged from that period of European history known as the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment provided the spirit, the impetus, the confidence, and the political and economic structures that facilitated the search for new knowledges. The project of the Enlightenment is often referred to as 'modernity' and it is that project which is claimed to have provided the stimulus for the industrial revolution, the philosophy of liberalism, the development of disciplines in the sciences and the development of public education. Imperialism underpinned and was critical to these developments. Whilst imperialism is often thought of as a system which drew everything back into the centre, it was also a system which distributed materials and ideas outwards. Said's notion of 'positional superiority' is useful here for conceptualizing the ways in which knowledge and culture were as much part of imperialism as raw materials and military strength. Knowledge was also there to be discovered, extracted, appropriated and distributed. Processes for enabling these things to occur became organized and systematic. They not only informed the field of study referred to by Said as 'Orientalism' but other disciplines of knowledge and 'regimes of truth'. It is through these disciplines that the indigenous world has been represented to the West and it is through these disciplines that indigenous peoples often research for the fragments

of ourselves which were taken, catalogued, studied and stored. It is not the intention of this chapter to tell the history of Western knowledge but rather to draw that history down into the colonized world, show the relationship between knowledge, research and imperialism, and then discuss the ways in which it has come to structure our own ways of knowing, through the development of academic disciplines and through the education of colonial elites and indigenous or 'native' intellectuals. Western knowledge and science are 'beneficiaries' of the colonization of indigenous peoples. The knowledge gained through our colonization has been used, in turn, to colonize us in what Ngugi wa Thiong'o calls the colonization 'of the mind'.<sup>2</sup>

### Establishing the Positional Superiority of Western Knowledge

The project of modernity signalled the end of feudalism and absolutist authority, legitimated by divine rule, and announced the beginning of the modern state. The new state formation had to meet the requirements of an expanding economy based on major improvements in production. The industrial revolution changed and made new demands upon the individual and the political system. The modern state was wrested from the old regime of absolutist monarchs by the articulation of liberal political and economic theories.<sup>3</sup> As a system of ideas, liberalism focuses on the individual, who has the capacity to reason, on a society which promotes individual autonomy and self-interest, and on a state which has a rational rule of law which regulates a public sphere of life, but which allows individuals to pursue their economic self-interest. Once it was accepted that humans had the capacity to reason and to attain this potential through education, through a systematic form of organizing knowledge, then it became possible to debate these ideas in rational and 'scientific' ways.

The development of scientific thought, the exploration and 'discovery' by Europeans of other worlds, the expansion of trade, the establishment of colonies, and the systematic colonization of indigenous peoples in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are all facets of the modernist project. Modernism is more than a re-presentation of fragments from the cultural archive in new contexts. 'Discoveries' about and from the 'new' world expanded and challenged ideas the West held about itself.<sup>4</sup> The production of knowledge, new knowledge and transformed 'old' knowledge, ideas about the nature of knowledge and the validity of specific forms of knowledge, became as much commodities of colonial exploitation as other natural resources.<sup>5</sup> Indigenous peoples were classified alongside the flora and fauna; hierarchical typologies of humanity and systems of representation were

fuelled by new discoveries; and cultural maps were charted and territories claimed and contested by the major European powers. Hence some indigenous peoples were ranked above others in terms of such things as the belief that they were 'nearly human', 'almost human' or 'sub-human'. This often depended on whether it was thought that the peoples concerned possessed a 'soul' and could therefore be 'offered' salvation and whether or not they were educable and could be offered schooling. These systems for organizing, classifying and storing new knowledge, and for theorizing the meanings of such discoveries, constituted research. In a colonial context, however, this research was undeniably also about power and domination. The instruments or technologies of research were also instruments of knowledge and instruments for legitimating various colonial practices.

The imaginary line between 'east' and 'west', drawn in 1493 by a Papal Bull, allowed for the political division of the world and the struggle by competing Western states to establish what Said has referred to as a 'flexible positional superiority' over the known, and yet to become known, world.<sup>6</sup> This positional superiority was contested at several levels by European powers. These imaginary boundaries were drawn again in Berlin in 1934 when European powers sat around the table once more to carve up Africa and other parts of 'their' empires. They continue to be redrawn. Imperialism and colonialism are the specific formations through which the West came to 'see', to 'name' and to 'know' indigenous communities. The cultural archive with its systems of representation, codes for unlocking systems of classification, and fragmented artefacts of knowledge enabled travellers and observers to make sense of what they saw and to represent their new-found knowledge back to the West through the authorship and authority of their representations.

Whilst colonialism at an economic level, including its ultimate expression through slavery, opened up new materials for exploitation and new markets for trade, at a cultural level, ideas, images and experiences about the Other helped to shape and delineate the essential differences between Europe and the rest. Notions about the Other, which already existed in the European imagination, were recast within the framework of Enlightenment philosophies, the industrial revolution and the scientific 'discoveries' of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. When discussing the scientific foundations of Western research, the indigenous contribution to these foundations is rarely mentioned. To have acknowledged their contribution would, in terms of the rules of research practice, be as legitimate as acknowledging the contribution of a variety of plant, a shard of pottery or a 'preserved head of a native' to research. Furthermore, according to Bazin, 'Europeans

could not even imagine that other people could ever have done things before or better than themselves'.<sup>7</sup> The objects of research do not have a voice and do not contribute to research or science. In fact, the logic of the argument would suggest that it is simply impossible, ridiculous even, to suggest that the object of research can contribute to anything. An object has no life force, no humanity, no spirit of its own, so therefore 'it' cannot make an active contribution. This perspective is not deliberately insensitive; it is simply that the rules did not allow such a thought to enter the scene. Thus, indigenous Asian, American, Pacific and African forms of knowledge, systems of classification, technologies and codes of social life, which began to be recorded in some detail by the seventeenth century, were regarded as 'new discoveries' by Western science.<sup>8</sup> These discoveries were commodified as property belonging to the cultural archive and body of knowledge of the West.<sup>9</sup>

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also constituted an era of highly competitive 'collecting'. Many indigenous people might call this 'stealing' rather than 'collecting'. This included the collecting of territories, of new species of flora and fauna, of mineral resources and of cultures. James Clifford, for example, refers to ethnography as a science which was

[a] form of culture collecting ... [which] highlights the ways that diverse experiences and facts are selected, gathered, detached from their original temporal occasions, and given enduring value in a new arrangement. Collecting – at least in the West, where time is generally thought to be linear and irreversible – implies a rescue of phenomena from inevitable historical decay or loss.<sup>10</sup>

The idea that collectors were actually rescuing artefacts from decay and destruction, and from indigenous peoples themselves, legitimated practices which also included commercial trade and plain and simple theft. Clearly, in terms of trade indigenous peoples were often active participants, in some cases delivering 'made to order' goods. The different agendas and rivalries of indigenous groups were also known to have been incorporated into the commercial activities of Europeans. Hence, muskets could be traded and then used to pursue traditional enemies or one group of people could be used to capture and assist in the enslavement of another group who were also their traditional rivals. Indigenous property is still said to be housed in 'collections', which in turn are housed either in museums or private galleries, and art and artefacts are often grouped and classified in the name of their 'collector'. These collections have become the focus of indigenous peoples' attempts to reclaim ancestral remains and other cultural items (known in the West as 'artefacts') belonging to their people.

It is important to remember, however, that colonialism was not just about collection. It was also about re-arrangement, re-presentation and re-distribution. For example, plant species were taken by Joseph Banks for the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. Here they could be 'grown, studied, and disbursed to the colonial stations, a centre of plant transfers on the scientific level, and of the generation and publication of knowledge about plants'.<sup>11</sup> The British Empire became a global laboratory for research and development. New species of plants and animals were introduced to the colonies to facilitate development and to 'strengthen' indigenous species. This point is worth remembering as it contrasts with the view, sometimes referred to as a diffusionist explanation, that knowledge, people, flora and fauna simply disbursed themselves around the world. This botanical colonization had already been successfully carried out in other places: for example, maize, sweet potatoes, and tobacco from South America had been widely distributed. In the centre of this collection and distribution network was the imperial 'home' country. The colonies were peripheral satellites which gained access to these new knowledges and technologies through 'recourse to the writings of authors in the centre'.<sup>12</sup> One effect of this system of redistribution was the interference caused by new species to the ecologies of their new environments and the eventual extinction of several species of bird and animal life.<sup>13</sup> In the case of New Zealand, Cheryl Smith argues that, ecologically, the indigenous world was colonized by weeds.<sup>14</sup>

Among the other significant consequences of ecological imperialism – carried by humans, as well as by plants and animals – were the viral and bacterial diseases which devastated indigenous populations. This devastation or genocide was, in the accounts of many indigenous peoples, used deliberately as a weapon of war. Stories are told in Canada, for example, of blankets used by smallpox victims being sent into First Nation communities while the soldiers and settlers camped outside waiting for the people to die. There were several ideologies which legitimated the Western impact on indigenous health and well-being. These supported racial views already in place but which in the later nineteenth century became increasingly legitimated by the 'scientific' views of social Darwinism. The concept of the 'survival of the fittest', used to explain the evolution of species in the natural world, was applied enthusiastically to the human world. It became a very powerful belief that indigenous peoples were inherently weak and therefore, at some point, would die out. There were debates about how this could be prevented, for example, through miscegenation and cultural assimilation, and whether this, in fact, was 'desirable'. Judgements on these issues circled back or depended upon prior considerations as to whether the

indigenous group concerned had souls, could be saved, and also could be redeemed culturally. Influential debates on these matters by Catholic scholars such as Bartolome de Las Casas took place during the sixteenth century. In nineteenth-century New Zealand some of the debates delved right down into the supposed fecundity rates of indigenous women and the better prospects for racial survival if miscegenation occurred. There were very serious scientific views put forward to account for the demise of the indigenous populations. Some views included: sterility caused by the 'licentiousness' of the women, a vegetable diet, infanticide and abortion. Other causes were put down to a sense of 'hopelessness' and lack of spirit, which came about through contact with 'civilization'.<sup>15</sup>

But there were also state policies (federal, provincial and local) of 'benign neglect' which involved minimal intervention (the 'infected blanket' strategy) while people suffered and died. There were also more proactive policies based around such ideas as 'Manifest Destiny' which sanctioned the taking of indigenous lands by any means.<sup>16</sup> Ward Churchill and other indigenous writers classify these actions as part of the Columbian legacy of genocide.<sup>17</sup> In relation to the diseases and disease which the West is said to have introduced to indigenous peoples, the bigger question has always been the extent to which the impact of disease is an inevitable consequence of contact with the West. The significance of the issues which this question raises emerges when we examine, in a later chapter, the world-wide search currently being undertaken amongst indigenous populations for genetic solutions to Western diseases. Aborigine activist Bobbi Sykes has an 'acid test' for the Western impact on indigenous health which consists of two lists: one a list of diseases introduced by Europeans to Aboriginal people, the other a list of diseases introduced by Aboriginal people to Europeans. There are no items listed on the second list. That empty space tells a very potent story.<sup>18</sup>

The globalization of knowledge and Western culture constantly reaffirms the West's view of itself as the centre of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge and the source of 'civilized' knowledge. This form of global knowledge is generally referred to as 'universal' knowledge, available to all and not really 'owned' by anyone, that is, until non-Western scholars make claims to it. When claims like that are made history is revised (again) so that the story of civilization remains the story of the West. For this purpose, the Mediterranean world, the basin of Arabic culture and the lands east of Constantinople are conveniently appropriated as part of the story of Western civilization, Western philosophy and Western knowledge.<sup>19</sup> Through imperialism, however, these cultures, peoples and their nation states were re-positioned as 'oriental', or 'outsider' in order to legitimate the imposition of colonial rule. For indigenous peoples from other places, the real

lesson to be learned is that we have no claim whatsoever to civilization. It is something which has been introduced from the West, by the West, to indigenous peoples, for our benefit and for which we should be duly grateful.

The nexus between cultural ways of knowing, scientific discoveries, economic impulses and imperial power enabled the West to make ideological claims to having a superior civilization. The 'idea' of the West became a reality when it was re-presented back to indigenous nations through colonialism. By the nineteenth century colonialism not only meant the imposition of Western authority over indigenous lands, indigenous modes of production and indigenous law and government, but the imposition of Western authority over all aspects of indigenous knowledges, languages and cultures. This authority incorporated what Said refers to as alliances between the ideologies, 'clichés', general beliefs and understandings held about the Orient and the views of 'science' and philosophical theories.<sup>20</sup>

For many indigenous peoples the major agency for imposing this positional superiority over knowledge, language and culture was colonial education. Colonial education came in two basic forms: missionary or religious schooling (which was often residential) followed later by public and secular schooling. Numerous accounts across nations now attest to the critical role played by schools in assimilating colonized peoples, and in the systematic, frequently brutal, forms of denial of indigenous languages, knowledges and cultures. Not all groups of indigenous peoples, however, were permitted to attend school – some groups being already defined in some way as 'ineducable' or just plain troublesome and delinquent. Furthermore, in many examples the indigenous language was used as the medium of instruction and access to the colonizing language was denied specifically. This policy was designed to deny opportunities to participate as citizens.

Colonial education was also used as a mechanism for creating new indigenous elites. It was not the only mechanism for producing elite groups, as the traditional hierarchies within an indigenous society who converted to the colonial ideology also formed part of the elite group. Schooling helped identify talented students who were then groomed for more advanced education. Many of these students were sent away to boarding schools while others were sent to the metropolitan centre in Europe for their university studies. In these settings, and through their learning, students acquired the tastes, and sampled some of the benefits and privileges, of living within the metropolitan culture. Their elite status came about through the alignment of their cultural and economic interests with those of the colonizing group rather than with those of their own society.

School knowledge systems however, were informed by a much more comprehensive system of knowledge which linked universities, scholarly societies and imperial views of culture. Hierarchies of knowledge and theories which had rapidly developed to account for the discoveries of the new world were legitimated at the centre. Schools simply reproduced domesticated versions of that knowledge for uncritical consumption. Although colonial universities saw themselves as being part of an international community and inheritors of a legacy of Western knowledge, they were also part of the historical processes of imperialism. They were established as an essential part of the colonizing process, a bastion of civilization and a sign that a colony and its settlers had 'grown up'. Attempts to 'indigenize' colonial academic institutions and/or individual disciplines within them have been fraught with major struggles over what counts as knowledge, as language, as literature, as curriculum and as the role of intellectuals, and over the critical function of the concept of academic freedom.<sup>21</sup>

### Colonizing the Disciplines

Academic knowledges are organized around the idea of disciplines and fields of knowledge. These are deeply implicated in each other and share genealogical foundations in various classical and Enlightenment philosophies. Most of the 'traditional' disciplines are grounded in cultural world views which are either antagonistic to other belief systems or have no methodology for dealing with other knowledge systems. Underpinning all of what is taught at universities is the belief in the concept of science as the all-embracing method for gaining an understanding of the world. Some of these disciplines, however, are more directly implicated in colonialism in that either they have derived their methods and understandings from the colonized world or they have tested their ideas in the colonies. How the colonized were governed, for example, was determined by previous experiences in other colonies and by the prevailing theories about race, gender, climate and other factors generated by 'scientific' methods. Classification systems were developed specifically to cope with the mass of new knowledge generated by the discoveries of the 'new world'. New colonies were the laboratories of Western science. Theories generated from the exploration and exploitation of colonies, and of the people who had prior ownership of these lands, formed the totalizing appropriation of the Other.

Robert Young argues that Hegel

articulates a philosophical structure of the appropriation of the other as a form of knowledge which uncannily simulates the project of nineteenth century imperialism; the construction of knowledges which all operate

through forms of expropriation and incorporation of the other mimics at a conceptual level the geographical and economic absorption of the non-European world by the West.<sup>22</sup>

David Goldberg claims that notions of the Other are more deeply embedded in classical philosophy but became racialized within the framework of liberalism and the ideas about people and society which developed as disciplines through liberalism.<sup>23</sup> In an interesting discussion on the discourses which employ the word 'civilization', John Laffey suggests that the word 'civilization' entered Anglo-French usage in the second part of the eighteenth century, enabling the distinction to be drawn between those who saw themselves as civilized and those who they then regarded as the 'savages' abroad and at home.<sup>24</sup> As a standard of judgement, according to Laffey, the word 'civilized' became more defined with the help of Freud and more specialized in the way different disciplines employed the concept. One such use was comparative and allowed for comparisons between children and savages or children and women, for example. This way of thinking was elaborated further into psychological justifications for the distinctions between the civilized and the uncivilized. Freud's influence on the way disciplines developed in relation to colonialism is further explored by Marianna Torgovnick, who examines the links between Freud and anthropology in her analysis of Malinowski's book 'The Sexual Life of Savages'.<sup>25</sup> According to Torgovnick,

Freud's explanation of the human psyche in terms of sexuality undergirded their endeavors and influenced the structure of many ethnographic enquiries at this stage of the discipline's development even when those enquiries suggested (as they often did) modifications of Freudian paradigms, such as the Oedipus complex.<sup>26</sup>

Other key intellectuals have also been referred to as not so innocent philosophers of the truth. Henry Louis Gates Jr names Kant, Bacon, Hume, Jefferson and Hegel as 'great intellectual racialisers' who have been influential in defining the role of literature and its relationship to humanity, 'The salient sign of the black person's humanity ... would be the mastering of the very essence of Western civilization, the very foundation of the complex fiction upon which white Western culture has been constructed....'<sup>27</sup>

Of all the disciplines, anthropology is the one most closely associated with the study of the Other and with the defining of primitivism.<sup>28</sup> As Adam Kuper argued, 'The anthropologists took this primitive society as their special subject, but in practice primitive society proved to be their own society (as they understood it) seen in a distorting mirror.'<sup>29</sup> The

ethnographic 'gaze' of anthropology has collected, classified and represented other cultures to the extent that anthropologists are often the academics popularly perceived by the indigenous world as the epitome of all that it is bad with academics. Haunani Kay Trask accuses anthropologists of being 'takers and users' who 'exploit the hospitality and generosity of native people'.<sup>30</sup> Trinh T. Minh-ha makes similar references to anthropology and anthropologists, including those whose intent now is to train Third World anthropologists. 'Gone out of date,' she says, 'then revitalised, the mission of civilizing savages mutates into the imperative of "making equal".'<sup>31</sup> In writing a history of geography, Livingstone refers to this discipline as the 'science of imperialism par excellence'.<sup>32</sup> His comment relates to geographical studies into such things as the mapping of racial difference, the links which were drawn between climate and mental abilities, the use of map makers in French colonies for military intelligence and the development of acclimatization societies.<sup>33</sup> As suggested above in the Introduction, history is also implicated in the construction of totalizing master discourses which control the Other. The history of the colonies, from the perspective of the colonizers, has effectively denied other views of what happened and what the significance of historical 'facts' may be to the colonized. 'If history is written by the victor,' argues Janet Abu-Lughod, 'then it must, almost by definition, "deform" the history of the others.'<sup>34</sup> Donna Awatere claims that, 'The process of recording what happened automatically favours the white occupiers because they won. In such a way a whole past is "created" and then given the authority of truth.'<sup>35</sup> These comments have been echoed wherever indigenous peoples have had the opportunity to 'talk back' to the academic world.

While disciplines are implicated in each other, particularly in their shared philosophical foundations, they are also insulated from each other through the maintenance of what are known as disciplinary boundaries. Basil Bernstein has shown how this works in his paper on the 'classification and framing of knowledge'.<sup>36</sup> Insulation enables disciplines to develop independently. Their histories are kept separate and 'pure'. Concepts of 'academic freedom', the 'search for truth' and 'democracy' underpin the notion of independence and are vigorously defended by intellectuals. Insularity protects a discipline from the 'outside', enabling communities of scholars to distance themselves from others and, in the more extreme forms, to absolve themselves of responsibility for what occurs in other branches of their discipline, in the academy and in the world.

In the context of research and at a very pragmatic level researchers from different projects and different research teams can be in and out of the same community (much in the way many government social

services are in and out of family homes), showing 'as a collective' little responsibility for the overall impact of their activities. At other levels criticism of individual researchers and their projects is deflected by the argument that those researchers are different in some really significant 'scientific' way from others. How indigenous communities are supposed to work this out is a mystery. There are formal organizations of disciplines, researchers and communities of scholars, many of which have ethical guidelines. These organizations are based on the idea that scholars consent to participate within them as scholars, as professionals, or as ethical human beings. Not all who carry out research in indigenous communities belong to, or are bound by, such collegial self-discipline.

### Disciplining the Colonized

The concept of discipline is even more interesting when we think about it not simply as a way of organizing systems of knowledge but also as a way of organizing people or bodies. Foucault has argued that discipline in the eighteenth century became 'formulas of domination' which were at work in schools, hospitals and military organizations.<sup>37</sup> Techniques of detail were developed to maintain discipline over the body. The colonizing of the Other through discipline has a number of different meanings. In terms of the way knowledge was used to discipline the colonized it worked in a variety of ways. The most obvious forms of discipline were through exclusion, marginalization and denial. Indigenous ways of knowing were excluded and marginalized. This happened to indigenous views about land, for example, through the forced imposition of individualized title, through taking land away for 'acts of rebellion', and through redefining land as 'waste land' or 'empty land' and then taking it away. Foucault suggests that one way discipline was distributed was through enclosure. This is the other side of exclusion in that the margins are enclosures: reserved lands are enclosures, schools enclose, but in order to enclose they also exclude, there is something on the outside. Discipline is also partitioned, individuals separated and space compartmentalized. This allowed for efficient supervision and for simultaneous distinctions to be made between individuals. This form of discipline worked at the curriculum level, for example, as a mechanism for selecting out 'native' children and girls for domestic and manual work. It worked also at the assessment level, with normative tests designed around the language and cultural capital of the white middle classes.

The deepest memory of discipline, however, is of the sheer brutality meted out to generations of indigenous communities. Aborigine parents in Australia had their children forcibly removed, sent away beyond reach

and 'adopted'.<sup>38</sup> Native children in Canada were sent to residential schools at an age designed to systematically destroy their language and memories of home. There is a growing body of testimony from First Nations people in Canada which tells of years of abuse, neglect and viciousness meted out to young children by teachers and staff in schools run by various religious denominations.<sup>39</sup> These forms of discipline were supported by paternalistic and racist policies and legislation; they were accepted by white communities as necessary conditions which had to be met if indigenous people wanted to become citizens (of their own lands). These forms of discipline affected people physically, emotionally, linguistically and culturally. They were designed to destroy every last remnant of alternative ways of knowing and living, to obliterate collective identities and memories and to impose a new order. Even after the Second World War, when the post-colonial period was beginning according to some cultural studies theorists, many indigenous peoples around the world were still not recognized as humans, let alone citizens. The effect of such discipline was to silence (for ever in some cases) or to suppress the ways of knowing, and the languages for knowing, of many different indigenous peoples. Reclaiming a voice in this context has also been about reclaiming, reconnecting and reordering those ways of knowing which were submerged, hidden or driven underground.

### Colonialism and 'Native' Intellectuals

The position within their own societies of 'native' intellectuals who have been trained in the West has been regarded by those involved in nationalist movements as very problematic. Much of the discussion about intellectuals in social and cultural life, and their participation in anti-colonial struggles, is heavily influenced by Marxist revolutionary thought, is framed in the language of oppositional discourse, and was written during the post-war period when struggles for independence were under way.<sup>40</sup> Included within the rubric of 'intellectual' by liberation writers such as Frantz Fanon are also artists, writers, poets, teachers, clerks, officials, the petit bourgeoisie and other professionals engaged in producing 'culture'. Their importance in nationalist movements is related to their abilities to reclaim, rehabilitate and articulate indigenous cultures, and to their implicit leadership over 'the people' as voices which can legitimate a new nationalist consciousness.

At the same time, however, these same producers and legitimators of culture are the group most closely aligned to the colonizers in terms of their class interests, their values and their ways of thinking. This view was restated in 1984 by Donna Awatere who wrote that '[Colonial Maori] ... are noticeable because they have succeeded as white in some



section of white culture; economically, through the arts, at sport, through religion, the universities, the professions.<sup>41</sup> There were concerns that native intellectuals may have become estranged from their own cultural values to the point of being embarrassed by, and hostile towards, all that those values represented. In his introduction to Cesaire's *Return to My Native Land* Mazisi Kunene wrote that, 'those [students] who returned despised and felt ashamed of their semi-literate or illiterate parents who spoke inelegant patois'.<sup>42</sup> In New Zealand the few Maori who were trained at universities in the last part of the nineteenth century are generally viewed positively as individuals who retained a love for their culture and language and who were committed in the context of the times to the survival of indigenous people. What is problematic is that this group of men have been named by the dominant non-indigenous population as individuals who represent 'real' leadership. They have been idealized as the 'saviours of the people' and their example remains as a 'measure' of real leadership.

As Fanon has argued, the problem of creating and legitimating a national culture 'represents a special battlefield'<sup>43</sup> and intellectuals are important to this battle in a number of different ways. In recognizing that intellectuals were trained and enculturated in the West, Fanon identifies three levels through which 'native' intellectuals can progress in their journey 'back over the line'.<sup>44</sup> First there is a phase of proving that intellectuals have been assimilated into the culture of the occupying power. Second comes a period of disturbance and the need for the intellectuals to remember who they actually are, a time for remembering the past. In the third phase the intellectuals seek to awaken the people, to realign themselves with the people and to produce a revolutionary and national literature.<sup>45</sup> In this phase the 'native writer progressively takes on the habit of addressing his [sic] own people'.<sup>46</sup>

Fanon was writing about Algeria and the structure of French colonialism in Africa. He himself was trained in France as a psychiatrist and was influenced by European philosophies. One of the problems of connecting colonialism in New Zealand with its formations elsewhere is that New Zealand, like Canada and Australia, was already privileged as a white dominion within the British Empire and Commonwealth, with the indigenous populations being minorities. Whilst geographically on the margins of Europe, they were economically and culturally closely attached to Britain. Within these states the indigenous people were absolute minorities. The settlers who came arrived as permanent migrants. For indigenous peoples in these places this meant a different kind of experience with colonialism and different possibilities for decolonization. What it also points to is that indigenous intellectuals have emerged from different colonial and indigenous systems. In the

Pacific Islands, for example, scholars come from majority cultures and independent island nations but they have also been incorporated at a regional level into the metropolitan cultures of Australia and New Zealand.<sup>47</sup> Hau'ofa argues that 'the ruling classes of the South Pacific are increasingly culturally homogeneous. They speak the same language, which is English; they share the same ideologies and the same material life styles....'<sup>48</sup>

Currently the role of the 'native' intellectual has been reformulated not in relation to nationalist or liberationary discourses but in relation to the 'post-colonial' intellectual. Many intellectuals who position themselves as 'post-colonial' move across the boundaries of indigenous and metropolitan, institution and community, politics and scholarship. Their place in the academy is still highly problematic. Gayatri Spivak, who writes as a post-colonial Asian/Indian intellectual working in the United States, argues that Third World intellectuals have to position themselves strategically as intellectuals within the academy, within the Third World or indigenous world, and within the Western world in which many intellectuals actually work. The problem, she argues, for Third World intellectuals remains the problem of being taken seriously.

For me, the question 'Who should speak?' is less crucial than 'Who will listen?'. 'I will speak for myself as a Third World person' is an important position for political mobilisation today. But the real demand is that, when I speak from that position, I should be listened to seriously; not with that kind of benevolent imperialism....<sup>49</sup>

Spivak acknowledges that the task of changing the academy is difficult: 'I would say that if one begins to take a whack at shaking the structure up, one sees how much more consolidated the opposition is.'<sup>50</sup>

The role of intellectuals, teachers, artists and writers in relation to indigenous communities is still problematic, and the rhetoric of liberation still forms part of indigenous discourses. Indigenous communities continue to view education in its Western, modern, sense as being critical to development and self-determination. While criticizing indigenous people who have been educated at universities, on one hand, many indigenous communities will struggle and save to send their children to university on the other. There is a very real ambivalence in indigenous communities towards the role of Western education and those who have been educated in universities. This is reflected in many contexts in struggles over leadership, representation and voice between those perceived as 'traditional' and those seen either as the 'radicals' or simply as having Western credentials. In Australia, the term 'flash blacks' encompasses both those who are well educated and those who have high-flying jobs. In New Zealand one struggle over the value of Western

education was played out in the 1980s through a process of reprivileging of 'elders' and a reification of elders as the holders of all traditional knowledge and a parallel deprivileging of the younger, frequently much better educated members (in a Western sense) of an *iwi* (tribe). Maori academics who work away from their tribal territories can easily be criticised because they live away from home, and are perceived therefore as being distanced from the people. At the same time they are drawn into tribal life whenever a crisis occurs or there are additional demands for specialist knowledge and skills. The bottom line, however, is that in very fundamental ways they still remain members of an *iwi* with close relations to families and other community ties.

### The 'Authentic, Essentialist, Deeply Spiritual' Other

At a recent international conference held in New Zealand to discuss issues related to indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights, the local newspapers were informed and invited to interview some of the delegates. One news reporter thought it would be a good idea to have a group photograph, suggesting that it would be a very colourful feature for the newspaper to highlight. When she and the photographer turned up at the local *marae* (cultural centre) they were so visibly disappointed at the motley display of track suits, jeans and other items of 'modern' dress, that they chose not to take a photograph. 'Oh, I forgot to come as a native', joked one of the delegates. 'My feathers got confiscated at the airport when I arrived.' 'I suppose my eyes are too blue.' 'Are we supposed to dress naked?' As we have seen, the notion of 'authentic' is highly contested when applied to, or by, indigenous peoples. 'Authorities' and outside experts are often called in to verify, comment upon, and give judgements about the validity of indigenous claims to cultural beliefs, values, ways of knowing and historical accounts. Such issues are often debated vigorously by the 'public', (a category which usually means the dominant group), leading to an endless parading of 'nineteenth century' views of race and racial difference. Questions of who is a 'real indigenous' person, what counts as a 'real indigenous leader', which person displays 'real cultural values' and the criteria used to assess the characteristics of authenticity are frequently the topic of conversation and political debate. These debates are designed to fragment and marginalize those who speak for, or in support of, indigenous issues. They frequently have the effect also of silencing and making invisible the presence of other groups within the indigenous society like women, the urban non-status tribal person and those whose ancestry or 'blood quantum' is 'too white'.<sup>51</sup> In Tasmania, where experts had already determined that Aborigines were 'extinct', the voices of

those who still speak as Aboriginal Tasmanians are interpreted as some political invention of a people who no longer exist and who therefore no longer have claims.

Recent poststructural and psychoanalytical feminist theorists have argued against the claims made by earlier generations of feminists that women as a group were different, because their essence as women was fundamentally, undeniably different, and that therefore their 'sisterhood' would be a natural meeting place for all women. Pedagogically, essentialism was attacked because of its assumption that, because of this essence, it was necessary to be a woman and to experience life as a woman before one could analyse or understand women's oppression. Third World women and women of colour also attacked this assumption because it denied the impact of imperialisms, racism and local histories on women, who were different from white women who lived in First World nations. The concept of authentic, which is related to essentialism, was also deconstructed but more so from psychoanalytic perspectives because the concept assumed that if we strip away the oppressions and psychological consequences of oppression we would find a 'pure' and authentic 'self'. One of the major problems with the way words are defined is that these debates are often held by academics in one context, within a specific intellectual discourse, and then appropriated by the media and popular press to serve a more blatant ideological and racist agenda.<sup>52</sup> As Trinh T. Minh-ha put it when writing of anthropologists in particular, 'But once more *they* spoke. *They* decide who is "racism-free or anti-colonial", and they seriously think they can go on formulating criteria for us...'<sup>53</sup>

In the colonized world, however, these terms are not necessarily employed in the same way that First World academics may have used them. The term 'authentic', for example, was an oppositional term used in at least two different ways. First, it was used as a form of articulating what it meant to be dehumanized by colonization; and, second, for reorganizing 'national consciousness' in the struggles for decolonization. The belief in an authentic self is framed within humanism but has been politicized by the colonized world in ways which invoke simultaneous meanings; it does appeal to an idealized past when there was no colonizer, to our strengths in surviving thus far, to our language as an uninterrupted link to our histories, to the ownership of our lands, to our abilities to create and control our own life and death, to a sense of balance among ourselves and with the environment, to our authentic selves as a people. Although this may seem overly idealized, these symbolic appeals remain strategically important in political struggles. Furthermore the imputing of a Western psychological 'self', which is a highly individualized notion, to group consciousness as it is centred in many colonized societies, is not a straightforward translation of the

individual to the group, although this is often the only way that Westerners can come to understand what may constitute a group. The purpose of commenting on such a concept is that what counts as 'authentic' is used by the West as one of the criteria to determine who really is indigenous, who is worth saving, who is still innocent and free from Western contamination. There is a very powerful tendency in research to take this argument back to a biological 'essentialism' related to race, because the idea of culture is much more difficult to control. At the heart of such a view of authenticity is a belief that indigenous cultures cannot change, cannot recreate themselves and still claim to be indigenous. Nor can they be complicated, internally diverse or contradictory. Only the West has that privilege.

The concept of essentialism is also discussed in different ways within the indigenous world. It is accepted as a term which is related to humanism and is seen therefore in the same way as the idea of authenticity. In this use of the word, claiming essential characteristics is as much strategic as anything else, because it has been about claiming human rights and indigenous rights. But the essence of a person is also discussed in relation to indigenous concepts of spirituality. In these views, the essence of a person has a genealogy which can be traced back to an earth parent, usually glossed as an Earth Mother. A human person does not stand alone, but shares with other animate and, in the Western sense, 'inanimate' beings, a relationship based on a shared 'essence' of life. The significance of place, of land, of landscape, of other things in the universe, in defining the very essence of a people, makes for a very different rendering of the term essentialism as used by indigenous peoples.

The arguments of different indigenous peoples based on spiritual relationships to the universe, to the landscape and to stones, rocks, insects and other things, seen and unseen, have been difficult arguments for Western systems of knowledge to deal with or accept. These arguments give a partial indication of the different world views and alternative ways of coming to know, and of being, which still endure within the indigenous world. Concepts of spirituality which Christianity attempted to destroy, then to appropriate, and then to claim, are critical sites of resistance for indigenous peoples. The values, attitudes, concepts and language embedded in beliefs about spirituality represent, in many cases, the clearest contrast and mark of difference between indigenous peoples and the West. It is one of the few parts of ourselves which the West cannot decipher, cannot understand and cannot control ... yet.

## Notes

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- 18 Sykes, R. B. (1989), *Black Majority*, Hudson Hawthorn, Victoria, p. 185.
- 19 Bernal, M. (1991), *Black Athena, The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, Vintage, London.
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- 21 See, for examples of these debates in relation to indigenous issues, Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), *Decolonizing the Mind. The Politics of Language in African Literature*, James Currey, London, and Haunani Kay Trask (1993), *From a Native Daughter*, Common Courage Press, Maine.
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- 38 This practice is known popularly as the 'stolen children' policy but an official inquiry was conducted by the Australian government called 'A National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families'. This was completed in 1997.
39. A government commission to investigate the abuses in the residential school system for Indian children was recently completed by the Canadian government. For further background read Furness, E. (1995), *Victims of Benevolence: The Dark Legacy of the Williams Lake Residential School*, Arsenal Pulp Press, Vancouver; Haig-Brown, C. (1988), *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School*, Tillacum Library, Vancouver in L. Taine, ed. (1993), *Residential Schools: the Stolen Years*, University of Saskatchewan Press, Saskatoon.
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- 42 Césaire, A. (1969), *Return to My Native Land*, translated by John Berger and Ana Bostock, introduction by Mazisi Kunene, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, p. 24.
- 43 Fanon, F. (1990), *The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin, London, p. 193.
- 44 *Ibid.*, pp. 178-9.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 179.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 193.
- 47 Hau'ofa, E. (1987), 'The New South Pacific Society: Integration and Independence', in *Class and Culture in the South Pacific*, eds A. Hooper, S. Britton, R. Crocombe, J. Huntsman and C. Macpherson, Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Auckland, Institute for Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, pp. 1-15.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 49 Spivak, G. (1990), 'Questions of Multiculturalism', in *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*, ed. S. Harasayam, Routledge, New York, pp. 59-60.

- 50 Spivak, G. (1990), 'Criticism, Feminism and the Institution', in *The Post-Colonial Critic*, p. 6.
- 51 'Blood quantum' refers to the 'amount' of native blood one has and is used in places such as Hawai'i to determine eligibility access to Hawai'ian lands and identity. It is based on racial beliefs that the more indigenous peoples inter-married the more assimilated or 'watered down' they became. Conversely if they did not inter-marry they remained 'pure'.
- 52 Similar debates occur over a word such as 'invention', where anthropologists may talk to each other about the invention of culture; the media can then accuse indigenous people of inventing culture to serve their own interests *at the expense of the dominant group*. This occurred in New Zealand over an article written by A. Hanson (1991), 'The Making of the Maori: Culture Invention and its Logic', in *American Anthropologist*, pp. 890-902. One of the larger daily newspapers took the article and turned it into the following headline: 'US EXPERT SAYS MAORI CULTURE INVENTED', *Dominion*, Saturday 24 February.
- 53 Minh-ha, Trinh T., *Woman, Native, Other*, p. 59.