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*'Large letter'd as with thundering shout'*

An Analysis of Typographic Posters Advertising Emigration to  
New Zealand 1839 – 1875

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Visual and Material Culture

Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand

Patricia Ann Thomas

2014

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role of ephemeral, typographic material in the promotion of emigration to New Zealand in the nineteenth century. It focuses on the advertising posters produced by the New Zealand Company, the Otago and Canterbury Associations, the provincial governments and Government of New Zealand. It aims to identify how advertising and typography contributed to the transfer of the promotion message from the producer to the audience in this specific historical context.

For the first time a comprehensive data set of emigration posters of this period has been gathered together and examined. The posters are analysed in the context of their contemporary visual, material and print cultures, with particular reference to ephemeral printing. To account for all the historical, textual and graphic properties of the posters, the thesis develops and applies a novel, multilayered system of analysis, drawing on communication theory, social semiotic principles and Gestalt principles of composition.

The posters afforded emigration promoters a visual medium for distributing audience-appropriate messages through typographic strategies. They provided promoters with the facility for fast and inexpensive messaging that was otherwise unavailable in nineteenth century communication. The thesis concludes that posters were a significant part of an early, coherent and systematic advertising campaign which utilised processes and persuasive tools that have traditionally been seen as emergent only in the late nineteenth century.

This thesis establishes the value of ephemeral material and the study of graphic language when applied to the examination of historical phenomena. As well as shedding new light on these particular forms of historical design and modes of communication, it also adds a further valuable dimension to the more well-known story of nineteenth century emigration promotion by focussing on its graphic and advertising languages rather than its pictorial aspects. The investigation undertaken provides a new analytical system through which a combination of historical, ephemeral, typographic and advertising material can be examined in the future.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am firstly indebted to my supervisors, Dr Bronwyn Labrum and Dr Claire Robinson of the College of Creative Arts at Massey University. Their patience and wisdom has seen me safely through this long journey. Without their careful and thoughtful feedback on the many twists and turns it took, this thesis would have been a lesser one. I would like to acknowledge the financial assistance given to me by Massey University; they funded my attendance at conferences, but this allowed me time and put me in the right place to collect the set of posters. I wish also to thank the many people in the libraries, museums and archives who helped me find, and then gave me access, to the material I knew needed. My friends and colleagues in the School of Design have been particularly forbearing of my occasional physical absences and mental blanks and for this I am grateful. I would like to thank my late father, Peter Thomas, for creating the intellectual compost on which I was able to grow, and my mother, Joy Thomas, for understanding my neglect over the last few years. Lastly, I would like to thank my partner, Mike Lawrance, who kept the home fires burning, left me alone when I needed peace and kept me amused when I needed distraction.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND USAGES

### Abbreviations

AJHR	Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives, New Zealand
ANZ	Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o Kāwananga
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
CA	Canterbury Association
HL	Hocken Library/Uare Taoka Hakena
NA	National Archives, London
NLS	National Library of Scotland/Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba
NLNZ	National Library of New Zealand/Te Puna Mātauranga O Aotearoa
NZC	New Zealand Company
NZCS	New Zealand Company Scrapbook
NZG	New Zealand Government
OA	Otago Association
PGA	Provincial Government of Auckland
PGC	Provincial Government of Canterbury
PGO	Provincial Government of Otago
PGT	Provincial Government of Taranaki
RCI	Royal Cornwall Institute
RCSL	Royal Commonwealth Society Library

### Usages

An issue that arises in using historical documents concerns grammar and spelling. Throughout the posters, the related material and the contemporary writings, words such as ‘colonization’ are invariably spelled with a ‘z’. I have kept this spelling when using quoted material, but reverted to present-day conventional New Zealand usage of the ‘s’ for such words.

The word ‘labourer’ is spelled on the posters both as ‘labourer’ and ‘laborer’. In quoting the text, I have retained the original spelling in all cases.

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