

“KIA ORA BEGORRAH! AMEN”: PROMISCUOUS POSTCOLONIAL MIXING IN THE LITERATURE OF AOTEAROA-NEW ZEALAND

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RESUMO: Este artigo examina o *code-switching* na literatura Neozelandesa desde os períodos colonial, moderno e pós-colonial, enfocando a mistura de Maori, Inglês e línguas do Pacífico. O argumento é que o intercâmbio entre línguas ocidentais e indígenas progressivamente transformou a prática da escrita literária na Nova Zelândia-Aoteaora e que este 'entrelaçamento' de elementos linguísticos constitui um distinto e significativo assunto para o estudo comparativo contemporâneo.

PALAVRAS CHAVES: Maori, code-switching, Pasifika

ABSTRACT: This paper examines code-switching within New Zealand literature from the colonial, modern and postcolonial periods, focusing on the mixing of Maori, English and Pacific languages. The paper argues that the interchange between Western and Indigenous language has progressively transformed the practice of literary writing in New Zealand-Aoteaora and that this 'entanglement' of linguistic elements constitutes a distinct and significant subject for contemporary comparative study.

KEY WORDS: Maori, code-switching, Pasifika

In spite of its narrow linguistic provenance and the traditionally mono-cultural disposition of its settler population, contemporary New Zealand indicates the possibility of a unique and vigorous version of comparative literary studies, one that arises as the limitations of settler identity confront the opportunities of a postcolonial and post-national identity and one that has international implications for a discipline that has embraced cross-cultural and democratic modes of literary comparison, including those “between Western cultural traditions, both high and popular, and those of non-Western cultures; [and those] between pre- and post-contact cultural productions of colonized peoples....”² I argue here that the basis of significant comparative literary study within New Zealand may be found in the points of distinction and entanglement among the main linguistic/ethnic groups arising from a particular history of colonization, biculturalism, and migration.

In using the term “entanglement” I am drawing on work of historian, Tony Ballantyne, that explores early collaboration between the Indigenous Māori and “Pākehā,” as European New Zealanders, embracing the name Māori conferred on them, now widely call themselves.³ Ballantyne’s term registers both the inescapability and the complexity of cultural and material exchange. It recalls Māori enthusiasm for as well as resistance to and scepticism of European beliefs and practices. And it speaks to a present in which, while bicultural principle has not

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² “The Bernheimer Report” (1993), in Charles Bernheimer, *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1995), 41-2.

³ Tony Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire: Missionaries, Maori and the Question of the Body* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2016).

resulted in general bilingualism, New Zealand English includes a large and mobile store of Māori words, phrases, and some memorized texts, which many Pākehā seek to pronounce correctly. In literary practice since the 1980s the representation of Māori culture by Pākehā has exhibited a level of care that is distinct from the sentimental borrowings of Māori language in the colonial period when settler New Zealand proudly and vacuously knew itself as “Maoriland.” Moreover, central to that literature has been an active interchange among Māori, Pākehā, and Pasifika writers that involves not merely representation but the linguistic means and formal strategies of writing. To read contemporary New Zealand literature is to be struck by the ubiquity, ingenuity, and variety of linguistic mixing that has somewhat loosely been called “code-switching”.⁴ In these (sometimes fractious) cohabitations of linguistic difference we discover the opportunity for a comparatism based on the entanglement of ethnicities and social registers within a national multi-culture in the minute and energetic operations of an increasingly composite literary language.

“Code-switching,” along with the use of a voice both conversational and ironic, has figured as a defining feature of the New Zealand writing scene since an influential 1991 essay by the poet, Bill Manhire. In “Dirty Silence: Impure Sounds in New Zealand Poetry” Manhire describes the undermining of a monologic poetic voice—or its benign invasion by other communal voices—as desirably speaking to the condition of the nation as a whole.⁵ Yet fitting a literary strategy or style to any overarching pattern of national meaning is problematic because the specific workings of cross-linguistic practice in literary texts are too various to figure any such pattern accurately; and the nation itself remains a contested concept, especially since the 1970s when biculturalism introduced into “Aotearoa-New Zealand”—the widely accepted national signifier—the possibility of a limited division of sovereignty. Indeed, it is the discriminations *within* the slippery term code-switching that most trenchantly mirror the contested and fluid patterns of national self-understanding.

I want here to revisit discriminations among kinds of “code-switching” in New Zealand literature made in a 1998 essay,⁶ referring now not only to the periods of biculturalism from the 1970s or multiculturalism over the last twenty years but also, comparatively, to the colonial and cultural nationalist periods. In the varieties of linguistic mixing, historically considered, distinct kinds of cultural understanding or misprision, social antagonism or rapprochement, are inserted *into* the reading process, often unreflectingly in colonial writing but with at times fierce deliberateness in postcolonial writing. The most overtly “political” kind of code-switching identified in the 1998 essay is a means of complicating the non-indigenous reader’s access to insider cultural material.⁷ This boundary-setting method still applies, along with a more inclusive, even celebratory, kind we might name “conversational code-switching,” following Manhire, who cites in support of his argument against poetry as a form of modernist language-cleansing the shifts of register and style in poems by Hone Tuwhare, as a welcome “dirty[ing]” of literary language.⁸ He points to Tuwhare’s Māori-Irish-Hebrew phrase “Kia ora begorrah! Amen” as indicating in a uniquely New Zealand combination of exclamations the agreeable

⁴ Elizabeth Gordon and Mark Williams, “Raids on the Articulate: Code-Switching, Style-Shifting and Post-Colonial Writing,” *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 33, no. 2 (1998): 75-76.

⁵ Bill Manhire, “Dirty Silence: Impure Sounds in New Zealand Poetry,” in Graham McGregor and Mark Williams, eds. *Dirty Silence: Aspects of Language and Literature in New Zealand: Essays Arising from the University of Waikato Winter Lecture Series of 1990* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1991), 156.

⁶ Gordon and Williams.

⁷ Gordon and Williams, 83-85.

⁸ Manhire, “Dirty Silence,” 144. “Conversational code-switching” has the specific meaning in linguistics of “changes within conversations between fluent bilinguals,” Gordon and Williams 1998, 77; here I employ it more loosely to convey the bringing together of elements of discrete languages that invites rather than excluding those unfamiliar with all the parts of that communion.

sort of conversation among parts that both literature and society should display and provoke.⁹ Both these forms of mixing have discovered new complexities as the range of linguistic elements—Māori, English and, increasingly, “Pasifika”; hieratic and demotic; the dissonant styles of contemporary and older poets—and the modes of interchange among them have been extended.

Boundary-setting code-switching may be found most cogently in the fiction of Patricia Grace where untranslated Māori language (te reo Māori) is placed alongside or mixed with English. Māori and to some extent Pākehā readers familiar with te reo will experience a sense of invitation into the culture. But for non-indigenous readers with no knowledge of the language this is a distancing, at times reproving, reminder of the limits of their cultural knowledge. Code-switching here is a more severe political strategy than the humorous collocations of colloquial and formal language, street and literary, Māori and English, which Manhire celebrates in Tuwhare’s poetry. It might be compared with the borrowing of Māori words and phrases in colonial poetry where Pākehā writers were enthusiastic collectors of native names redolent of nobility and loss. In Thomas Bracken’s “The March of Te Rauparaha” (1890) the litany of places and names of noble forebears of the great chief Te Rauparaha act a preserved history the settler poet can neither banish from consciousness nor evoke without exaggerated gravity. The winds “Moan ... over the mighty chieftains/Sprung from giants of far Hawaiki!/Moan they over the bones of Raka,/Moan they over the Rangatira/Toa, who founded the Ngatitōa!”¹⁰

By the mid-twentieth century, the cultural nationalist poet, Charles Brasch, has rejected such plangencies in favour of a stern extirpation of the memory of Māori names from his poem, “The Silent Land” (1945), where “The plains are nameless,” as if no language of place existed before the settlers arrived.¹¹ This is part of the project of “cultural nationalism” in which a group of Pākehā writers set about establishing the beginnings of a serious literature by attending to local realities unmediated by myth, nostalgia, or the long-vowelled names of Māori maidens and native flora. Thirty years later, Māori Renaissance writers return to the use of those names, not as elegaic local colour, but as instances of lived reality. To turn to Grace’s use of Māori names in her 1992 novel, *Cousins*, is to be made to feel, as part of the Māori assertion of culture and nation, the struggle to record the embedding of te reo Māori, not in literary imaginings which consign living Māori to a twilight of the gods or to mere extinction, but in the everyday lives of Māori people in a world where, perforce, English accommodates Māori names: “Kui Hinemate came towards me, calling to Gloria to bring towels and asking Keita to cut flax for the muka ties. I lay back against a tree while she attended to me, thinking of Rere, praying that he would be home to see his daughter before the battalion left for overseas”.¹²

In Grace’s fiction there is a development in the use of language-mixing from the argumentative involvement with readers in early stories and novels, where te reo Māori is sometimes a kind of weapon or reproach, to later work in which the identification of language and culture is *enacted* in the reading process. Consider a passage from a justly celebrated 1975 story by Grace, “Parade,” where an educated girl returns to her small-town home to participate in a communal tradition of demonstrating Māori cultural performance (kapa haka) from a float in the annual parade. She observes “enjoyment on the upturned faces,”

⁹ Manhire, “Dirty Silence,” 151. David O’Donnell notes that Tuwhare himself acknowledged the poet, Michael O’Leary, as the ‘inception of the phrase’, in “Kia ora begorrah: Performing Irishness in Aotearoa,” 173, fn. 9.

¹⁰ Jane Stafford and Mark Williams, eds. *The Auckland University Press Anthology of New Zealand Literature* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2012), 194-5.

¹¹ Stafford and Williams, *Anthology*, 315.

¹² Patricia Grace, *Cousins* (Auckland: Penguin, 1992), 105.

and yet it occurred to me again and again that many people enjoyed zoos. That's how I felt. Animals in cages to be stared at. This one with stripes, this one with spots—or a trunk, or bad breath, the remains of a third eye. Talking, swinging by the tail, walking in circles, laughing, crying, having babies.¹³

The discovery of what Pākehā viewers of the parade (or readers of the text) *see* in the performance of Māori culture is a by-product of the careful tracing of the reverberations in the story's central consciousness of what it means to display one's culture as in an exhibition, where those viewing have no understanding. For the protagonist, Matewai, this knowledge is like a Joycean epiphany, a sudden access of knowledge that transforms understanding; for the Pākehā reader the passage has the quality of a message, part of that "instructive or educative" quality of early Māori Renaissance writing noted by Ken Arvidson.¹⁴ We are led to a cultural apperception without being forced to negotiate our way there *in* the language or confront its reality *as* language. The story closes with an untranslated passage in te reo that indicates the necessary hard work of learning for Pākehā (and for some Māori), while its separateness from the rest of the text, like that of the Pākehā observers of the parade and the Māori "performers" on their float, suggests the distances yet to be navigated if te reo is to become normal.

Language, for Grace, is not merely "cultural" in the loosely anthropological meaning of the word. Learning an indigenous language does not automatically usher the user into the worldview it substantiates. Rather, it carries one *towards* that depth of being within a people that is ontological as well as metaphysical and without which their very existence is threatened. In *Baby No-Eyes* (1998), the Māori child, Riripeti, dies as a result of the State-sanctioned policy of preventing the use of te reo at school.¹⁵ The intensity of the connection between language and being registers that profound sense of loss occasioned by the imposition of the Pākehā nation and the English language on Māori. How then does this sense of loss *work* in Grace's major work? It works in this passage from *Cousins* where a child registers the return home of her drunken father not simply by alienating Pākehā readers or coaxing Māori ones but by carrying readers into the complex experiential effects on Māori language of damage, adaptation, and resilience:

"I'm as free as the breeze," our father sang, dancing into the yard, but you were all eyes-down on comics, wouldn't hear, wouldn't see.

*I can do as I please
What's to stop me and why
Open road
Open sky.*

And as he danced chewing gum began to fly everywhere. That brought all your eyes up, brought you to your feet. You left the comics and went running about the yard picking, picking, calling don't swallow. Don't swallow chewing gums or they stick on your rungs.

*Ringa ringa pakia,
Waewae takahia
Ringa ringa I torona
Kei waho hoki mai*

Our father arm slicing, hip cutting, dancing on his bandy, silly legs.¹⁶

¹³ Patricia Grace, "Parade," in *Waiariki and Other Stories* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1975), 85.

¹⁴ Ken Arvidson, "Aspects of Contemporary Maori Writing in English," in McGregor and Williams, *Dirty Silence*, 117.

¹⁵ Patricia Grace, *Baby No-Eyes* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1998), ch. 4.

¹⁶ Grace, *Cousins*, 176.

The narrative perspective here is that of a child, but layers of diverse cultural reference are tucked into the writing. The father first sings the refrain from “Open Road,” a song in Strauss’s operetta, *The Gypsy Baron*; then he recites a refrain in Māori. The watching child abandons her comics and chants a schoolyard shibboleth. For the non-Māori-speaking reader, however, it is Māori language that holds one initially at a distance, and prevents confident responsiveness to the passage, ironically so given that the quoted material ought to be familiar to all New Zealand readers. The first two lines are a coaxing refrain used in the performance of the famous haka, “Ka Mate,” composed by the same Te Rauparaha mourned in Bracken’s lay and still chanted by the All Blacks before rugby matches: “Slap the hands against the thighs! / Stamp the feet as hard as you can.” This is followed by the deflating image of the father in an eloquently incorrect English that conveys his drunkenness but also the inability of the child to grasp his complex situation between cultures. The intersections here of Māori and English, high and popular culture, remind readers of the difficult entanglements of language and cultural knowledge that must continually be revisited by readers as well as citizens struggling towards a postcolonial future.

In Tuwhare’s poetry, we find less overt distancing of the non-Māori-speaking reader. Linguistic exuberance is as evident in his poetry as political purpose, and the political values of his poetry into the 1970s tend to reflect socialist and anti-nuclear positions rather than postcolonial indignation. A favourite technique is to set different linguistic registers side-by-side, literary resonances rubbing against racy colloquialisms. This switching from formal language to that of the workplace or street is not a specifically postcolonial technique; a characteristic modernist device, it may even be found in the colonial poet, Jessie Mackay’s 1891 “Poet and Farmer,” where romantic and realistically rural speech collide: “The sable tui’s liquid notes are trilling; / The myriad voices of the day awake; — / (Susan, I guess that hog is fit for killing!).”¹⁷ In Tuwhare’s work the relations between literary reference and used language are much more complex and more fundamental to the practice of poetry than in Mackay’s light piece. Still, his inclusion of te reo alongside a rich range of English registers—demotic, literary and elevated—is not forbidding. One of the key early routes of many Pākehā into biculturalism is found in Tuwhare’s poetry from the 1960s, which established an audience receptive to the fashioning of a literature where language differences produce as well as reflect shifts in cultural understanding and practice.

“Understanding” here involves the recognition that the terms of entry into the culture of the other become progressively sensitive and guarded from the early 1970s. Tuwhare does not involve the reader as intensely as Grace in the struggle to forge a postcolonial consciousness, yet in “We, Who Live in Darkness” (1987) he uses a widely known Māori myth in which the children of Rangī and Papa, the Earth Mother and Sky Father, squeezed in primal darkness, argue over whether to kill or merely separate their clasped parents. The poem’s referencing of contemporary arguments regarding the proper degree of militancy in the Māori struggle for separation from the settler nation speaks to Pākehā anxieties as well as Māori political uncertainties. Tuwhare leaves all its readers “wriggling and squirming” blindly in the confined space not just of English words struggling to represent the Māori stories in which they have long been held but also of Māori words tugging in their own directions.¹⁸

In Tuwhare’s “The New Zealand Land March on Wellington, Hepetema 14—Oketopa 17, 1975,” an earlier poem in which the speaker considers a political action he is about to embark on, the internal monologue registers doubt as well as lyrical celebration of nature. The Māori spelling of the months September and October in the title points to the loss of specific languages and traditions. These small shifts in language are not forbidding and are, indeed,

¹⁷ Stafford and Williams, *Anthology*, 121.

¹⁸ Stafford and Williams, *Anthology*, 728-9.

scarcely perceptible, yet they induce that “sting in the heart” that, as Goethe noted appreciatively in 1827 of work by a Serbian poet, signals “ineradicable difference”.¹⁹

In Tuwhare’s poems, as in Grace’s fiction, the reader confronts the problem Haun Saussy cites as fundamental to contemporary comparative literary studies, that is “*how ... to contextualize literature and admit new traditions and canons*”;²⁰ but here the contextualizing and admitting are conducted from within the other tradition. Cross-cultural practice is exemplified by a meeting of two languages and of high and popular traditions, both literary and linguistic. The reader must recognise at least some of the range of idiolects that make up social being, including — indeed especially — those that lie outside familiar usage. The bicultural citizen is a distinctly different kind of reader from that of the mid-twentieth century reader approaching the strenuous effort of interpreting cultural nationalist verse. In the 1930s and ‘40s a generation of writers, embarrassed by the appropriations of their colonial forebears of Māori words and myths, avoided representing Māori. Three decades later Māori writers, forging their own cultural nationalism, insert linguistic barriers that thwart such overly facile access to a sentimentalized Māori atmosphere provided to colonial readers which were current as late as the 1970s.

Patricia Grace does not “smooth the pillow” of the Pākehā reader, to turn a phrase about Māori demographic decline favoured in the colonial period; nor does she regard her work as offering cosmopolitan readers what David Damrosch calls “windows on the world.”²¹ The language as well as the content is often distancing and discomforting for Pākehā readers; even as one is given access to another culture, one is reminded of the view looking back at the expectant visitor. Tuwhare often displays a beguiling lack of such overt distancing but in key poems he produces similar effects, not allowing the work to provide a touristic gateway to “Maoriland,” where the children dive for pennies beside the geysers. These two kinds of linguistic behaviour, the angry and the emollient, are not historically sequential—an early phase of Māori conviviality giving way to a stern refusal to ignore historical injustice. They are, rather, present in Māori writing generally, sometimes simultaneously; hence Witi Ihimaera describes addressing “two audiences, the Māori audience and the general reader.”²²

As the postcolonial refiguring of settler history makes the old unitary notion of nation increasingly redundant, the question is how are the linguistic enclaves within “New Zealand literature” to be approached as part of a common pattern of national being. A traditional comparative approach allows too great a distinction between the parts being compared, for, even if some boundaries remain jealously guarded, linguistic miscegenation is widely evident and various in its applications. This is especially the case as the bicultural pattern is complicated by the arrival since the 1950s of Polynesian migrant communities, or “Pasifika.”

In the first wave of Pasifika writing—notably Albert Wendt’s *Sons for the Return Home* (1973)—the narrative norm is English, inflected with Samoan diction. This caution is abandoned over following decades as the imported languages not only clash with but also rework the dominant one in their own terms, sometimes tragically, sometimes comically and satirically exploring the situation of being neither settler nor “tangata whenua.”²³ Pasifika writing in Aotearoa addresses the question of how different traditions are to be brought into new literary relation, especially where Polynesian traditions and Western intrusions collide. In

¹⁹ David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 10.

²⁰ Haun Saussy, “Exquisite Cadavers Stitched from Fresh Nightmares: Of Memes, Hives, and Selfish Genes,” in *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*, ed. Haun Saussy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), p. 22.

²¹ Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?*, 15.

²² Witi Ihimaera, *Dominion Post*, 12 March, 2016, 10.

²³ Tangata whenua, meaning “the people of the land,” signifies Māori Indigenous priority in bicultural Aotearoa-New Zealand.

“Exam Failure Praying” (1986) Wendt catches the uneasy mixture of Christian influence and the fear of the Samoan father in the abject stream-of-consciousness of a failing student, his language mixing learned piety, filial terror, formality of expression, and pained grammar. The boy’s uncle Samani, a minister, has “never been to high school but he still pass Malua College so with the help of God and my humble prayers to Him I too can pass and become a man of God. If I become that I am sure my father and aiga [family] they will all love me because being a man of God is more worthy that becoming a lawyer”.²⁴

The syntax here is painfully at odds with the consciousness of the boy, whose condition within language might be compared to that of the schoolboy in Manhire’s 1991 poem “Magasin,” who, learning French and proud of his new knowledge, visits his father in hospital and learns among the kiwi blokes being operated on a kind of language not foreign and exotic but familiar and yet strange, and thus eminently fit for literary purpose: “At the end of the ward/men are listening to the races/and from the next-door bed/the man with one leg,/the bloke my father says/ might have to lose the other,/leans across to tell my father/something about/the second leg at Trentham”.²⁵ While Manhire’s student is attentively noticing different languages and the collocation of different *kinds* of language—educated and earthy—that will prove useful to him, the boy in Wendt’s story cannot inhabit the language he must learn to please his father or return to the one that still structures his talk, though not his thought.

Since the 1980s, a new generation of Pasifika writers has emerged, for whom linguistic mixing and exchange is inescapable, even where painful internal division is still evident. Tusiata Avia registers the long afterlife of Christianity in diasporic Polyesian culture in a 2004 poem “Alofa,” where an internal monologue initially seems to convey no guilt about sexuality, and where prayer is directed towards material reward. Alofa (the Samoan word for love) is more at home in her mixed language than Wendt’s desparate boy, but she is also a victim of the long romantic-imperial association of the South Pacific with easy “love.” Alofa is betrayed by the trope of cross-racial romance in the Pacific and shamed by the judgements of a transplanted Christianity. Suspended between worlds—linguistic, religious, consumerist, erotic, representational — Alofa’s experiences and observations of love are deeply alienated and wounded:

Alofa go for da walk . . . walking walking Alofa find alofa everywhere in da bush in da tree under da bush under da tree in da dark alofa . . . plenty alofa in da dark.

Alofa go to church . . . Alofa singing to Jesus Alofa praying to Jesus . . . Jesus bring me plenty alofa plenty money too Jesus make me win da bingo den I make da big donation show my alofa to all da peoples in da church an show my alofa to da faifeau too an everybodys say Alofa is da good kirl—she got so much alofa.

Jesus love Alofa so Alofa win da bingo.²⁶

Such works belong to Pasifika as a regional and global identity including Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Aotearoa, Australia, and the United States. When Tongan novelist and anthropologist, Epli Hau’ofa, described the Pacific as a “Sea of Islands,” he intimated that New Zealand with its Polynesian diaspora might also be seen as part of the Pacific, not merely a dominant power within it (1993).²⁷ And indeed New Zealand has gone some way towards becoming a Pacific

²⁴ Stafford and Williams, *Anthology*, 750-1.

²⁵ Manhire, “Dirty Silence,” 12.

²⁶ Stafford and Williams, *Anthology*, 968. A faifeau is a priest or worker of God.

²⁷ Epli Hau’ofa, “Our Sea of Islands,” in *A New Oceania: Rediscovering our Sea of Islands*, eds. Epli Hau’ofa, Vijay Naidu and Eric Waddell (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 1993), 148-61.

world rather than an outpost of empire in the Pacific, and increasingly its major city is an Asian one as well. In the waves of migrant writing and the (uneven) accommodations of both Māori and Pākehā writing to new arrivals, the relations of cultural power are being renegotiated. In the process the “minor” status of literary traditions within New Zealand have been revalued, while New Zealand literature itself has been increasingly recognized internationally.

Witi Ihimaera argued in 1982 that Māori culture and the oral literary tradition were minor in the sense of being the “largest underground movement ever known in New Zealand”.²⁸ More than thirty years later the Māori Renaissance is as mainstream as cultural nationalism was in the 1940s. Alistair Te Ariki Campbell’s prediction in 1989 that Polynesian writing would eclipse that of Pākehā, has not eventuated in the sense that there has been a wholesale replacement of one ethnic tradition by another.²⁹ Nevertheless, a shift in attention has occurred that might better be conceived of as a change of each in relation to the other such as that observed in a particular elaboration of a feature of language use described by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari:

Even when it is unique, a language remains a mixture, a schizophrenic *mélange*, a Harlequin costume in which very different functions of language and distinct centers of power are played out, blurring what can be said and what can’t be said; one function will be played off against the other, all the degrees of territoriality and relative deterritorialization will be played out.³⁰

In Aotearoa-New Zealand that “*mélange*” operating among the once gated territories of culture has become a conscious and distinguishing feature of contemporary literary practice. The cultural nationalists saw themselves as laying the foundations for a national literature that might be provincial but which, like Ireland’s, would not be “minor” in world terms; and part of that effort required the expulsion from cultural memory of the colonial habit of using Māoriness to make local writing seem distinctive. In turning from Curnow’s stern expulsion of the indigenous-exotic to actively and collaboratively engage with Māori writing and writers, Manhire has joined writers like Tuwhare and Grace in redirecting what Curnow famously called “the local and special” from landscape to language — or, rather, entangled languages.³¹ In the process the “minor” status of New Zealand literature,³² which was addressed but not resolved by cultural nationalism, has been translated into a richer exchange between differences, and Aotearoa-New Zealand has become, although scarcely a “major” figure in “world literature,” then considerably more so than the “undiscovered country” of 1915 that Katherine Mansfield thought to bring to the world’s regard.³³

²⁸ Witi Ihimaera, “Maori Life and Literature: A Sensory Perception,” Turnbull Winter Lectures 1981, *Turnbull Library Record*, 15, no.1 (1982), 48.

²⁹ Tapu Misa, “Identity Search Changes Outlook,” interview with Alistair Te Ariki Campbell, *New Zealand Herald*, 20 May, 1989, section 2, p. 6.

³⁰ Gilles Deleuze, and Felix Guattari. *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 26.

³¹ Allen Curnow, “Introduction to *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse 1960*,” in *Look Back Harder: Critical Writings, 1935-1984*, ed. Peter Simpson (Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1987), 133.

³² Evgeny Pavlov and Mark Williams. “Vnov” privodia v zameshatel’stvo: malye literatury Aotearoa/Novoi Zelandii.” *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie*, 85 (2007): 323-38.

³³ C.K. Stead, ed. *The Letters and Journals of Katherine Mansfield: A Selection* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), 65.

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