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Constructing New Zealand's Landscape

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Abstract

This study considers some of the ways European visitors to New Zealand, prior to 1840, constructed the New Zealand landscape through their published accounts. In examining what was written about the New Zealand landscape, a number of questions arise: How did these early writers construct the New Zealand landscape? To what extent were their prior understandings and knowledge modified or simply confirmed by their new experiences? What are the implications for interpretation, given the derived nature of the published accounts? To what extent do the accounts allow for multiple readings over time? Finally, given hindsight, is it possible to read these texts as anything other than appropriative? It attempts to deal with these large questions by focusing on four roles of the published accounts: naming and associating, resource inventorying, locating Maori within the landscape, and 'aestheticising' the landscape through the use of convention and vivid prose.

The process of 'deconstruction' yields good returns, especially in tracing ways in which European presence, activity and writing inscribed European values onto a new landscape. The study questions whether, individually and collectively, the accounts are more complex than might be suggested by a straightforward reading of them as foreshadowing colonisation. It takes the view that the landscapes, constructed by the account writers, do not fit any single construct easily. Other preoccupations and obsessions surface in the texts that, in combination, destabilise a single interpretative model. In examining what others have made of these earlier landscape constructions, the study also considers present day preoccupations. The sub-text, then, is about how these landscapes continue to be constructed for present day purposes.

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Contents

Abstract

Acknowledgments

Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter one: Landscape as an Interpretative Strategy	6
Chapter two: Making a Place in the Landscape	17
Chapter three: The Landscape as a Repository of Useful Information	37
Chapter four: Seeing Maori	56
Chapter five: 'Aestheticising' the Landscape	73
Conclusion	97
Bibliography	102

Introduction

By 1840, New Zealand was alive in the European imagination in many forms. Setting aside earlier generations of utopian literature, New Zealand inspired texts included a wealth of newspaper articles, parliamentary papers, and correspondence. In addition to the official files, New Zealand featured in the journals and published accounts of its early European visitors. From Captain Cook's first visit onwards, a number of accounts were published, which conveyed to home audiences a picture of the New Zealand landscape. This study examines some of the ways European visitors to New Zealand constructed the New Zealand landscape through their published accounts, prior to 1840. It focuses on four areas of activity, where the dominant (post-colonial) interpretative standpoint appears most unambiguous: place naming; resource inventorying; and portrayals of Maori and the landscape in highly contrived 'artistic' forms. In examining what was written about the New Zealand landscape, a number of questions arise: How did these early writers construct the New Zealand landscape? To what extent were their prior understandings and knowledge modified or simply confirmed by their new experiences? What are the implications for interpretation, given the derived nature of the published accounts? To what extent do the accounts allow for multiple readings over time? Finally, in light of later events, is it possible to position these texts other than as foreshadowing the appropriation of land and resources by Europeans?

The principal primary sources for this study are the published accounts from Cook's first voyage to those published around 1840. The study draws both on the Hawkesworth version and the later Beaglehole edition of Cook's first visit, on the grounds that the Hawkesworth edition placed a view of New Zealand in the public arena that survived well into the nineteenth century with numerous reprints, unauthorised editions, revisions, reductions, and expansions.¹ It was, therefore,

¹ J.C. Beaglehole (ed.), *The Voyage of the Endeavour*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, vol 1, 1955. John Hawkesworth, *An Account of the Voyages ...*, Vols 2&3, London: Strahan and Cadell, 1773. A brief synopsis of the publication history of Hawkesworth's *Account* is included in J.C. Beaglehole, 'The Printed Sources', in *Endeavour Journal*, pp.ccxlii-ccliii.

pivotal in shaping later interpretations of the New Zealand landscape.² Accounts, written by later explorers (including Crozet, Dumont D'Urville, and FitzRoy), joined the pool of published information on New Zealand.³ Later still, a number of other accounts appeared, written by lesser known figures, such as naval surgeons, missionaries, traders and adventurers.⁴ Visiting New Zealand in the early to mid nineteenth century, most stayed for periods anywhere from six weeks to six years. On the long voyage home, they wrote about what they saw, found and experienced.

Or did they? Often they wrote about what others had seen and found, and what they themselves had read and heard. They wrote for pleasure, but with an eye for a possible market, borrowing form and genre from the conventions of the day. Within these frameworks, most of them expressed opinions and hopes for the future, at a time when the British Government was ambivalent towards formal annexation of New Zealand. A good number of them introduced their travel narratives with a brief synopsis of discovery history. And all of them included full-blown descriptions of the land, complete with inventories of its resources and observations of 'the New Zealanders', alongside narrative detail of their daily doings. Almost without exception, the texts were complemented with images of Maori chiefs, Maori objects, panoramic landscapes, and the occasional map as well. The texts of these early European visitors, despite their limitations, remain in the public eye, reappear in compilations, and continue to attract notice.⁵

Broadly categorised as travel accounts, the texts suffer from the lack of a coherent framework, within which to interpret them collectively. Navigators and

² Beaglehole, 'The Printed Sources', in *Endeavour Journal*, p. ccliii. This point was echoed by Peter Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, 2nd ed., Terry Sturm (ed.), Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998, p.35.

³ E.H. McCormick and Peter Gibbons both briefly surveyed these neglected accounts, in E.H. McCormick, *New Zealand Literature; a Survey*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959, and Peter Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, 2nd ed., Terry Sturm (ed.), Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp.31-118.

⁴ They included: John Savage, John Liddiard Nicholas, Richard Cruise, Peter Dillon, Augustus Earle, William Barrett Marshall, Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, Joel Samuel Polack, William Yate, William Wade, John Carne Bidwill, Frederick Maning, and Edward Markham.

⁵ Since publication of the Hocken and Bagnall bibliographies, facsimiled copies of the more popular accounts have continued to appear, including Cruise (1998), Bidwill (1996), Maning (1996). (The 1970s saw revivals of Bidwill, Cruise, Dieffenbach, Dillon, Heaphy, Maning, Marjoribanks, Nicholas, Polack, Wade, E.J. Wakefield's *Adventure*, and Yate.)

explorers wrote accounts that combined navigational detail with ethnographic and natural scientific observation. Natural scientists wrote accounts, which encompassed philosophical and ethnographical matters. Missionaries wrote travel accounts and botanical guides. Company men wrote accounts of natural scientific discoveries. Naval surgeons wrote accounts of treasure hunts and ethnographic encounters, and explorers wrote accounts that would later be acknowledged as adventure classics. These disparate texts, nonetheless, textually construct landscapes that were strikingly similar.

Ideas about 'landscape' require some introduction. This is the focus of chapter one, which introduces the idea of landscape as an interpretative strategy in historical enquiry. It also offers a way into introducing the published accounts of this period, from the perspective of how they have been located within the historical work of others. This leads to some consideration of the role of interpretative strategies, and the challenges for historical research of this pre-1840 period.

Chapter two considers the collective contribution of the accounts to the geographic discourse of naming. Cook's naming practices are tested within the theoretical framework of naming as claiming, and contrasted with the focus of later accounts. Other means of creating a sense of place are examined in the later accounts. The role of the landscape author is briefly considered. The underlying issue however is the role of naming and associating to know (create) the New Zealand landscape through the travel accounts.

The accounts' contribution to natural history and the creation of a landscape of prospect are considered in Chapter three. It looks at the way the accounts presented information on the land and its resources, noting the repetitions - the thickly wooded slopes, rich soil, benign climate, abundance of fish, and general sense of fertility. In looking at the practice of resource inventorying in early travel accounts, it suggests a role in creating landscapes of plenitude and a landscape that lacked useful things. The extent to which the travel accounts generated new knowledge or recycled old ideas is also considered. This includes, for example, *terra*

australis incognita, and its imitators, which stem from the idea of an ideal place somewhere out there.

Chapter four concentrates on the extent to which Maori figured in these early landscapes, how they were represented and the kinds of roles, which were assigned to them. It suggests a link between past inventions and present strategies of assigning roles to Maori as guardians of nature.

Moving on from naming, classifying, describing landscapes and assigning roles, the 'aestheticisation' of the landscape is the subject of chapter five. It focuses on concepts of the 'sublime' and the 'picturesque' versus 'local' elements. The questions addressed here are the extent to which typing and describing were responsive to local conditions, individual writers, or were sourced from older traditions. The interpretation of 'aestheticisation' as a technique of appropriation is also briefly explored.

Although the published accounts, listed in the bibliography, are the prime focus of this study, there is no suggestion that they form a representative survey of all published accounts of this pre-1840 period. There are notable exceptions. For example, the published accounts between the Cook voyages and John Savage's visit are virtually ignored, as are the published official reports and memoranda. Frederick Maning's account has also been set aside, given its highly retrospective nature.⁶ With some exceptions, missionary journals were only superficially consulted. The missionary reports, which appeared in the Church Missionary Society's (CMS) publications throughout this period, have been ignored altogether. Some reference is made to the early painted landscapes of this period, the engravings that accompanied the texts, and a handful of unpublished journals from this period, which survive as typescripts or in the original in the Alexander Turnbull Library. They feature in the study as a point of comparison or contrast. As for other 'primary' sources of this period, the logs from the hundreds of ships that visited New Zealand in the seventy

⁶ F.E. Maning, *Old New Zealand: a Tale of the Good Old Times*, Auckland: Seascapes, 1996. Maning's *Old New Zealand*, published in 1863, has appeared in at least 19 reprints, including translations in Dutch, Italian, German and Danish.

years following Cook's first visit were not consulted. With the exception of extracts reprinted in Carrick and McNab, newspaper articles were also ignored.⁷

Scope played a role in framing the selection of texts that form the focus of this study. However, the more important consideration is the nature of the accounts themselves. As a blend of many forms and functions, they attempted to serve several purposes and appeal to a broad audience. Read collectively, the accounts offer a way to experience these early landscapes as their authors wished others to see them. At the same time they allow alternative readings from the perspective of present day preoccupations and hindsight. Account readings, therefore, carry their own poignancy, as they conjure up landscapes of the past that have been transformed beyond recognition, or lost altogether. It is not tangential that they continue to offer such a rich field for historical endeavour. On the contrary, it is suggested that the very act of returning to these accounts and their landscapes ensures that the process of construction continues right up to the present day.

⁷ Robert Osborne Carrick (ed.), *Historical Records of New Zealand South prior to 1840*, Dunedin: Otago Daily Times, 1903, and Robert McNab (ed.), *Historical Records of New Zealand*, 2 vols, Wellington: Govt. Printer, 1973.

Chapter One

Landscape as an Interpretative Strategy

J.C. Bidwill experienced the traveller's disappointment, on finding a destination didn't quite match expectations.¹ Recalling Robert Burford's 360 degree panorama, on show in London and New York in the late 1830's, it seemed that the hills of his memory were mere: 'trifling elevations in reality'.² The Bay of Islands, while 'certainly a very pretty place', was not the grandest and most beautiful in the land, as compared to the Thames.³ By contrast to its bland concoction of hills and harbour, Bidwill described the Thames, with its expanse of water: 'thickly studded with islands', high rocky outcrops, beaches, and thickly timbered hills stretching back into the interior.⁴ Charles Wilkes, another dissatisfied customer, complained: 'From the splendid panorama of Mr. Burford, I had pictured the Bay of Islands to myself as a place of unsurpassing beauty, and I could not but feel gratified at the idea of paying it a visit The whole view is anything but picturesque, and there is little to meet the eye, except bare hills and extensive sheets of water.'⁵

The visual impact of this virtual Bay of Islands is now difficult to imagine. Notwithstanding the sour remarks of these disappointed gentlemen, all that remains are the exhibition pamphlets.⁶ Reproduced as an A3 sized, black and white, fold-out to accompany the pamphlet, Burford's panorama was split in two sections, one perched on top of the other, with each landscape feature carefully annotated. It shows two pleasant landscapes, comprising hills, signs of shipping activity, the location of European residences, and vignettes of Maori village life and customs. The panorama fairly seethes with foreground activity. Fifty years later, the panoramic

¹ J.C. Bidwill, *Rambles in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Capper Press, 1974, p.2.

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States' Exploring Expedition, during the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842*, abridged, London: Whittaker, 1845, (WTU: P q910.4 WIL 1845), pp.160-161.

⁶ Robert Burford, *Description of a View of the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, and the Surrounding Country ...*, London: G Nichols, 1838, New York, Osborn, 1840. (Pamphlets, WTU, PAM BUR 1838 & 1840.)

image re-appeared in Brett's Historical Series, *Early History of New Zealand*.⁷ Labelled 'Bay of Islands, 1837', Burford's image had been cropped and manipulated to fit a smaller print space. The print order was reversed. The start and end of each panorama had changed, and chunks of the landscape excised altogether. Much of the hinterland had disappeared and, even more sinister, the Maori village and pa had vanished too.

Burford's landscape, derived from Augustus Earle's portfolio of New Zealand works and other sources of inspiration, offers rich opportunity for present day interpretation. It is about matching expectations with 'reality', the development of an aesthetics that enabled landscape representation on such a grand scale, and the Victorian obsession with panorama. It also provides scope to consider commercial opportunism, for example, Burford's connections with The New Zealand Company, and the role of utopian representations in colonisation. There is a poignancy about his panorama, if for no other reason than it no longer exists. The landscape of his construct never existed. While the panorama could once again be reconstructed, it would at best hold curiosity value. The ideas that contributed to the fame of his panorama belong to another culture and time. The 360 degree experience would no longer inspire.

Burford's panorama serves to introduce some of the ideas about landscape construction that are the focus of this study. He borrowed from Earle's landscape paintings to present a New Zealand landscape for metropolitan audiences in London and New York. His panorama can be re-positioned, in turn, as a subject of historic interest. It provides scope to test current preoccupations, as well as Burford's role as landscape interpreter, or the older fascination with panoramic scenery. His construct of a New Zealand landscape, both derived from the work of others, and feeding the work of others, is analogous to other popular forms of conveying ideas about the New Zealand landscape. The landscapes that emerge from the published accounts of this period are similarly influenced by, and in turn influence, perceptions and expectations. They present, if in a less concrete way, rich opportunities for

⁷ R.A.A Sherrin, and J.H. Wallace, *Early History of New Zealand from Earliest Times*, Auckland: H.Brett, 1890, p.447. Sherrin noted: 'The illustration ... was taken at the time of the Rev. S. Marsden's last visit to New Zealand...'. Burford's original 44 annotations had been reduced accordingly to 35.

deconstruction, not only of themselves, but of what others have made of them, as well. In this way, these early constructions reinvent themselves as landscapes to fit present day frameworks of understanding.

'Landscapes are culture before they are nature; constructs of the imagination projected onto wood and water and rock', Simon Schama wrote.⁸ It is in this sense that depictions and descriptions of landscape and landscape types have long been sites for remembering earlier landscapes and the ideas that shaped their production. The idea of landscape encompasses what is seen and portrayed in image or print. It has its own history: "Landscape" is a painter's word, borrowed from the Dutch in the sixteenth century, to mean a pictorial representation of countryside, as a picture's background or subject Landscape came next to mean the countryside itself, visually perceived.⁹ But it is also used metaphorically as a site where association and imagination combine to influence the seeing. This single word conjures up a myriad of associations that, in combination, link places, and their attributes, to human use. As an ideological concept (discursive instrument), it brings together notions of place and human relations with nature: '[Landscape] represents a way in which certain people have signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature and through which they have underlined and communicated their own social role and that of others with respect to external nature.'¹⁰ Another way of conceptualising landscape is Geoff Park's, where he addresses the merging of object and subject in landscape construction:

[it is] the pattern of landforms, plants, human structures, phenomena, etc, that we 'see' when we look at a stretch of country; and the experiences, imaginations, beliefs and ideals which inform the looking and other interactions.¹¹

Landscapes, depicted or described, tell as much about what was perceived or projected, as what was actually there. Landscape and place are linked. The one favours the seen, the other the experienced. The concept of place, similarly, has a blend of cultural and geographical dimensions:

⁸ Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, London: Harper Collins, 1995, p.61.

⁹ Francis Pound, *Frames on the Land: Early Landscape Painting in New Zealand*, Auckland: Collins, 1983, pp.23-24.

¹⁰ D.E. Cosgrove, quoted in Kate Soper, *What is Nature?: Culture, Politics and the Non-Human*, Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995, p.234.

¹¹ Geoff Park, *Nga Uruora: The Groves of Life: Ecology and History in a New Zealand Landscape*, Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1995, p.337.

Places are fusions of human and natural order and are the significant centres of our immediate experiences of the world. They are defined less by unique locations, landscape, and communities than by the focusing of experiences and intentions onto particular settings.¹²

This diffuse blend of landscape with notions of place, nature and culture lends itself to fruitful engagement with the past. 'Landscape' is shorthand for the many associations. It is grounded historically, in the sense that meaning attaches itself to time, place, circumstance, writer and audience. But it invites constant review in the face of the concerns and ideas of the present. In this respect, landscapes are constructed politically and economically at the same time as they serve emotional, intellectual and aesthetic needs.

Early European visitors to New Zealand arrived with some idea of what they might see. The mythical origins of the New Zealand landscape had long resided in the European imagination. An enormous archive of stories, myths, and books attest to a European fascination for fabled lands of the south.¹³ The site of these mythical landscapes had long been exoticised as an Eden-like place, peopled with unusual life forms. Geographers played their part in theorizing the continent as a logical balance to the land mass of the northern hemisphere. As centuries of maritime exploration located long dreamed of worlds for Europeans, which were in turn found to be less than paradise, so were the residual dreams projected onto the last great continent remaining unknown to eighteenth century Europeans, *terra australis incognita*. Cook's failure to locate the imagined great southern continent became celebrated as a triumph of modern discovery.¹⁴ In replacing a mythical landscape with a host of actual locations (with potential strategic and economic advantages), Cook unwittingly stimulated an insatiable appetite to know more about the places and peoples found. These islands, and the continent of Australia, were fixed for all time on charts, labelled and recorded in logs and journals by the end of the century.

¹² E.C. Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, London: Pion, 1976, p.141.

¹³ Neil Rennie surveyed a number of them in *Far-Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South Seas*, Oxford: Clarendon Press & New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. The process of transformation of the imaginary Great Southern Land through actual voyaging is the subject of David Fausett's *Writing the New World: Imaginary Voyages and Utopias of the Great Southern Land*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993.

¹⁴ This view of Cook's achievement as a 'discoverer' appears in J.C. Beaglehole's numerous Cook publications. It both positions Cook's geographical achievements against Alexander Dalrymple's, and fits Beaglehole's view of Cook, the man. See Beaglehole (ed.), 'General Introduction', in *Endeavour Journal*, pp.cxx-cxxi. Also 'Epilogue', in *The Life of Captain James Cook*, London: A&C Black, 1974, pp.689-714.

If the geographical existence of the unknown continent was dispelled by scientific exploration, the idea of *terra australis incognita*, it was suggested by David Mackay, continued to play a role long afterwards in the European imagination, with unhappy consequences.¹⁵ It fed expectations and, as nineteenth century disillusionment replaced earlier optimism, became burdensome. In this way, the unknown continent survived as a useful construct to contrast expectations and dreams of a place, with what was found and made. It functioned equally well as a rhetorical device to evoke a landscape on a grand scale, a place imagined, not found. Its dimensions remain vast, encompassing artistic, literary, economic, political and psychological aspects that come together as an interpretative strategy.

As fascinating as the idea of *terra australis* remains, it was just one of many ideas that inspired early European visitors to write of the place they found in the way they did. Other ideas emerged from their landscape descriptions. The 'interior', a word to describe another unknown place, appeared in the accounts as a site of speculation, worthy of further exploration. Within the interior, a whole host of natural landscapes presented themselves: river-scapes, mountain- and forest-scapes and the landscape of the plain, with its encouraging signs for cultivation and European settlement. But the most tantalising landscape of all remained undescribed in the accounts. The imagined landscapes of the interior were both populous with Maori and contained unmeasured resource. They invited further exploration and mapping. For the missionaries, the interior held the promise of spiritual prospects. This prompting to go further into the interior, even if in conventional terms New Zealand's landscape presented a narrow interior, had something of a spiritual or emotional dimension to it: 'We felt assured that no great work could be accomplished till we could establish a Mission station in the interior of the island, and in the midst of its cultivable and populous districts.'¹⁶ It was as if the best and the worst could be projected onto the unknown 'interior'. This pushing back the boundaries of unknown space has a context other than commercial and religious

¹⁵ David Mackay, 'The Burden of *Terra Australis*: Experiences of Real and Imagined Lands', in *From Maps to Metaphors: the Pacific World of George Vancouver*, Robin Fisher and Hugh Johnston (eds), Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993, pp.21-37.

¹⁶ Rev. William Yate, *An Account of New Zealand and of the Church Missionary Society's Mission in the Northern Island*, 2nd ed., Wellington: Reed, 1971, p.188.

opportunism. The unknown landscapes of the interior represented the pursuit of knowledge and experiences to challenge old knowledge and precepts.

While historians, generally, have been careful to comment that the literature of this period, written chiefly about pockets of the North Island, should not be taken as indicative of the country as a whole, this study argues that, from the point of view of the account reader, the landscapes were written as a series of set landscapes, irrespective of location. They commonly included contrasts offered by isolated pockets of civilisation against the backdrop of forest and Maori cultivation. Riverscapes were lovingly described as a series of serpentine rivers winding their way through rich plains, fringed with the trees reaching down to the waters edge, and decorated with flying ducks and other wildfowl. Waterfalls, rocky outcrops and grottoes also fulfilled an aesthetic demand.

There were also bleaker landscapes, where useful plants and animal life were not to be found. More sinister, in hindsight, was the inverse of the *terra australis* and the interior. The idea of *terra nullius*, which suggested both nothing and no one, in a word signalled vacant possession. While *terra nullius* was more commonly applied as a legal fiction to describe the perceived emptiness of Australia (and hence justify Aboriginal dispossession), it is a relative latecomer as a concept to retrospectively understand dispossession in the latter part of nineteenth century New Zealand.¹⁷ Yet some of the assumptions underpinning *terra nullius* are discernible in the accounts. They are to be read in the projected ideas for improving upon what was found and making good of the waste land where Maori gardens lay fallow, or had been abandoned as a consequence of tribal dispersion.

The New Zealand landscape featured strongly in the published accounts of early European visitors to New Zealand. At the time of publication, the accounts served to augment a growing archive of literature, (if not knowledge), on New Zealand. Some of the account authors wrote with the specific purpose of drumming up support for British annexation, appearing before Parliamentary Select

¹⁷ For example, Geoff Park, 'Going between Goddesses', in *Quicksands: Foundational Histories in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand*, Klaus Neumann, Nicholas Thomas and Hilary Eriksen (eds), Sydney: UNSW Press, 1999, p.197. Paul McHugh, 'Australasian Narratives of Constitutional Foundation', in *Quicksands*, p.102.

Committees to present their 'evidence'.¹⁸ At the time they were first published, reliability and authenticity were at issue, especially when the views expressed in the account were contrary to public taste. This applied equally to the tone in which the account was written, and the reputation of the author himself. This was evident in the criticism of Augustus Earle's account, which impugned the integrity of the missionaries, at the same time as it offered views of Maori that did not mesh with those of his critics.¹⁹ The reliability of William Yate's account was also questioned, ostensibly on the basis that he relied on the testimony of others.²⁰ Documentary integrity was a prime concern for twentieth century academic editors, especially J.C. Beaglehole (in the case of Cook), E.H. McCormick (with reference to Earle and Markham), and to a certain extent Judith Binney (as evidenced in her introductory notes to Yate's *Account*).²¹

E.H. McCormick was among the earliest to position these early New Zealand texts as literary and historic artefacts.²² Despite their popularity, they had been ignored by literary historians on the grounds of dubious literary merit. Their value gradually increased over time, as they became 'historic documents'. The accounts, to paraphrase McCormick, might be factually unreliable, but they remained indispensable as rare witnesses to: 'aspects of pre-colonial New Zealand', with their blend of ethnographic and natural scientific observation, tales of adventure, anecdotes and stories, and their function as a: 'unique repository of gossip'.²³ McCormick positioned these early texts within parentheses, concerning himself with later texts, which contributed more directly to social history and, obliquely, an emergent (Pakeha) New Zealand identity.

¹⁸ For example, J.S. Polack and J.L. Nicholas gave 'evidence' in April 1838. *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, Appointed to Inquire into the Present State of the Islands of New Zealand and the Expediency of Regulating the Settlement of British Subjects therein*, London, H.M.S.O., 1838, pp.3-11, 79-93 & p.95.

¹⁹ The most comprehensive criticism was reprinted as a separate publication. 'Review of Earle's Narrative of a Residence ...', extracted from *The Protestant Journal*, 1833, London: Gilbert & Rivington, 1833. WTU, Wellington: P/EARLE, 1833.

²⁰ Yate, *An Account*, pp.ix-x.

²¹ J.C. Beaglehole's editorial comments are contained in the prefacing remarks to all three volumes of the Cook journals, and numerous monographs and articles on the task of editing the Cook journals. E.H. McCormick's appeared in *Narrative of a Residence in New Zealand; Journal of a Residence in Tristan da Cunha*, E.H. McCormick (ed.), London: Oxford at Clarendon Press, 1966; and, in *New Zealand or Recollections of it*, E.H. McCormick (ed.), Wellington: Govt. Printer, 1963. J. Binney discussed matters of reliability, in Yate, *An Account*.

²² E.H. McCormick, *New Zealand Literature*, pp.10-14.

²³ McCormick (ed.), Markham, p.27.

The accounts continue to appear, either as excerpts in compiled works or as facsimiled editions, for a newer reading public. Such compilations remain popular, possibly because they tend to write optimistic histories of early New Zealand in pioneering mode. Nancy Taylor's *Early New Zealand Travellers* remains the most scholarly version, given her substantive analysis, which positioned the texts within the framework of discovery history.²⁴ She dealt with the accounts as empirical evidence for this phase of New Zealand's history. Shirley Maddock's enthusiastic treatment of similar material popularised similar themes for a broader audience.²⁵ Characterising her album as: 'a social commentary relative to European settlement from 1814 to 1854', she tried to: 'piece together a picture of New Zealand *as it was* when men and women first ventured to the Antipodes and bequeathed to us something of the vision which persuaded them to journey south'.²⁶ Gordon and Sarah Ell's compilations re-presented account extracts to tell a story about early European visitors and settlers and the world they encountered.²⁷ These books, and others like them, treat the accounts as a coherent body, in so far as selected excerpts conform to the overall plot of the larger story they wish to tell. This suggests a fascination, irrespective of their limitations as historical documents or literary pieces, for entertaining 'eye witness' accounts of another place in another time.

The more serious attempts to locate these early texts in a literary historic context failed to take account of their role in textualising New Zealand and Maori as a site for European colonisation. This is the principal difference between E.H. McCormick's 1959 exercise, and Peter Gibbons', in 1990. In his contribution to the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature* Peter Gibbons examined the role of 'Non-Fiction' in colonisation specifically, and more generally, in: 'inventing --- and re-inventing --- provisional notions of "New Zealand"; of its past and present, its "place" in the world'.²⁸ He positioned the accounts of the serious maritime explorers, Cook, Vancouver, Malaspina, Bellingshausen, the French expeditions, and others, as founding documents in a scientific discourse about New Zealand, where:

²⁴ Nancy M. Taylor, *Early Travellers in New Zealand*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.

²⁵ Shirley Maddock, *These Antipodes: a New Zealand Album: 1814 to 1854*, Auckland: Collins, 1979.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p.2.

²⁷ Gordon and Sarah Ell (eds), *Adventurous Times in Old New Zealand: First-hand Accounts of the Lawless Days*, Auckland: Bush Press, 1994; and _____, *Great Journeys in Old New Zealand: Travel and Exploration in a New Land*, Auckland: Bush Press, 1995.

²⁸ Gibbons, p.33.

'New Zealand (or a few parts of it) was primarily an occasion for accumulating information to be added to the scientific inventories'.²⁹ This contrasted with other visits, where New Zealand was simply another place on a voyage to the 'South Seas'.³⁰ In his view, the accounts revealed common European obsessions with: 'local customs of sexuality, warfare, "superstition", and cannibalism'.³¹ He represented the accounts collectively under the banner of 'Archive of Exploration'. This archive was: 'a consequence of European power but which, while operating upon New Zealand and [Maori], was largely external to them.'³² The later works of J.C. Bidwill and William Wade, (where overt impatience with Maori was evident), foreshadowed knowledge of formal annexation, thus forming a bridge passage, of sorts, into the next phase of, what Gibbons termed, the 'literature of invasion' during the period 1840-1890.³³ This was, in turn, succeeded by the 'literature of occupation' from around 1890 to the 1930s.³⁴ In Gibbons' view, the texts of the archive of exploration, therefore, functioned as forerunners of the later texts of occupation and invasion.

The current dominant framework for any deconstruction of early European representations of the New Zealand landscape is post-colonial, as exemplified by Gibbons. The texts are easily mined for evidence of their role in advancing ideas of European superiority and preparing the ground for formal annexation. There is European presence; Europeans seeing, gazing on the landscape, measuring and evaluating it, classifying it, reporting it, and occupying it centre stage in their accounts, even before the land surveys and formal annexation. Then too, the act of representing landscape is essentially European. The features selected for telling are relative to European experience. The very act of seeing, selecting and reporting can be seen as a form of appropriation, especially when Europeans saw landscape as a representation of nature, and ignored any marks of human touch. Portrayals of early New Zealand as Eden-like, an untouched wilderness, ignored hundreds of years of Maori modification to the natural environment. Choice extracts from the accounts support this view of their role in constructing the landscape of New Zealand.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p.35.

³⁰ For example, Peter Dillon, Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, Gibbons, p.35.

³¹ *ibid.*, p.36.

³² *ibid.*, p.38.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ *ibid.*, p.55.

So construed, the landscapes that emerge from the pages of the accounts evoke feelings of loss, nostalgia and regret. They function as a reminder of what has been destroyed, an index to earlier values and preoccupations, and a link between the despoiled landscapes of the present and those of the past. Ecology and history come together in Geoff Park's elegy for New Zealand landscapes of the past.³⁵ The central character is the lost lowland landscape of early nineteenth century New Zealand. This exploration of past representative landscapes is a story about ignorance, carelessness and neglect, as much as wilful damage. The damaged landscapes are testimony to the overwhelming arrogance of another civilisation, which came to a country and set about creating a landscape in its own image. In so doing, it plundered a rich natural environment, bringing the foundation of life itself, the soil, to the brink of exhaustion. Piecing together the documentary evidence, Park looked for cultural explanations of how this landscape came to be so quickly appropriated for such destructive ends. He found it to be foreshadowed as much by a British vision of an agricultural landscape, which re-constituted itself in the antipodes, as in the greedy machinations of the early resource grabbers.

Attempts to retrieve a landscape through the eyes of earlier witnesses are made problematic by the very act of reconstruction, which necessarily involves some intellectual sleight of hand. The interpretative framework encompassed in the single word 'appropriation' is disturbingly consistent. It appears as rigid, systematic and inflexible, as the very 'project' it represents. Other frameworks, based on the concept of 'exchange relationships', allow Maori agency in their affairs throughout this early encounter period.³⁶ But it is less easy to see 'agency' and 'mutual exchange' operating in the natural world encountered by early European visitors, let alone in their representations of that world. Nevertheless, the accounts can be examined in terms of older themes and stories, predating the 'colonial project'. This is not to underplay the significance of European settlement, especially the effects of the introduction of European ideas and practices on the natural world of New Zealand. Nor is it to deny the legitimacy of the interpretative standpoint exemplified by

³⁵ Park, *Nga Uruora*

³⁶ For example, Anne Salmond, *Between Worlds: Early Exchanges Between Maori and Europeans 1773-1815*, Auckland: Viking, 1997.

Gibbons and Park. Rather, it calls into question what is meant by appropriation, and whether a single interpretative model is useful other than to serve present day needs.

The brief survey of the way these accounts have been used points to a secondary process of construction at work. How the accounts were used depended as much on the historical argument, and the present day perspective, as on the thinking that informed the original texts. The business of historical research and writing continues to shape the constructions. As far as interpretative strategies go, construction works both ways. But what does it mean to be constructed? It suggests a deliberate process of fabrication, involving foundations, framework and external cladding that, in turn, invites deconstruction. The process of 'deconstruction' yields good returns, especially in tracing ways in which European presence, activity and writing inscribed European values onto a new landscape. But in creating a new structure (writing a new story), it risks underplaying or ignoring ideas and contributions that lie outside the dominant interpretative framework. It also invites deconstruction of the interpretative position itself.

By focusing on a collection of texts that represent the most commonly available accounts, both for nineteenth century and present-day readers, this study seeks to represent their landscapes as both derived and constructed. The approach taken is to recognise that there are many ways of reading the landscapes of the published accounts, including, but not exclusively, the dominant post-colonial standpoint. The objective of this study is not to work from any specific interpretative framework. Rather, it starts with the texts, in terms of the broad themes examined in each of the following chapters, touching on just some of the meanings, associations and interpretations that the texts individually and collectively allow. In this manner, the study attempts to show that the landscapes, constructed by the account writers, do not fit a single construct easily. Other preoccupations and obsessions surface in the texts that destabilise a single interpretative model. The implications for historic interpretation are to question whether the dominant appropriation model adequately interprets the pre-1840 European landscapes, constructed through the accounts, in light of the multiplicity of ways that the texts can be read, and the relative incoherence of the accounts, when collectively considered. It also invites further consideration of the role of historic interpretation when it relies on single constructions to support single lines of enquiry.

Chapter Two

Making a Place in the Landscape

This chapter considers the contribution of early European visitors to the pool of ideas on the New Zealand landscape, through the practices of naming a place, finding articles of association in it, and writing about them. Cook's naming practices are firstly considered, alongside commentary by later visitors. The Thames, as a named site with a host of older associations, is examined as exemplary of a process of association. Concrete articles of association, described and noted in the accounts, are then explored, together with the role of the landscape author. It is argued that the principal contribution of the accounts was to locate Europeans physically, intellectually and emotionally within a 'new' landscape through the practices of association. The underlying question in this chapter, is the extent to which this familiarising function is inherently appropriative.

For his first New Zealand landfall, Cook was spared the need to dignify the 'discovery' with a name. Abel Tasman had been there first. But the thin sketched line, a fragment of the coastline of an unknown land, needed to be completed. Lines had to be drawn, and labels assigned to points on the grid, so that this finding could be found once again. Cook sailed through the Pacific bestowing European names to non-European landscape features and geographic locations in fulfilment of his brief to navigate, explore and report. He followed in a long line of Pacific explorers, who had charted the Pacific in fragments, relying on accounts that blended fact with theory and outright rumour. Naming served practical purposes. It also met the terms set out by the Admiralty.¹ Charts from the *Endeavour* voyage enabled other expeditions to quickly follow, including Cook's second voyage, to absolutely prove the non-existence of the great unknown continent, and thus lay waste to the fantasies

¹ 'Admiralty Additional Instructions', in J.C. Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.cclxxxiii.

of theoretical geographers and other myth-makers.² Hydrological and topographical surveys, to produce reliable charts and maps, enabled labels to be attached to grid points, in order to locate New Zealand geographically for Europeans. There were, however, other ways that New Zealand was located for Europeans.

Log books recorded and amplified certain naming practices. Journal entries provided another opportunity to rehearse or revise place names. In so doing, names might be modified through a process of first attaching a name to a place, recording it in a log book, adding it to a chart or map, noting it in a journal, preparing a journal for editing, and editing a journal for publication. Most names didn't survive this process. J.C. Beaglehole noted subsequent revisions of the name 'Stingray Harbour' to become 'Botany Bay', and the similar processes at work with 'Mercury Bay'.³ But place names did not come into being through the early travel accounts. Rather, the accounts offer a secondary witness to naming practices, either in explaining how and why names were selected, or by offering comment on specific names or naming practices. Shaping and polishing the final selection of a name, and recording it for posterity in a publishable account, points to a role these accounts played in locating articles of association in a new landscape. Place naming itself attracted little comment by these early visitors, who used a range of other devices to locate New Zealand for their readers.

In plain, workmanlike prose Cook penned a journal, blending navigational detail with descriptions of the natural world of New Zealand and New Zealand Maori. By contrast to the host of names, recorded in logs and charts, he selected a mere handful, to give meaning and prominence through his journal. To John Hawkesworth, Cook's first official editor, the material in the *Endeavour* journal must have represented slim pickings. Fanciful names, evocative of the fabled landscape, *terra australis incognita*, were not to be found. Nevertheless, Cook's journal offers some insights. Three practices are evident in this first journal. They relate to people, places

² cf Chapter one, p.9, 14n.

³ Beaglehole, 'Textual Introduction to the Journal', in *Endeavour Journal*, p.ccxix. Paul Carter re-examined what was signified by the revision of 'Stingray Harbour', in *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History*, London & Boston: Faber & Faber, 1987, pp.9-17.

and experience. Cook named to honour an esteemed patron or reward staff. He also used names to describe, evoke or celebrate a landscape feature, usually as a visual aid for navigation. Finally, he awarded names to commemorate an event, or recall a memory of a landscape elsewhere. In naming some places, Cook necessarily chose not to name other places. His journal entry offered the simple explanation: "This Bay is called by the Natives *Tegadoo*, ... but as it hath nothing to recommend it so I shall give no description of it."⁴ The absence of a European name indicated that the place was not valued in any form.

In choosing to write about his reasons for naming after an esteemed patron, or member of the ship's complement, Cook doubly honoured or rewarded them. In this way, he bequeathed for European posterity: 'Hawke's Bay' (after the first Lord of the Admiralty); 'Hicks's Bay' (after Lieutenant Hicks 'the first who discover'd it'); 'Cape Colvill' ('in honour of the Rig^t honble the Lord Colvill'); 'Cape Brett' (in honour of Rear Admiral Sir Piercy Brett); 'Point Pocke' (in honour of the Vice Admiral); 'Cape Pallisser' ('in honour of my worthy friend Captⁿ Pallisser'); 'Cape Campbel' (after Vice-Admiral John Campbell); 'Solander Island' ('This Island I have named after Dr Solander ... it is nothing but a barren rock of about a Mile in circuit remar[k]ably high').⁵ Here, the only link between the landscape feature and its name was the degree of esteem, in which they were both held by Cook, at the time he wrote his journal, or later polished it for his editor.

A second practice arose from a perceived resemblance to an object or natural feature, or a substitute for the natural resource found and enjoyed. This was a practice ostensibly rooted in the landscape as seen and experienced, but referred back to specifically European concerns. Cook's reasons for naming, on this account, occur seemingly at random throughout his journal. Strung together, they reduce the landscape to a series of waymarkers and convenient spots. Examples include: 'Cape Table' ('on account of its shape and figure'); 'Gable-end Foreland' ('on account of the very great reseblence the white clift at the very point hath to the Gable end of a

⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, pp.182-83.

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 178, 188, 209, 212, 249, 263.

house’); ‘East Cape’ (‘because I have great reason to think that it is the Eastermost land on this whole Coast’); ‘white Island’ (‘because as such it always appeared to us’); ‘Oyster River’ (‘an immense quantity of Oysters ... and this is the only thing it is remarkable fore’); ‘River of Mangroves’ (‘because of the great quantity of these trees’); ‘Bream bay’ (‘we caught between 90 and a hundred Breams’); ‘Cavalles’ Islands (after fish), ‘Bay of Islands’ (‘on account of the great number which line its shores’); ‘Sandy bay’ (‘the Soil to all appearance nothing but white sand’); ‘Woody head’ (‘cloathed with wood and Verdure’); ‘Entry Isle’ (Kapiti as the marker for entry); ‘Point five fingers’ (‘five high peaked rocks standing up like the four fingers and thum of a mans hand’); ‘West Cape’ (‘as this is the westermost point of land’); ‘Cascades Point’ (‘steep red cliffs down which falls four small streams of water’); ‘Rocks point’ (‘off which lay some rocks above water’).⁶ Whereas naming after patrons could be interpreted as a discharge of duty to superiors, or in keeping with naval protocol, Cook’s explanations for naming in response to landscape features seem distressingly unimaginative.

His more whimsical naming practices commemorated local events, ranging from the noteworthy through to the forgettable. Examples here include: ‘Cape Kidnappers’ (the kidnapping of Tupaia’s servant, Tiata); ‘Cape Turnagain’ (‘because here we returnd’); ‘Lookers on’ (‘After looking at [us] for some time the[y] pull’d in for the land like an Island above mentioned on which account I call’d it Lookers on’); ‘duskey Bay’ (night falling); ‘Cape Fare-well’ (‘for reasons which will be given in their proper place’); and ‘Indian Island’ (‘we had a short interview with three of the Natives’).⁷ ‘Poverty Bay’ was a place not worth returning to: ‘because it afforded us no one thing we wanted’.⁸ The ‘Isle of Portland’ was so named: ‘on account of its

⁶ *ibid.*, pp.174, 181, 187-88, 189, 202, 203, 210, 213, 218, 222, 231, 249, 264, 265, 267, 269. Cook’s journal of the second voyage records the explanation for ‘Duck Cove’ (‘we shott fourteen Ducks’), J.C. Beaglehole (ed.), *The Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure: 1772-1775*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961, p.116.

⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, pp.178, 179, 252, 264, 270. His journal of the second voyage records an explanation for ‘Lunchen Cove’ (‘because here we dined on Craw fish on the side of a pleasant brook under the shade of the trees’), and ‘Goose Cove’ (Having five Geese left I went with them this morning to Goose Cove (named so on this account) where I left them’), *Resolution Journal*, pp. 116, 119.

⁸ Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.172. (This name was evidently selected retrospectively, as a replacement for the less appropriate ‘Endeavour Bay’. Mitchell library MSS, draft journal entry, appended to Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.537n.)

very great resemblance to Portland in the English Channel'.⁹ The 'Traps' warned of a rock hazard: 'because they lay as such to catch unwary strangers'.¹⁰

What can be made of Cook's naming practices through the Cook/Hawkesworth accounts? They appear to be, first and foremost, responsive to practical challenges, with minor polishing occurring after the event. He barely offered explanations for place names bestowed on subsequent visits to New Zealand. They remain, with few exceptions, a minor feature of his first journal. There were implications for his readers. In writing them into his journal, the place names established a connection with an otherwise unfamiliar physical environment. The process of naming served a multitude of functions beyond mere geographical labelling. In local and cultural histories, place names help build a sense of place and history. Stories of origin belong with place names which, in some cases, behave metaphorically. But the common themes that underpin local (European) histories draw from agendas that can be broadly seen as 'nation building'. Geographical labelling itself is now widely understood as a highly political act foreshadowing claiming and appropriation. Cook, therefore, functions as the first in a long line of 'renamers', who replaced Maori place names, and so began the process of appropriating the landscape for other people.¹¹

Paul Carter's *The Road to Botany Bay* made some important connections between place naming, travel, exploration and history making. He explored naming as an historical event, and its role in local histories, through the naming practices of Cook, Banks and early Australian explorers.¹² Place names, as rhetorical constructions, were themselves instrumental in constructing spatial history, in his view. His concept of spatial history involves the complex layering of experience and imagination projected onto a specific site, with the name, in turn, shaping and influencing experience and imagination. In this way, Carter maintained that history

⁹ *ibid.*, p.174.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.261.

¹¹ This viewpoint was unambiguously represented in Malcom McKinnon (ed.), *Bateman New Zealand Historical Atlas*, Auckland: David Bateman/ Historical Branch of Internal Affairs, 1997, Plate 33: 'The renaming of the New Zealand islands began in earnest with the prodigious efforts of Captain James Cook.'

¹² Carter, 'An outline of Names', in *Botany Bay*, pp.1-33.

and presence in the European imagination were predicated on place naming. This was, therefore, not an 'objective' process conceived outside the business of exploration, travelling and finding. Rather, it was to be understood as exemplifying the very logic of travelling. By logic of travelling, Carter referred to a relationship between the narrative of travel, and the sequence of events and places constituting travel itself. Land might exist geographically before naming, but a landscape could be constructed culturally only once it had been named.

Carter's explication of Cook's naming practices, in so far as Australian European history is concerned, offers some insight into the origins of New Zealand's naming practice by Cook. He saw in Cook's 'metaphorical' mode of naming more coherency than might first be apparent. Cook, he claimed, understood that naming was not an act of whim. Rather, it represented epistemological preoccupations. Cook, in Carter's view, could not be accused of insensitivity in labelling landscape features after foreign men. Rather, Cook drew an ironic, but conscious, distinction between the natural world and the human domain: 'the *unnaturalness* of attaching ministers to mountains, secretaries to capes, the playful tautology of calling islands 'Islands of Direction ... by all these figurative means Cook preserves the difference between the order of nature and the order of culture.'¹³ This differed from Banks' practices, which in keeping with enlightenment assumptions, sought to lump together things found with categories known.¹⁴ Cook's naming practices, by contrast to Banks', maintained a coherency between the related acts of travelling, exploration, knowing and writing:

Rather, [the name 'Botany Bay'] neatly recognized, and perhaps satirized, the difference between Banks's science, founded on changeless, universal axioms, and [Cook's] own nomadic discourse, which, by contrast, engaged phenomena as they presented themselves to his problem-solving consciousness.¹⁵

¹³ *ibid.*, p.31.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.24.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p.28.

Perhaps Carter made more of 'Banks's science', than a reading of his journal sustains. Banks' naming practices might well have sprung from: 'changeless, universal, axioms', but in his journal, they are conveyed in the language of an enthusiastic adventurer, who is keen to intersperse all manner of digressions within the course of his narrative. They tumble out, without undergoing the extensive revision that Cook undertook, even before his journals were delivered to Hawkesworth.¹⁶ The younger Banks, it would now seem, carried the weight of his later reputation and role as scientific entrepreneur and imperialist *par excellence*. Carter juxtaposed the discourse of exploration (with Cook as exemplar), with the discourse of botany (exemplified in Banks). The texts of Cook and Banks are therefore to be read metaphorically.

Carter's theory of the role of place naming, in creating spatial history, attracted attention, not the least for its complexity. At heart, Carter seemed to imply that spatial history was concomitant with European discovery and naming. Keith Windschuttle challenged this effectively, advancing the view that the role of naming could be overplayed.¹⁷ Indeed, the act of naming could be seen as largely irrelevant to the occurrence of history, as evidenced by several telling examples of impoverished places bearing bleak names becoming wealthy, up-market suburbs.¹⁸ Far from the place name determining the history, lived history could make the name. He questioned too, the absence of trenchant analysis of the relabelling of new found sites in memory of old sites.¹⁹ This, Windschuttle claimed, was less a practice that fitted in with the logic of travelling (how could it intersperse itself in a narrative in this way?) nor marked the resemblance to an old place. Instead, he argued, the use of 'New' had a pragmatic function. A name on a map enabled a legal claim to a place.²⁰ Its future was subject to a multitude of influences, of which the actual place name was but one.

¹⁶ It is worth noting that Banks supplied the ironic explanation for the name, 'Court of Alderman': 'we calld the Court of aldermen in respect to that worthy body & entertained ourselves some time with giving names to each of them from their resemblance thick & squat or lank tall to some one or another of those respectable citizens.', Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.192n.

¹⁷ Keith Windschuttle, 'The Deconstruction of Imperial History. Poststructuralism and the Founding of Australia', in *The Killing of History. How a Discipline is Being Murdered by Literary Critics and Social Theorists*, Paddington, NSW: MacLeay, 1994, pp.93-121.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, pp.104-105.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp.105-106.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.106.

Within Carter's argument lies: 'the possibility of other ways of possession', than that embodied by Banks, (the personification of imperialist natural history).²¹ More complex than the straightforward view of naming, as claim staking, for appropriative purposes, Carter's argument represents a search for other ways of understanding relationships between past exploration and subsequent history. Other ways of understanding how people, generally, make a place from space was the subject of E. C. Relph's *Place and Placelessness*.²² In arguing that 'men' claimed space by naming it, he maintained that place names functioned, essentially, as a link between people and territory.²³ Place naming represented: 'part of a fundamental ordering of existential space'.²⁴ It was a cornerstone of European understanding of the inter-relationship between humans and their environment: "Where there are no names the environment is chaotic, lacking in orientation, even fearful, for it has no humanised and familiar points of reference."²⁵ The role of naming in bringing the reality of order into being was also examined by Mary Louise Pratt.²⁶ Similarly to Carter, her concern with naming, as a practice, focused on the role it played in constituting imperial power, especially through the transformative power of natural history. In natural history: 'the naming, the representing, and the claiming are all one; the naming brings the reality of order into being.'²⁷ It is both a product and tool of appropriation. While their interpretative standpoints and methodological approaches are not the same, Carter, Windschuttle, Relph and Pratt at least share a view of naming as a function with important strategic and political outcomes. They differ in positioning this function along a continuum, from 'specific cultural imperative' to 'fundamental human activity'.

²¹ Carter, *Botany Bay*, p.33.

²² E.C. Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, London: Pion, 1976.

²³ *ibid.*, p.16.

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ Irving Hallowell, quoted in Relph, p.17.

²⁶ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London & New York: Routledge, 1992.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p.33.

Although Cook's journal used remarkably few place names to directly recall the memory of other landscapes, the Thames was an obvious exception. Hawkesworth introduced Cook's reading public to this new Thames in New Zealand:

the river at this height is as broad as the Thames at Greenwich, and the tide of flood as strong; it is not indeed quite so deep, but has water enough for vessels of more than a middle size and named the river the THAMES, it having some resemblance to our own river of that name.²⁸

Cook concluded: 'the best place for establishing a colony would be either on the banks of the Thames, or in the country bordering upon the Bay of Islands.'²⁹ Much has been made of the effect these few sentences would have for the early dwellers of this Thames landscape, and the role it was to play for European visitors to New Zealand.³⁰ For one thing, the Thames came to encapsulate not just the Waihou river, but an extensive hinterland. For another, in evoking the Thames, Cook (Hawkesworth) unconsciously tapped into a large reservoir of myth and association.

The cultural significance of rivers in European artistic and literary endeavour has been mapped by many, more recently including Barbara Stafford and Simon Schama.³¹ Schama mapped the transposition of early sources of river mythology onto the River Thames. His Thames found a place deep in the British psyche as a site of mythical, intellectual and cultural importance. The panoply of Thames-inspired art and literature included the seventeenth century river poets, who idealised the river's fertility.³² This older Thames, site of myth, came to be intimately linked with its modern role as a commercial site in eighteenth century Britain. The newer Thames conjured up a winning combination of pastoral innocence with commerce.³³ Schama's Thames story found its most powerful expression in the James Barry

²⁸ Hawkesworth, vol 2, p.353.

²⁹ Hawkesworth, 2nd edn, vol 3, p.40.

³⁰ The projection of the idea of *terra australis* onto the Thames is discussed in Geoff Park, *Nga Urnora*, pp.60-62. 'Floating just ahead of knowledge, the New Zealand of European imagination in 1801 was an image of unlimited possibility.' (p.61.)

³¹ Barbara Maria Stafford, *Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760-1840*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1984. Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory*, London: Harper Collins, 1995.

³² Schama, pp.326-32.

³³ Schama, p.357.

painting 'Commerce; or the Triumph of the Thames', with the Thames figured as a barge, propelled by the embodiments of: 'imperial worthies: Drake, Cook, Cabot and Raleigh'.³⁴ The idea of the Thames, for Schama, had historical significance, as a site of profound cultural significance and receptacle of nationalist preoccupation:

For it seemed that the idea of the Thames as a line of time as well as space was itself a shared tradition. Had I reached back further in the literature of river argosies, I would have discovered that Conrad's imperial stream, the road of commercial penetration that ends in disorientation, dementia, and death, was an ancient obsession. Before the Victorian steamboats pushed their way through the scummy waterweed of the Upper Nile and the Gambia, there had been Spanish, Elizabethan, and even German craft, adrift up the Orinoco basin, pulled by the tantalizing mirage of El Dorado, the golden paradise, just around the next bend.³⁵

But it also figured as part of Schama's own lived experience and memory. This public and private role of the Thames has relevance in the context of the use made of it by European visitors who, in turn, drew upon Cook (or indeed Hawkesworth) as a source of inspiration.³⁶

Cruise and Savage were perhaps less enthusiastic about the Thames, in view of their difficulties extracting timber. Nicholas found the Bay of Islands to be superior to the Thames as a place for future settlement, taking issue with Cook, who: 'suggested the river Thames as the most eligible haven'.³⁷ He wrote:

Such is the account given by Captain Cook of this river and the adjacent country, with both of which he was so highly pleased as to recommend the place as the best suited of any in the island for an European settlement; giving it a decided preference to all the other parts he had visited.³⁸

³⁴ Schama, p.358. For Schama, the painting's unpopularity does not detract from the argument. Rather, the painting exemplified the worst of a genre, that can be appreciated in historic, if not aesthetic, terms.

³⁵ *ibid.*, p.5.

³⁶ In fact, Hawkesworth's portrayal of the Thames drew from Banks' journal, where he wrote with greater enthusiasm than Cook of its future prospects: 'we rowd for many miles between woods of these trees, to which we could see no bounds.' Beaglehole (ed.), *The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks: 1768-1771*, 2 vols, Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1962., vol 2, pp.3-4.

³⁷ John Liddiard Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage*, 2 vols, Auckland: Wilson and Horton, 1971, vol 1, p.396. (In point of fact, Cook rated them equally, yet it is impossible to know which version of Hawkesworth's *Account*, authorised or unauthorised, Nicholas was familiar with.)

³⁸ *ibid.*, vol 1, p.416.

Elsewhere in his account, Nicholas, and later Polack and Bidwill, improved upon Cook's version of the Thames. By contrast, Thomas Shepherd, disappointed colonist on the *Rosanna*, dealt to the broad sweep of country north of the Thames in uncharacteristically matter of fact terms: 'At the Frith of the River Thames are good harbours, on the north side of which ... is a fine level country which extends many miles into the interior. I have seen several square miles of this land which was of the very best quality, has little timber upon it (being chiefly fern and brushwood).'³⁹ Other landscapes had captured Shepherd's imagination more than the Thames, perhaps owing to the tense relationship with local Maori, and the ensuing failure of their enterprise.⁴⁰

What was the effect of connecting the Waihou lowland forest with the Thames of Cook's culture? Park suggested that evoking the name Thames invited the projection of a European landscape on the Waihou, with sorry effects.⁴¹ Certainly, the weight of Cook's speculations appeared to pave the way for projections of a colony by later visitors, grounded as much in myth and wish, as the reality before their eyes. Even Cruise, who did not exaggerate the difficulties of extracting timber, wrote warmly of this future destination: 'nor is there a part of the eastern coast, that we examined, that presents so fair a field for the agriculturist, as the western bank of the river Thames.'⁴² Bidwill, as noted in chapter one, compared the Bay of Islands unfavourably with the Thames as the future site of a colony.⁴³ Prophetically, he envisaged the eventual draining of the Waihou wetland: 'nothing would be easier than to drain it'.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, the Thames compared less favourably with Port Nicholson: 'from what I have heard of it, I am inclined to think it must be a more advantageous situation, geographically considered, than even the Thames.'⁴⁵ Polack opined:

³⁹ Thomas Shepherd, 1779?-1835, Journal, 1826, WTU, Wellington: Micro-MS-0017, pp.22-23.

⁴⁰ Park, *Nga Uruora*, p.87.

⁴¹ Park, 'The Immense Trees of Ooahaouragee', in *Nga Uruora*, pp.17-74.

⁴² Richard A. Cruise, *A Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Capper Press, 1974, p.298.

⁴³ Bidwill, pp.3-4.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p.74.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp.83-84.

The *Frith of Thames* and its river will be a favourite locality for the future colonist ... The country, in the vicinity of the Thames, yields to none other in the land; and, if the place had possessed a port similar to the Bay of Islands, the Thames, or E'Horéké (literally the launch), would have been the head-quarters of the invaluable colony this country must become.⁴⁶

Whether causal relations exist between Cook's inadvertent projection of an immense obsession onto the Waihou, and subsequent ecological carnage is, necessarily, a matter of interpretation. But it seems that, at the very least, later visitors seized on the Thames as a convenient way marker, a sign post and anchor in the course of their narratives. This was a site, which might well stir the home imagination. It certainly acted as a triangulation point, a place to measure distance from. There were many examples of this in other accounts of this period, along the lines of Joel Polack's observation: 'This place is but a trifling distance from the river Thames'.⁴⁷ Superficially then, the Thames acted as an anchor in the texts of later visitors. But more significantly, these later visitors drew a larger picture than Hawkesworth, or Cook, of the properties of the Thames for later colonisation. Reverence for the hallowed name of the great navigator himself, no doubt, acted as all the authority they needed. The extent to which they propagated the myth of the Thames is a matter of interpretation. At the very least, the Thames acted as a geographical point of connection in their narratives.

With very few exceptions, subsequent accounts (Savage, Nicholas, Cruise, Earle, Polack, and others) have little to offer on naming practices. This is hardly surprising, when they were largely on paths already known and travelled. (Re-) Naming is, after all, the prerogative of the explorer, and these miscellaneous men were not travelling with the sole purpose of exploration. Indeed, reading each journey, it is easy to lose the progress of the traveller, especially as past landscapes bear no great resemblance to present day landscapes. Maori names were phonetically, and inconsistently, spelt. Sites of European and Maori habitation no longer exist, or have been renamed or relocated. Place names, bestowed by Cook, have themselves been replaced.

⁴⁶ Joel Samuel Polack, *New Zealand: Being a Narrative of Travels and Adventure*, 2 vols, Christchurch: Capper Press 1974, vol 1, pp.253-254.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, vol 1, pp.199-200.

Contemporary readers might have had similar difficulties. In the absence of detailed maps of their routes, and a careful matching of narrative to map, place names used in the texts provided little guidance through unknown landscapes. Readers could have been forgiven for envisaging a New Zealand landscape that somehow encapsulated all the landscapes described in the accounts, irrespective of location. Where names assumed some importance in Cook's account, as a reference point, individual place names in many later accounts diminished in importance. While most accounts began with precise descriptions of the first harbour entry, they tended to use place names far more casually once they ventured beyond the first landfall. This is not difficult to understand. Many would not have had detailed, much less accurate, maps at hand throughout their inland travels. Bush travel, by its very nature, generates a sense of enclosure and disorientation, except where views from high points can be gained. Little wonder, then, that the named landscapes came to stand for other landscapes. Place names functioned in the accounts to create a sense of place, as opposed to building a series of local, named landscapes.

Yet some commentary on naming practices appeared in the accounts. Familiar Maori place names occurred alongside European names. W.B. Marshall, who became interested in the Maori language, queried the appropriateness of European naming practices, suggesting it would be better to use Maori place names:

... although the propriety of giving arbitrary names at all to places not belonging to us, and names, too, having no manner of connection what ever with the character or circumstances of the places they are designed to represent, may be doubted. Would it not be better, ... to adopt the native names of places, and translate them for our English use, a practice which would help to simplify, instead of confusing, our geographical nomenclature⁴⁸

⁴⁸ William Barrett Marshall, *A Personal Narrative of Two Visits to New Zealand in His Majesty's Ship Alligator, A.D. 1834*, London: J. Nisbet, 1836, pp.154-55. He also had aesthetic reasons for promoting this view: 'Nothing can exceed the poetical beauty of some of these names - such as the Waters of the Rainbow, and the River of Murmuring Waters', p.233.

His fondness for Maori names extended to, what he termed, the 'simple ideas' embedded within the language.⁴⁹ He also appeared concerned with the emerging practice of overwriting Maori place names with European names:

Thus the native names of places are in some instances abandoned, and the names employed by their visitors preferred; though the former were in all, or almost all instances, names descriptive of things; and the latter are, as frequently, mere sounds without any corresponding sense.⁵⁰

Polack also commented on the use of place names in his account. By contrast to Marshall's attempt to retain Maori place names, at least in essence, Polack recorded his own decision to rename the South Island ('Tovypoenammu') as 'Victoria', in anticipation of formal annexation:

I have, in consequence, with a presumption...bestowed the appellation of VICTORIA, ... with assured certainty, that no modern Cook, ... will feel disposed to deprive this extensive country of a name, additionally endeared to an Englishman abroad, without the pale of protective laws of the dearly cherished country of his birth.⁵¹

The accuracy of place names was sometimes questioned by later visitors. Dr. Charles Pickering, American naturalist, who visited in early 1840, recorded his impressions of a place that belied its name: 'The Bay of Islands... if Topographical features were regarded should rather have been called the Bay of Inlets - it certainly is remarkable neither for its number of islands or rocks, as has sometimes been asserted.'⁵² Taken on the whole, however, discussion of place names was a minor concern of these early visitors, in so far as they bothered to comment directly, or even obliquely, through their accounts. Naming, through the later accounts, contributed little to the geographical act of labelling and staking a claim for formal possession. Rather, the use of European place names in the accounts called upon other associations. They functioned as rhetorical articles of association.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, p.233. Marshall also printed the Maori alphabet for use in schools, *Ratari*, Sydney: W.B. Marshall, 1834, (WTU: EMI 0021 W14).

⁵⁰ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.155.

⁵¹ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.276. Polack's additions to the map of New Zealand (from Cook, D'urville, Duperry and Herd), gave prominence to the name he bestowed on the South Island. ('His' map faced page one, vol 1.)

⁵² Charles Pickering, Diary entry, 24 February 1840, *Diary of Visit to Bay of Islands*, ca.1840, WTU, Wellington: fMS-Papers-3856. This is repeated in Charles Wilkes: 'It might, with more propriety, be called the Bay of Inlets.', p.160. (Pickering transformed his diary into vols. 6,7 of the expedition's official publication, under the authorship of Wilkes, as expedition leader.)

The sense of European presence and 'artefacting' is evident in all the accounts. Visitors were alert to the presence of signs - Christian and secular, material and human. Nicholas commented on: 'an extraordinary appearance in a nation of savages' of a cross, erected on a hilltop, for the purpose of exposing a dead thief. Marion du Fresne's ill fated visit became a point of reference, and a grim reminder of past deeds in Cruise's account.⁵³ Cruise reported the jests: 'that Mr. Marsden had been attacked by the natives in the interior, killed, and devoured.'⁵⁴ Marsden, himself, wrote with relish of the English flag flying on Christmas day in New Zealand: 'I considered it the signal for the dawn of civilization, liberty, and religion in that dark and benighted land.'⁵⁵

The presence of other Europeans acted as articles of association, but none with more eminence than Cook himself. Cook's instructions had required him to: 'take possession for His Majesty by setting up Proper Marks and Inscriptions, as first discoveries and possessors', in the event that he found uninhabited country.⁵⁶ Occupied or not, Cook left behind articles, other than lines, positions and names on a chart. In his *Endeavour* journal, he wrote that he erected a cairn on the top of a hill, leaving inside it: 'some Musquet balls, small Shott Beeds and what ever we had about us that was likely to stand the test of time'.⁵⁷ On a nearby hill, another cairn was assembled from loose stones: 'in which we left a peice of Silver Coin, some Musquet Balls Beeds etc and left flying upon it a peice of an old pendant'.⁵⁸ Later on, the ship's carpenter cut timber and prepared two posts:

with inscriptions upon them setting forth the Ships name month and year, one of them was set up at the watering place on which was hoisted the Union flag and in the morning I took the other over to the Island I next ... explained to the old man and several others that we were come to set up a mark upon the Island in order to shew to any ship that might put into this place that we had been here before to the old man I gave silver threepenny peices dated 1763 and spike nails with the Kings broad Arrow cut deep in them things that I thought were most likely to remain long among them.⁵⁹

⁵³ Cruise, p.45.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p.223.

⁵⁵ Samuel Marsden, *The Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden, 1765-1838, Senior Chaplain in the Colony of New South Wales ...*, J.R. Elder (ed.), Dunedin: A.H. Reed and others, 1932, p.93.

⁵⁶ 'Admiralty Additional Instructions', in Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.cclxxxiii.

⁵⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.240.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, pp.241-42.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p.242.

On later visits, Cook carried medals struck specifically as tokens, and proof of their visits.⁶⁰ While this can be understood as enacting the claiming mechanism by distributing signs of visitation and claim, these signs themselves later acquired new value through their association with Cook. They became the relics of ‘first discovery’, signs not just of the prior presence of Europeans, but souvenirs of Cook himself, that well and truly survived his test of time, through subsequent narratives.

Nicholas remarked favourably on entering: ‘a wood, in which Captain Cook, as Bennee informed us, had cut down some timber on his visit to the island.’⁶¹ Cruise wrote in his journal of Maori pointing out the place: ‘where Captain Cook had been attacked by the natives.’⁶² Even Earle, not renowned for obsequious homage to fellow Europeans, anchored Cook within his text: ‘It is with peculiar interest we look upon the spot where the illustrious Cook cast anchor after his discovery of this Bay Since the time of Cook, and other circumnavigators of that period, the character of these people has undergone a thorough change.’⁶³ Polack, too, harked back to the memory of Cook, commenting on:

... a small hole that was dug in the granite rock, by order of Cook, for receiving from a small spring, the fluid that unceasingly flows into it. The marks of the pick axe are as visible, at the present day, as at the period it was excavated under Cook’s eye.⁶⁴

Veneration for Cook was also evident in the historic association with places described, or marked in some way by Cook: ‘It has seldom been my lot to fall in with scenery more romantic than I found in this small bay of Opotoumu, enhanced by the cherished associations of the immortal circumnavigator.’⁶⁵ Boulton related his regret on giving away a Cook voyage commemorative medal ‘for a trifle’, which he had found: ‘amongst a heap of rubbish on Iron Island, in Dusky Bay.’⁶⁶ He had evidently

⁶⁰ Beaglehole (ed.), *Resolution Journal*, pp.xxviii-ix. The brass medals, ordered by Joseph Banks, and made by Matthew Boulton, were carried on Cook’s second voyage for distribution.

⁶¹ Nicholas, vol 1, p.265.

⁶² Cruise, pp.44-45.

⁶³ Earle, p.75.

⁶⁴ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 2, p.135.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p.136.

⁶⁶ John Boulton, *Journal of a Rambler: the Journal of John Boulton*, June Starke (ed.), Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1986, p.54. Starke reproduced one of Boulton’s sketches of the medal, p.44.

also read his Hawkesworth, as he also related the explanation Cook had offered for naming: “Five Fingers Point” from its resemblance to the hand and fingers of a man.⁶⁷ John Hemery, Captain of the *Bengal Merchant*, confided to his mother:

... and we are sailing along all the bays and points discovered and named by Captain Cook such as Cape Kidnappers and Tauneroa or Poverly Bay. What a noble fellow he was, before he arrived here there was no quadruped in the Island, now there are thousands besides potatoes, cabbage and all sorts of vegetables growing wild along the coast and all left and planted by him. There is a very old native in Port Nicholson who perfectly remembers the visit of Captain Cook.⁶⁸

Interpreting visible signs relied on the concerns of their finders. Absence of signs of former Maori habitation was remarked upon in the accounts. Polack contrasted the permanence of British signs (through their link to the immortal navigator) with the impermanent nature of Maori history: ‘The very names of many tribes, originally belonging to the soil, had passed away from human remembrance.’⁶⁹ Earle drew upon the symbolic associations of light to provide reassurance in an, at times, bewildering and overwhelmingly foreign place. Describing a night time journey through forest, accompanied by his Maori guide, he wrote: ‘In the midst of our toilsome progress, night frequently overtook us; then, by means of my fowling-piece, I procured a light; the boy made a fire; and we passed the night in this vast wilderness, far from the habitation of any human being!’⁷⁰ Marshall wrote nostalgically about finding potatoes being boiled in an English pot, elevating an otherwise trivial incident into a moment of great import:

A little farther on, were a couple of women boiling potatoes in an English swing pot of cast iron, a product of our own country, the sight of which, however apparently little a kail pot may have to do with patriotism, was not void of interest to one, in whose breast that healthful feeling has not yet ceased to glow, which rejoices to meet with the arts and manufactures of his own beloved native land, in all nations and countries, even to the uttermost ends of the earth.⁷¹

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p.53.

⁶⁸ John Hemery, 7 April 1840 letter to mother, ‘Father’s Journal While at Sea’, 1839-1840, (typed transcript) WTU, Wellington: MS-Papers-4384, p.2.

⁶⁹ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.147.

⁷⁰ Earle, p.98.

⁷¹ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.70.

Marshall compared landscape features to European sites - a mountain resembling St Paul's, a slope compared to the 'vine-clad hills embanking the waters of the Alto Douro in "beautiful Portugal"'.⁷² Polack linked himself, in the minds of his readers, to the site of a previous disaster, with his purchase of: 'a house on the spot where the massacre was perpetrated'.⁷³ By far the most frequent form of landscape association was the traveller happening upon a missionary enclave, which offered the transition from dark forest into bright clearing, with a pleasant vista of pasture, running water, gardens, cottage, and signs of industry.

The role of place naming and association in the accounts is relevant in a contested present. European place names in New Zealand enshrine lived experience and association. They serve as rhetorical artefacts of long forgotten public figures, landscape features and reminders of another country. Prefacing his dictionary of New Zealand place names, A.W. Reed described the curiosity to know the origins of place names, and so understand the historical significance attached to them.⁷⁴ Since the publication of his first almanac, European naming practices have been scrutinised more closely for their contribution to, what is termed, the 'colonising project'. By this, naming is understood to initiate the process of claiming in a progression towards appropriation, occupation and invasion. This elision is perhaps best illustrated by the *NZ Historical Atlas* in its treatment of early naming practices, with its section 'Naming and Claiming' subtitled "Appropriating the landscape".⁷⁵ This is an approach that focuses on the extent to which Maori place names and their significance were overwritten by Europeans. Cook had fixed the perimeters of New Zealand on a chart, and signposted places of interest and significance for later comers, in the process overwriting Maori place names, with their own chains of association and cultural significance. Venturing into the 'interior', these later European visitors 'discovered' new places, attached names and significance to them, and eventually a claim, in either a specifically legal sense or in a more general cultural

⁷² *ibid.*, pp.139, 134.

⁷³ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.35.

⁷⁴ A.W. Reed, *Place Names of New Zealand*, Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1975, p.ix. Reed did, in fact, publish a dictionary of Maori place names, with a first edition in 1950, and a third edition in 1996. The point being made here, is that origin hunting and identity are linked.

⁷⁵ *Bateman New Zealand Historical Atlas*, Plate 33.

sense. To this extent, European naming practices become collaborative agents in the process of establishing identity and possession.

Yet, the general lack of interest in place naming by the early account writers, with one or two exceptions, does not readily support this construction. Identity itself is contestable, as more recent efforts to retrieve and celebrate Maori place names and naming practices reveal.⁷⁶ Nor is place naming a static practice. Through association, it is subject to change over time. To this extent, naming and placing or finding articles of association within the landscape were important locating devices, with consequences that might not have been foreseen. This was epitomised in the extraordinary reception of the idea embodied in the river Thames, and to a lesser extent the Bay of Islands, with its powerful associations. It was also evident in the way the account writers recycled and embellished these sites, as well as using them as points of reference.

The transformation of diary or log book entries into coherent accounts, edited for public consumption, calls into question the role of the landscape author in this process. The retrospective and, at times, introspective nature of the accounts subverted any 'logic of travelling' and the role of the author. Narrative choice rested with the author of the text, as much as order in time and place. Confusion about the role of the accounts to entertain, inform, or plead a case was evident in the pious prefacing remarks to be found in many of the accounts. Such remarks were a conscious attempt to position the account in relation to other works, often couched as a humble plea for readers to make what they would of the author's 'authentic' experiences. Whatever their stated aim, however, the account authors drew from a common pool of ideas, anxieties and obsessions, which manifested themselves in one form or another throughout their narratives. They also drew from a common pool of published accounts.

⁷⁶ For example, Te Aue Davis, Tipene O'Regan and John Wilson, *Nga Tohu Pumahara: The Survey Pegs of the Past: Understanding Maori Place Names*, Wellington: NZ Geographic Board, 1990.

The role of the landscape author in articulating place names, and finding articles of association in the landscape, was primarily to locate himself and his readers in relation to the landscape. This landscape was a composite site of images and constructs, blending old myths with new locations. In this respect, the accounts functioned, at one level, similarly to the early charts. The 1822 chart of Ruapuke Island exemplifies this practice.⁷⁷ It recorded navigational detail, the path of the *Snapper* to its anchorage, (marked by a sketch of a ship at anchor), noted rock features resembling Stonehenge, a 'singular rock' visible from ten miles out, the location of a fresh water lagoon, the site of good flax, the location of 'native huts' and the residence of local Pakeha Maori, James Caddell. Navigational pointers, names, symbols and other signs indicated a familiar European presence, and so helped to interpret an unknown land in terms familiar to its early European visitors.

The accounts served up a pleasant assemblage of familiar articles in an unfamiliar landscape, in the process drawing their readers into a relationship with an unseen, unknown landscape. The use of evocative names, inclusion of anecdotes and stories to attach to the place 'New Zealand', and locating familiar articles within that landscape, served to construct order from the unknown interior of New Zealand, which had emerged from Cook's journals. The extent to which this exercise in familiarisation can be characterised as appropriative depends very much on present day perspectives, themselves derived from prior knowledge and understanding of what transpired in the 200 years after Cook's first visit. How the accounts worked to construct landscapes, to meet the perceived present and future needs of Europeans, is the subject of the next chapter.

⁷⁷ Peter B. Maling, *Early Charts of New Zealand, 1542-1851*, Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1969, Plate 38, p.86.

Chapter Three

The Landscape as a Repository of Useful Information

The role of the texts in creating these landscapes as repositories of useful information is examined in this chapter. It aims to show how the accounts constructed landscapes of plenitude, which nevertheless lacked useful things, and so stood in need of improvement. It offers some context in terms of the practice of natural history, the ideas underlying it, and ideas about nature generally. It attempts to question whether the practice of inventorying, evident in the accounts, can be seen as anything other than appropriative. In the final analysis, it suggests that there are other ways of reading the texts, particularly those written without a clear mission for colonisation.

Hawkesworth's account of the *Endeavour* voyage had given the British reading public its first taste of the bounty of New Zealand.¹ They read that, on arrival, the *Endeavour* people imagined they had found the long dreamed of *terra australis incognita*.² Invoking the fabled land might have intentionally added suspense to Hawkesworth's narrative, but it also triggered a chain of associations with that great landscape of plenitude. Summarising his findings of New Zealand, Cook wrote: 'In short was this Country settled by an Industrious people they would very soon be supply'd not only with the necessaries but many of the luxuries of life.'³ He had focused on the items of practical use - timber, flax, seals and whales - characterised as the natural produce of the country, and navigational detail. This was a somewhat restrained verdict on the resource capabilities of the North Island.⁴ The British reading public, however, had Hawkesworth's version, which subtly transformed the pedestrian recital of facts into

¹ Hawkesworth, *Account*.

² Hawkesworth, vol 2, p.284.

³ J.C. Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.276.

⁴ Cook had dismissed the South Island: 'for the most part of a very Mountainous and to all appearances a barren Country.', Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.276.

a resource inventory more worthy of their expectations.⁵ Hawkesworth set the tone for future account writers. His Cook left the shores of New Zealand, as he found them, with a final reference to the unknown continent. *Terra australis incognita* remained part of the unfinished business in the Pacific.⁶

Preparing his journal for his editor, Cook faithfully carried out the instructions of his voyage patrons to describe the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms along with any other noteworthy feature.⁷ In describing what was there, he focused on those items of most use to a ship's captain after a long sea voyage - harbours, shelter, navigational aids and hazards. His New Zealand was a useful place for 'Cutting Wood and filling of Water'; a place to attend to domestic chores, such as cutting grass to feed the animals and 'Cutting of Broom stuff and making of Brooms'.⁸ Of equal importance, it provided opportunities to trade with the locals. As a naval man, Cook had kept a sharp look out for suitable timber to prop up naval supplies for masts and spars, and hemp for running rigging. But the scientific aims of the voyages were also accommodated, with Cook and the ship's scientific gentlemen setting out, as opportunities presented themselves, to examine the produce of the 'interior', classify and record their findings. On the *Endeavour* visit, detailed descriptions of botanical items were left to Joseph Banks and his team. Banks compiled a resource inventory, in the sense that the harvest of information contributed to the vast bank of natural history artefacts, descriptions and images accumulated from inventorying throughout the Pacific.⁹ Cook's more modest inventories, with their matter-of-fact lists and summaries, entered the public domain, through Hawkesworth's *Account*. But it was the flavour of Banks' journal that

⁵ Hawkesworth, vol 3, p.437. A comparison between Cook's and Banks' journals shows a difference in emphasis.

⁶ *ibid.*, pp.479-80. (This referred to the projected subsequent voyage to locate the remaining one fifth of the southern continent and to locate Tupaia's estimated 130 islands of the Pacific) Again, the tone reflected Banks', who had declared: 'That a Southern Continent really exist, I firmly believe; but if ask'd why I believe so, I confess my reasons are weak; yet I have a prepossession in favour of the fact which I find it difficult to account for.' Beaglehole (ed.), *Journal of Joseph Banks*, vol.2, pp.38-39.

⁷ 'Morton's Hints', in Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.517. Also see 'Admiralty Instructions', pp.cclxxix-cclxxxiv.

⁸ *ibid.*, p.184.

⁹ Beaglehole (ed.), 'The Young Banks', in *Journal of Joseph Banks*, vol 1. While Banks certainly collected and inventoried on a grand scale, (later becoming the pivotal figure in a vast network of naturalists) and made enormous use of the information harvested from this and subsequent expeditions, his failure to publish the natural history inventories of the *Endeavour* voyage, in Beaglehole's view, was disappointing, to say the least. pp.121-123.

Hawkesworth picked up on, transforming Cook's dull recital of resources into something more entertaining.¹⁰

Subsequent accounts followed the tradition of supplementing lists of resources with summaries and comment on future prospects. Savage's modest account faithfully enumerated and described the resources of the country, as he observed them.¹¹ The soil was rich, a conclusion Savage reached, based on the luxuriance of the vegetation. Fish, as Cook had also noted, 'abound', and shell fish provided shells for the 'cabinets of the curious.'¹² Mineral potential also rated a mention.

J.L. Nicholas interspersed, throughout his narrative, small descriptive passages and lists of the natural productions of the country, together with opinions on how they might be augmented or improved. He endorsed, if somewhat more prominently than Cook or Savage, the suitability of the climate, which was pronounced as superior to that of New South Wales.¹³ His New South Wales was a grim place indeed.¹⁴ His New Zealand, by contrast, was a peculiarly gentle and fertile place: 'taking the country through its whole extent, is mild and temperate, and consequently particularly favourable to the growth of whatever productions the soil may be adapted to yield.'¹⁵ Again the fertile soil was praised, as were the 'pines', a valuable resource, many of which were, however, 'utterly unknown to Europeans'.¹⁶ He offered a composite analysis of the 'vegetable and mineral kingdoms' under a general passage in the second volume, where he described these inhabitants in hyperbolic terms, quoting chunks from J.R. Forster.¹⁷ Fish were abundant: 'provided for the use of man, as must inspire him with admiration and gratitude for the

¹⁰ W.H. Pearson compared the journals of Banks and Cook, with the Hawkesworth *Account*, noting instances where Hawkesworth favoured Banks' influence over Cook's, in 'Hawkesworth's Alterations', *Journal of Pacific History*, 7, (1972), pp.45-72.

¹¹ John Savage, *Some Accounts of New Zealand, Particularly the Bay of Islands, and Surrounding Country ...*, Dunedin: Hocken Library, 1966.

¹² *ibid.*, p.11.

¹³ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage*.

¹⁴ Negative descriptors abound: dry; unfavourable; scarce; distress; parching; destroyed; dried up; sapless; withered; dying; indifferent; disgusting; sickly; burning; loss; suffocating; dreadfully oppressive; insupportable; pernicious; baleful; pestilential; and sterile.

¹⁵ Nicholas, vol 2, p.236.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.244.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp.243, 244, 253.

liberality of nature'; not just abundant, but available in a great variety of species for the 'discriminating palate'.¹⁸ Nicholas vouched for the accuracy of Cook's description of 'inexhaustible resources of the deep', as well as the absence of: 'a supply of land animals'.¹⁹

Richard Cruise's account of his spar gathering mission included specific appraisals of timber by type, location, accessibility and usefulness. Measurements of the girth and height of the 'Cowrie' and 'Kaikaterre' were faithfully recorded for future reference. His measuring eye reduced the forests of kahikatea to a mere commodity, encapsulated in the phrase: 'a *stick* of first rate quality'.²⁰ But there was more to Cruise's account than a description of the 'natural produce' encountered in New Zealand. The element of adventure was more prominent in his account, with expectations not met, and a series of disappointments recorded for posterity; fern impeded progress across the plains; the lack of 'natural grass' was bemoaned, and long walks through impenetrable forest were fatiguing. Nor were the trophy trees easily found, despite the assistance of local guides.

Polack's account continued the trend of enumerating resources and speculating on future prospects. Safe harbours, essential for travel, featured along with their opportunities for: 'water, wood and antiscorbutics'. The physical beauty of rivers was linked to their commercial and strategic importance: 'whose banks are bordered with noble timber and flax, not exceeded in value by any in the country'.²¹ Fish continued to: 'abound in great variety'.²² Hard evidence of minerals was not available, but hope remained high for findings of minerals: 'that will amply repay future investigators for their researches'.²³

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p.257.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.258.

²⁰ Cruise, *Journal*, p.2. This comment was recycled (without Cruise's wryness of expression) in R.A.A Sherrin, and J.H. Wallace, *Early History of New Zealand from Earliest Times*, p.242. (cf Park, *Nga Uruora*, p.33n.)

²¹ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.262.

²² *ibid.*, p.279.

²³ *ibid.*, p.327.

Bird life was particularly remarked upon, by all the account writers. Their descriptions attempted the detailed observation of the naturalist, with other interests closer to heart. Birds received special attention in Savage's *Account*, their beauty and numbers matched by their usefulness as a food source. The wood pigeon was esteemed for its: 'beautiful plumage, large size, and delicious eating.'²⁴ Nicholas paid the bird life fulsome tribute, both for its contribution to the table and ability to produce beautiful music in the otherwise quiet forest. Describing the dawn chorus, he wrote: 'we fancied ourselves for the moment in some enchanted ground, while the forest seemed to ring with the mellow warblings of nature, and a thousand feathered songsters poured their soft throats in responsive melody.'²⁵ Boulton described bird life in Fiordland: 'the woods are abundantly supplied with game, as wood hens, green birds, emus etc - these birds are of large size, they lay their eggs in the holes in the ground and in hollow trees and as they cannot fly, they are easily overtaken with dogs.'²⁶ Cruise made particular note of the 'enchancing music' of the dawn chorus in the forest, which otherwise remained: 'comparatively silent for the remainder of the day.'²⁷ He observed wild ducks and curlews which, when shot, 'proved very good', as did the wood pigeons.²⁸ In most accounts, appreciation for their physical beauty, song, and contribution to the table were regarded equally.

Amidst this landscape of plenty, there were items missing from the material landscape, and others that early visitors could have cheerfully removed. Hawkesworth wrote that the *Endeavour* people found: 'no quadrupeds but dogs and rats', complaining that the rats being so scarce, few had seen them.²⁹ The dogs were described as 'very small and ugly', and bred for consumption.³⁰ Savage also remarked on the lack of animals, noting only the dog. He wondered, hopefully, whether that place of greater promise, the interior, might: 'produce quadrupeds of greater

²⁴ Savage, p.10.

²⁵ Nicholas, vol 1, p.334.

²⁶ Boulton, *Journal of a Rambler*, p.37.

²⁷ Cruise, p.288.

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ Hawkesworth, vol 3, p.436.

³⁰ *ibid.*, vol 2, p.313.

magnitude, all the others found here are such as we usually call vermin.³¹ Dogs attracted negative acclaim, but provided entertainment value in their accounts. Earle, mistaking all dogs for European imports, declared them as ‘the most unserviceable, and indeed injurious’. They were not objects of affection, being: ‘poor half-starved curs, that were all night long committing depredations on the poultry, pigs, and goats’.³² Polack damned the dogs as ‘abominations ... curs of the lowest degree in the scale of animal creation. These harpies every traveller will find them to be the greatest pest in the country.’³³ They were also, by Polack’s time, responsible for destroying a number of recently introduced sheep.

Cook’s journal of his second voyage recorded the deliberate release of goats, hogs, sheep, domestic fowl, potatoes and other vegetables, to provide for future voyage re-provisioning, and to introduce locals to a wider variety of foods.³⁴ This was his practice on other favoured islands in the Pacific, where release was both a reward for good relations with the locals, and fulfilment of a wish to make better what was found. Later visitors brought new food sources with them, as witness the introduction of edible birds (domestic fowl), working animals and all manner of vegetables and fruit. The early accounts placed primary value on animals as a food source. Later accounts noted the absence of animals for use as transport and tools. Over time, the newly introduced plants and animals began to be valued, not only for their material contribution, but also for their association with the agent of their introduction. Remnants of gardens or animals released by Cook came to assume historical importance, as witness the references to these gardens by later visitors.³⁵ The consequences of such releases on indigenous plant and bird life appeared only occasionally in the accounts. The poor state of these early animal emigrants received no attention whatsoever.

³¹ Savage, p.10.

³² Earle, p.130.

³³ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, pp.65-66.

³⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Resolution Journal*, p.297. Cook recorded the fate of the animals he released in Queen Charlotte Sound, with some disappointment.

³⁵ References to remnant gardens and feral vegetables, originating from the Cook voyages, appear in most of the published accounts.

Deficiencies in the animal kingdom were matched by gaps in the realm of plants, specifically the local diet, which, like that of other Pacific islands, lacked the variety of vegetable products enjoyed by Europeans. By contrast to the rich soil and pleasant climate, Nicholas reported a country with few flowers, and ‘no trees that yield a fruit fit to be eaten by Europeans’.³⁶ In the absence of ‘herbage’, he expressed slight wonderment at the survival of the small number of resident cattle.³⁷ Cruise followed Nicholas in remarking upon both the absence of fruit and flowers, and the abundance of shrubbery: ‘Except a wild plum, and various kinds of berries, none of which were particularly palatable, we saw no indigenous fruit in the island; and the flowers were not so numerous nor so handsome as might be expected; but the shrubs were innumerable, and beautiful beyond description; and the woods throughout the year preserves their verdure.’³⁸ Polack, too, remarked on the paucity of fruit, noting what indigenous fruit there was as: ‘scarce worthy the attention of Europeans’.³⁹ In largely ignoring what was different and unusual, and listing what was known or likened to an article on the home inventory, these early visitors were sensitive to items that were missing from this new landscape. What was missing was a good deal of food stuffs familiar to the European palate.

The main items on the inventory were, in summary, capacious harbours, fuel, water, food, fertile soil, and trading possibilities - elements of a landscape that were seen as immediately useful to Europeans. ‘Noble’ and ‘lofty’ forests were described as timber sources for naval purposes or for trade. Flax was a material for extraction. Seals, whales, fish and other natural items of bounty were available for use, and assumed value in proportion to their usefulness to people. Undesirable commodities included insects, fern and, as noted above, Maori dogs. Fern was an inferior food for Maori and cattle, and a hindrance to making a way through the country. Nicholas was bothered by the sandfly which bit his ankles and ‘prove(d) very painful when we were warm in bed.’⁴⁰ Polack commented ruefully on the flea as a worthy equal of the

³⁶ Nicholas, vol 2, p.248.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p.249.

³⁸ Cruise, p.288.

³⁹ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol.1, p.286.

⁴⁰ Nicholas, vol 2, p.257.

sandfly and the louse, in nuisance value.⁴¹ Items, which were not accorded value in the resource inventory, appeared to have no use.

A common feature of the accounts was their survey of potential wealth with, mostly, an optimistic assessment of the country's suitability for European colonisation.⁴² In singling out two possible sites for future European settlement, the Thames and the Bay of Islands, Cook's (i.e. Hawkesworth's) account had been the first to construct the New Zealand landscape as an actual landscape of prospect. But, it was not by everlasting 'verdure' alone that early visitors were able to assess prospects for future cultivation in the European style. In the accounts, it was apparent that the landscape was, in many ways, incomplete. Minerals might yet be found in the distant hills; ground could be cleared of the troublesome fern, so that grasses might be cultivated; the dreary seasonal diet of Maori and European travellers might be supplemented by a range of meat and dairy products, grain based foods, and fruit and vegetables. For this, rich soil and a kind climate were needed, and there was work to be done.

The perceived fertility of the land held promise for further cultivation. Savage ventured the view that flax would be improved with cultivation: 'The flax is of a very superior quality in its native state; but there can be no doubt, but that it might be improved by cultivation.'⁴³ He took note of the good condition of the missionaries' stock, conceding that there must indeed be 'nutritive herbage' growing amongst the fern.⁴⁴ Cruise remarked on the qualities of the soil noting, in addition to potatoes, the presence of: 'degenerated turnips ... and cabbages'.⁴⁵ Nicholas declared all the North Island and part of the South to be capable of producing grain, fruit, crops and: 'all the choicest fruits of the countries in the South of Europe'.⁴⁶ By then, comforting samples of new food stuffs were being introduced by missionaries: wheat; peas; peaches, and a variety of domestic fowls. Nicholas' descriptions of resource wealth

⁴¹ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol.1, p.320.

⁴² E.H. McCormick, *New Zealand Literature*, p.10.

⁴³ Savage, p.8.

⁴⁴ Cruise, p.53.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 'Degenerated turnips', referred to the 'degeneration' of parsnips, carrots and other plants left by Cook, Note 13, pp.315-16.

⁴⁶ Nicholas, vol 2, pp.314-15.

echoed others: 'we entered a beautiful champaign country, extending for several miles, and enriched with the various natural productions of the island'.⁴⁷ Similarly: 'and it appeared to me exceedingly well adapted for agriculture.'⁴⁸ So too the prediction: 'those lands in this country, which are at present over-run with fern, might be brought to produce grasses of all descriptions; and were the experiment tried, I doubt not ... that the island in general would afford as fine pasturage for sheep and black cattle as any part of the known world'.⁴⁹

Nicholas had an eye for future prospects, remarking frequently on the fertile soil: 'a black vegetable mould, producing fern of the most luxuriant growth'. Troublesome wetlands were dismissed as swamps: 'of trifling extent, and might be drained with little trouble or expense.'⁵⁰ His appraisal of whaling prospects was exceedingly favourable, with New Zealand praised as: 'one of the best stations of procuring those prodigious animals.'⁵¹ Inclined to boast of the natural wealth and bounty, he singled out fisheries in the following example: 'The fisheries of this country would be an invaluable source of wealth in themselves; and the vast quantities of fish which they would supply for exportation might be sure, I should think, of finding a market'.⁵² Seals and sea lions were similarly celebrated, as was the flax plant: 'another very considerable resource of which the colonist might avail himself' for export to 'the mother country'.⁵³ Nicholas estimated the mountains to be: 'pregnant with some valuable ores', and later fully expected that, in time, there would be a: 'search for new sources of wealth in the bowels of the earth.'⁵⁴ Failing a realisation of this mineral wealth, the extensive forests were said to provide a fuel source 'for ages to come'.⁵⁵ But, in addition to what was seen and described, there was more. Like Cook and Savage before him, Nicholas relied on the testimony of a

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, vol 1, p.327.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p.328.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, pp.357-358.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, vol 2, p.231.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p.317.

⁵² *ibid.*, p.317.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p.319. cf Thomas McDonnell's later boast that New Zealand flax: 'could supply all Europe with ease.'

Thomas J. McDonnell, *Extracts from Mr. McDonnell's MS Journal, Containing Observations on New Zealand*, London: J. Moyes, 1834, p.17.

⁵⁴ Nicholas, vol 2, pp.252-253, p.319.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p.254. cf McDonnell: 'the noble and extensive forests of New Zealand offer such a superabundant source as the profusion of future generations can never exhaust', p.19. They provided: 'numerous single sticks, as straight as an arrow, and fit for masting any three-decker in the Navy.', p.19.

Maori interlocutor, in this case Duaterra, who hinted at further goods in the interior: ‘The country in the interior, he said, abounded with every thing, as the land was both fertile and excellent.’⁵⁶ Nicholas’s contribution was in overstating the natural resources of the country: ‘But without at all considering these treasures, which are only contingent, New Zealand possesses so many obvious resources which are defined and certain, as would render it one of the fittest places in the world for an industrious and enterprising colony.’⁵⁷ Polack’s colonising intentions were even more plain. Cook’s astonishment on a return voyage to Queen Charlotte’s Sound to find his vegetable garden flourishing, affirmed for Polack that the manifest fertility of the soil, combined with European know-how, could overcome indigenous, ‘rank’ vegetation:

notwithstanding the quantity of indigenous weeds, that served to choke up the effects of his labours; and states his conviction that, with moderate attention, every known European vegetable would thrive *superior* in this country to many other: his anticipations have since been realised.⁵⁸

In this way, both men were sketching out ways to fit the landscape for European uses.

The natural resources symbolised fertility. They also promised that what was ‘found’ could be made better. The perception of such apparent fertility tied in with the intentions of the landscape author. Burford’s panorama is a case in point. The text of the exhibition pamphlet offered further interpretation of his landscape, emphasising resource richness, beauty and safety: ‘the underwood is so thick as to be almost impenetrable: but no lurking beast of prey, or noxious reptile, alarm the unwary traveller.’⁵⁹ Not surprisingly, the pamphlet concluded with a summary of the benefits of annexation. A similar sense of mission was evident in E.G. Wakefield’s treatise, which also drew from earlier accounts, at the same time as it conjured up a landscape of enormous prospect. He effused on the soil quality: ‘best indicated by the luxuriant growth of its productions, superior to anything that imagination can

⁵⁶ Tupaia and Moyhanger, respectively. Nicholas, vol 1, p.104.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, vol 2, p.320.

⁵⁸ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.282.

⁵⁹ Burford, *Description of a View*, p.5.

conceive, and affording an august prospect'.⁶⁰ Should any prospective immigrant be in doubt, he described in detail the rivers, bays, harbours, navigational hazards and aids, and the flax, timber and prospects for future cultivation. Tantalisingly, he alluded to unseen, undescribed resources which invited closer inspection.

The verdant paradise, conjured up by Burford and Wakefield, was aimed at a particular market, and, unlike some of the accounts, was not balanced by attempts to locate the landscape for Europeans in other ways. Wakefield's landscape of plenitude capitalised, perhaps more than the earlier authors had intended, on their combined projections, for a specific purpose. The emerging landscape, when described in prospective terms, became more than a source of information on useful things. It was even more than the sum total of its parts. This transformation occurred when a patently *different* landscape was both imagined and packaged as a *familiar* one. It was constructed with the language of the salesman. The mode of description shifted from flatly mapping and outlining what was observed, to appealing to a home audience in a more direct way. It abandoned scientific disinterest, as a mode of telling and describing, for one that projected emotions onto the landscape and looked ahead to an imagined future. The landscape was consciously constructed as an object of desire. In Park's words: 'Land as patently fertile this was pre-destined to be cultivated - or forfeited.'⁶¹ From the bare bones account of Cook through to the purple prose of the E.G. Wakefield compilation, there was a consistent construction of the landscape as resource rich, a landscape of plenitude, by those who stood to gain from it. The amount of detail and tone of construction appeared to become more optimistic as more information became available, the country seemed more familiar, and the demands of the political climate meshed with self-interest.

But there were other estimations of the resource capability. James Montgomery's account of the Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet visit to the Bay of Islands was less enthusiastic. They had found the vegetation wanting. By comparison to Tahiti, Montgomery reported: 'nature here seems impoverished by the mere

⁶⁰ Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Ward, *The British Colonization of New Zealand*, London: J.W. Parker, 1837, p.307.

⁶¹ Park, *Nga Urnora*, p.39.

absence of superfluity'.⁶² Charles Pickering, naturalist on the Wilkes-led American surveying expedition, wrote: 'Nevertheless the Flora on the whole is rather a poor one, by no means as varied as that of Australia, and probably will not afford more than 2000 or 2500 species.'⁶³ The much-vaunted agricultural capacity was: 'a good deal exaggerated - and furthermore, there is but a very small proportion of fertile soil'.⁶⁴ The success of potatoes and corn was noted as a 'debt to America'; peaches, although 'abundant', were 'of inferior quality'; grapes were 'poor in quality'; sweet potatoes 'abundant but inferior'; wheat was 'often a failure; and cabbage and turnips, although 'now more naturalized ... the general complaint was that most kinds of seed degenerated'.⁶⁵ What excited his curiosity more was the complete absence of 'land quadrupeds'.⁶⁶ This is scarcely surprising. His main interest lay in understanding the complex history of the geographical location of species.

Savage had also been somewhat modest in his appraisal of future prospects for New Zealand, notwithstanding the sentimental verse that appeared on the title page of his account, ending with the rhyming couplet: 'Where the tall Forest and the Plains abound - And Waters wide, with various Wealth abound'.⁶⁷ He was, in fact, cautious about the future of whaling, warning against a decline in the trade brought about by over-fishing:

It has frequently happened that a particular coast or island has been reported to be frequented by a great number of whales, and no sooner does this information transpire, than ships are instantly fitted out to go in search of them, both from Europe and America. - The consequence is, the fish are soon in great measure, either destroyed by the harpoon, or driven from their favorite spot by repeated disturbance.⁶⁸

⁶² Daniel Tyerman & George Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, 2 vols, James Montgomery (ed.), London: F. Westley & A.H. Davis, 1831, vol.2, p.138. (vol 2, pp.129-140 covers their six week visit to New Zealand)

⁶³ Pickering, section 4 of his journal, 'Vegetation' (no page references sighted). In the published account, Wilkes/Pickering wrote: 'the greater part of the soil of the portion of New Zealand which fell under our observation is too sterile to be profitably employed in agriculture.', Wilkes, p.176. Soil erosion was noted as a problem, and the ever present fern, p.176. Perhaps, most damning (in light of the Hawkesworth account), was the comparison of New Zealand's vegetation as bearing: 'some resemblance to that of Tierra del Fuego', p.177.

⁶⁴ Pickering, section 5 of his diary, 'Cultivation of Introduced Plants' (no page references sighted)

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, section 7, 'Mammalia' (no page references sighted)

⁶⁷ Savage, title page. These were not, of course, Savage's own words. (cf Park, *Nga Uruora*, p.62)

⁶⁸ Savage, p.87.

Pickering and Wilkes also sounded a warning about the threats to the whale fishery: they [the New Zealanders and foreigners] are rapidly destroying this source of wealth, for, as has been stated, their eagerness for present gain leads them to destroy the animals whether old, or young, without discrimination.⁶⁹ W.B. Marshall described New Zealand as a place ripe for appropriation and exploitation by Europeans: 'its lofty woods tempt with the promise of inexhaustible riches; its harbours are so numerous and so excellent, as almost to invite the public robber to enter and take possession of them, under the plausible excuse of benefiting all-greedy commerce.'⁷⁰

Constructing the landscape in terms of its useful products had its roots in the eighteenth century enlightenment practice of scientific observation, followed by detailed description and classification. Early travellers to New Zealand, with mostly limited degrees of training in the natural sciences, attempted to faithfully record products seen and promised. They incorporated details within the narrative of their journey, (food obtained, views seen, resource extraction attempted), and often a separate evaluation of the material resources and prospects of the country. The link with the discourse of natural history is the language of the accounts and the assumptions embedded within that language. The account writers borrowed the language of classification of eighteenth century scientists, who theorised an order in the natural world. This order encompassed all living things, including 'man'. Hierarchy and progression were possible. Europeans, at the top, had dominion over lower forms of beings. The idea of 'kingdoms', 'nations' and 'colonies' was applied to plants and animals. The dog world had its own order, with 'degenerate' Maori dogs, bred for the table, at the lower end, and hounds and other imported dogs at the higher end of the scale. This ranking also marked a correspondence between the status of dogs and their owners. Individual animal species were ranked within the larger category of animal life. Cats, as both pets and vermin eaters, were doubly tabooed as a European food source.⁷¹ The attitude of Maori differed from the Europeans, who regarded the cat both as useful animal and cherished pet.⁷²

⁶⁹ Wilkes, p.177.

⁷⁰ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.295.

⁷¹ Cruise, pp.202-3. Cruise wrote of a present of a cat, which the Maori gift giver: 'must have intended for our repast, as he seemed a good deal surprised that we did not eat it.' Polack remarked sarcastically upon the way the cat: 'is looked upon with much affection by these kind-hearted people, for the delicacy of its flesh when cooked, and its skin; it is accounted as very nutritious food.' Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.314.

⁷² The rise of the cat's status in European culture was plotted in Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, London: Allen Lane, 1983, pp.109-110.

Similar concerns with ranking and status were evident in the descriptions of the plant world. Bidwill, an amateur botanist, combined his 'scientific descriptions' with ideas of beauty.⁷³ The 'Cowrie' he found to be: 'the least beautiful of the pine tribe, especially in its young state', which he described as 'absolutely ugly'.⁷⁴ The preoccupation with status entailed the notion of place. At a time when animal and plant species were mobilised and transported around the globe in the interests of science and commerce, a concern with acclimatisation appeared in some of the accounts. Bidwill believed it to be out of the question that Kauri might grow in England, given that they were: 'not found more than forty miles south of the Thames in New Zealand'.⁷⁵ This order, 'found' in the natural world, was of course a human-centred construction.⁷⁶

Natural history is now widely understood as an ambitious project to observe, see, collect, know and ultimately possess. Joseph Banks and the Linnaean collectors have been cast as the principal players in this project.⁷⁷ The legacy of their findings that ultimately led to settlement (occupation) of countries half a world away denies innocent explanation. The use made of the information gathered and generated from these scientific endeavours, in terms of the role of European colonisers, called into question scientific investigation itself as a neutral, value-free endeavour. In this way, the archive of exploration, characterised as a system of collecting and communicating information and ultimately knowledge, can be understood as a necessary precursor to the colonial project.⁷⁸ This 'project' is about re-distributing resources where they are best used and enhanced, according to European values and needs.⁷⁹ Laying bare to

⁷³ Bidwill, *Rambles*

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, pp.5-6.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p.6.

⁷⁶ Thomas, p.61. Thomas described: 'an enduring tendency of human thought to project upon the natural world (and particularly the animal kingdom) categories and values derived from human society and then to serve them back as a critique or reinforcement of the human order, justifying some particular social or political arrangement on the grounds that it is somehow more 'natural'; than any alternative.'

⁷⁷ For example, David Mackay, *In the Wake of Cook: Exploration, Science and Empire 1780-1801*, Wellington, Victoria University Press, 1985. John Gascoigne, 'Joseph Banks and the Expansion of Empire', in *Science and Exploration in the Pacific: European Voyages to the Southern Oceans in the Eighteenth Century*, Margarette Lincoln (ed.), London: Boydell Press/National Maritime Museum, 1998, pp.39-54, and N. Jardine, J.A. Secord and E.C. Spary (eds), *Cultures of Natural History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

⁷⁸ Gibbons, pp.33-38.

⁷⁹ David Spurr takes this as a given of the 'colonizing imagination', in *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1993, p.31.

European eyes the results of European exploration foreshadowed appropriation and colonisation. In this way the landscape was constructed for European eyes, and this 'seeing' can be cast as a form of possession. If the lists of goods on the resource inventory looked ahead to actual use, then 'knowledge' scouted for 'possession'. The accounts, so constructed, became a vehicle for appropriation.

If a key role of natural history was the accumulation of new facts and knowledge, to what extent did these early accounts add to the weight of evidence and observations already contained in the Hawkesworth account, and the correspondence and reports which constituted the public record? Ignoring the obvious borrowing from one account to another, it seems that little new information appeared in the accounts. Individually, the accounts built on earlier accounts, filling in detail here, adding opinion there, and building up the beginnings of local histories, in their recounting of resource prospects. Their descriptions were, in many ways, derivative. Collectively however, they appeared to reconstitute the resource inventories into landscapes of prospect, in a more obvious way than any single account, when read in isolation from its predecessors. Yet, landscapes cluttered with goods seen and collected, dreams of unseen wealth and imagined prospects were undoubtedly read as material evidence of what was found, and informed speculation of what might yet be found. Located within the travel accounts of Cook, Savage, Nicholas and Cruise, New Zealand landscapes were written about in such a way that they became sources of information deemed useful, as well as entertaining. The relevance of inventorying to the colonial project can be argued if the accounts, through their disparate observations, recycled or first hand experience, looked ahead to future prospects. Yet, in many cases, it is as if the inventorying itself was required for the sake of form, and in this, they were not entirely coherent. Mimicking in style, if not content, undermines the construction of the accounts solely as texts of appropriation. There were other associations at work in the accounts.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ A concise mining of this trope is found in Janet Browne, who described this as 'the muscular language of expansionist power', in 'Biogeography and Empire', in *Cultures of Natural History*, p.315.

The preoccupation to cultivate land, evident in the accounts, (and therefore improve upon nature) stemmed from a self confident belief in the practical benefits that could arise from such efforts. Paul Shepard described the concept of 'improvement' as the oldest form of English landscape aesthetics, which came to be associated with colonial enterprise.⁸¹ There were traces of this preoccupation in early travel accounts, especially in the approval of missionary and Maori gardens, and disapproval of abandoned gardens and fallow ground. The rise in the popularity of gardening in England undoubtedly provided some context.⁸² But there were other dimensions to the passion for cultivation, for example, the fear that unimproved land could become waste. The distraction of 'waste' and 'degeneration' sprang from older sources, including biblical ones. Paradise, a garden, had become wilderness. This cautionary landscape had dimensions in both time and place. Abandoned Maori gardens threatened a return to barrenness. J.C. Bidwill described Maori agricultural practices of clearing ground, planting and harvesting three crops, before moving on to leave the land fallow, as a degrading practice, which put the land at risk of becoming barren.⁸³ Ideologically, then, this desire to complement the natural wealth of the country also embodied a preoccupation with regression, and its companion improvement. Improvement went both ways. The accounts show both a preoccupation with improving what was found in New Zealand, and adding to the stock of objects in Britain, for example, taking specimens home to England to cultivate for commercial gain or curiosity. In this way, the accounts reflect a broader concern with the civilising mission, as well as commercial interests, at the same time as they reveal older obsessions.

⁸¹ Paul Shepard, *English Reaction to the New Zealand Landscape before 1850*, Wellington: Victoria University, 1969, p.144.

⁸² Thomas referred to the increase from 200 (recorded) cultivated plants rise to around 18,000 in the 300 years until 1839 in England, p.226.

⁸³ Bidwill, pp.40-41.

An unremitting focus on 'lofty' forests and individual tree species, evident in the accounts, is explained, at one level, within the context of the emergence of timber and flax as commodities, and the vicissitudes of the timber and flax trade.⁸⁴ Beyond New Zealand however, other commentators have focused on the symbolic value of trees in the British imagination.⁸⁵ This was manifest in the surge of interest in books on trees from the late eighteenth century through to the mid-nineteenth century.⁸⁶ Keith Thomas explored the link between emerging nationhood and articles within the landscape, symbolising that relationship. The oak, in his view, came to represent much more than its commodity value: 'Always the king of the trees, it became, with the growth of the Navy, an emblem of the British people and as much a national symbol as roast beef. It represented masculinity, vigour, strength and reliability.'⁸⁷ Similarly, Paul Carter claimed a similar role for gum trees in Australia, which: 'emerge in the literature of travelling and settling as fundamental expressions of the newcomers' desire to inhabit.'⁸⁸ In the published accounts of these early European visitors, it is as if the 'kaikaterre', then the 'cowrie', substituted for the oak in the imagination.

A preoccupation with the absence of animals, in the accounts, pointed to practical concerns. Animals were, at once, food source, machine, and companion.⁸⁹ But the absence of 'God's creatures' (indigenous rats and dogs notwithstanding), signalled an incompleteness in the 'natural order' of things. If animals were taken for granted as part of the natural world of nineteenth century Europeans, what effect would their absence have, at least at a subconscious level, on these early New Zealand visitors? If Keith Thomas's view of animals as the 'other' of Europeans is accepted, it is hardly surprising that their relative absence received a good deal of attention in the accounts:

⁸⁴ For example, Roger Wigglesworth, 'The New Zealand Timber and Flax Trade 1769-1814', Massey University, Ph.D thesis, 1981. Anne Salmond's *Between Two Worlds* dealt with the trade, within the context of exchange relationships between Europeans and Maori.

⁸⁵ For example, Barbara Maria Stafford, Simon Schama and Keith Thomas.

⁸⁶ Thomas, p.213.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p.220.

⁸⁸ Carter, *Botany Bay*, p.264.

⁸⁹ Thomas, p.25.

Men attributed to animals the natural impulses they most feared in themselves - ferocity, gluttony, sexuality - even though it was men, not beasts, who made war on their own species, ate more than was good for them and were sexually active all the year round. It was as a comment on *human* nature that the concept of 'animality' was devised.⁹⁰

In a landscape almost devoid of animals, a combination of practical concerns, a sense of restoring balance, as well as colonising intentions might account for the drive to populate the landscape with animals. Yet, they too, had symbolic value, as symbols of civilisation (then), or biological invaders (now).

The self confidence involved in constructing landscapes as repositories of useful information and landscapes of prospect, points to a more general consideration of how these early European visitors saw themselves in relation to the world around them. Thomas claimed that by the beginning of the nineteenth century: 'it had become possible to regard plants and animals in a light which was very different from the anthropocentric vision of earlier times.'⁹¹ This stemmed from the practice of natural scientists, whose methodologies of observation, classification and naming affected the way Europeans, in general, began to view their world. Even so, he claimed, the older anthropomorphic view of the natural world crept back 'in the form of pathetic fallacy of the Romantic poets and travellers, for whom nature served as a mirror to their own moods and emotions.'⁹² Elements of this tendency were present in all the accounts. The account writers, however, served them up separately from their descriptions of the natural resources. Resource inventories featured alongside other depictions of the natural world, as constructed in their accounts. The accounts imitated scientific methods of precise observation and measurement, at the same time as they wrote about nature in a romantic fashion.

The published accounts are read by late twentieth century audiences in a very different way from their contemporary audiences. Early descriptions of plant and animal life now call to mind plundered wealth. Optimistic comment on the

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, pp.40-41.

⁹¹ *ibid.*, p.52.

⁹² *ibid.*, p.91.

introduction of useful plants and animals rings hollow, in light of the changes wrought by these plant and animal invaders. The circulation of plant and animal life into new habitats not only irrevocably changed the look of the landscape and its use for people, but it also changed the way people came to see that landscape. The texts themselves call the roll of landscapes erased or transformed. To read the texts, then, as constructions, offers a way into understanding something of the preoccupations of the account writers, the world they inhabited, and the forms in which they expressed ideas about themselves and other species. In this way, some of the accounts were written as a resource prospectus. Other account writers, with other interests at heart, were more circumspect. To read the accounts collectively, then, as clearly foreshadowing future appropriation requires that the creators of landscapes of prospect (for example, Nicholas, Wakefield, Burford, and Polack) be taken as a representative group. Multiple readings of other accounts, at the very least, undermine the coherency of this position as a single interpretative strategy.

The idea of *terra australis* offers one way into understanding how New Zealand came to be constructed as a landscape of plenitude.⁹³ It formed part of the intellectual backdrop to nineteenth century travel in the Pacific. Yet it continues to exist as a paradigm for historical enquiry. The logic is simple: the mythical *terra australis* represented a vast landscape of untold wealth. New Zealand was not *terra australis*, but the familiarisation process enabled an association to be maintained with this older landscape. The items on the resource inventory were items familiar to visitors from Europe. The systematic gathering of information and trade in natural history explains how natural wealth came to be taken, manipulated and exploited. But the sense of promise, of more to come, in unknown places like the 'interior' had links with older, more powerful ideas of landscape and relations with the natural world, of which *terra australis* is but one manifestation. *Terra australis* remains an enduring paradigm to explore the early texts. Its intellectual inverse, *terra nullius*, offers a related paradigm, in the attempt to explain how it was that Maori came to be dispossessed of the land and its resources. Seeing Maori in the landscape is the subject of chapter four.

⁹³ Mackay, 'Burden of *terra australis*'

Chapter Four

Seeing Maori

This chapter explores some of the representations of Maori in the published accounts, prior to 1840. In the representations of Maori within the landscapes of Marshall, Earle, and Polack, it is suggested that Maori were positioned in at least three distinctive ways: as objects of ethnographic interest, subjects for discourse on matters of interest to Europeans, and as emblematic props to popularise the accounts. Although other relations are discernible in the individual accounts, some more sympathetic than others, they are largely overwhelmed by the dominance of Maori as unique identifiers in the landscape with several roles to play. Similarly to previous chapters, this chapter considers the extent to which these accounts might foreshadow later acts of appropriation. It suggests that the principle of *terra nullius* has more to do with interpretative strategy, than the way the accounts actually positioned Maori in their New Zealand landscapes.

European encounters with ‘new’ people in ‘new’ landscapes were long celebrated as founding moments in national histories, told from a European perspective. The meaning and significance attached to these early encounters provided boundless opportunities for historical definition, revision, and contention, from the perspectives of those who were there first, and those who came later. It seems colonisers, wherever they went, were inevitably blind to signs of indigenous presence.¹ This had as much to do with ignorance, as myopic self-interest. Colonising intentions were indicated as much by what was not seen and understood, as what was seen, recorded, and ‘created’ as knowledge. The colonising project ‘invisibilised’ and reduced indigenous presence through the representation of landscapes as free of any human touch. Stephen Turner expressed this as an

¹ An example of this now commonplace view can be found in David Lowenthal, ‘Empire and Ecologies: Reflections on Environmental History’, in *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies*, Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1997, p.234.

imperative of: 'the white dream of a new country, which requires that indigenous inhabitants be forgotten or constructed in terms of the vision of a bright future.'²

Certainly, in New Zealand during the 50 years following the treaty of 1840, the landscape encountered by these early visitors was commodified into parcels of land, of which five sixths were alienated by some form or another to Europeans, and Maori themselves came to represent a minority group of just seven percent of the entire population.³ Ample documentary and pictorial evidence supports an interpretation that this marginal role was envisioned by the early planners, legislators, administrators and settlers, and by the latter part of the nineteenth century found expression in the notion of the 'dying savage' in New Zealand, as elsewhere, in the European imagination. However, the period leading up to formal annexation presents a challenge of a different order. For during this pre-colonial period, the balance of power was clearly different. Europeans, as a minority population, dwelt on the fringe of Maori society, dependant on Maori for food, trade and establishing minor footholds. Differently from Australia, where the legal fiction *terra nullius* came to represent the constitutional underpinning of marginalisation and dispossession of indigenous peoples, Maori were undeniably part of the landscape encountered by European visitors, at least prior to 1840.⁴ How they were represented by Europeans in the landscape is another matter.

Representations of the natural landscape generally occupied much less journal space than representations of Maori, in the published accounts. This was not necessarily the case with private journals. William Jowett's fleeting impressions of Maori were recorded in his journal together with observations of the natural productions of the country: '... and this Country is Very Good for Fish and Potatoes and Pork for the Pigs Run Wild But as for any thing Else there is Nothing ... and

² Stephen Turner, 'Settlement as Forgetting', in *Quicksands: Foundational Histories in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand*, Klaus Neumann, Nicholas Thomas and Hilary Eriksen (eds.), Sydney: UNSW Press, 1999, p.22.

³ M.P.K. Sorrenson, 'Maori and Pakeha', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, 2nd ed., Geoffrey W. Rice (ed.), Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992, p.165.

⁴ Simon Ryan argued that the construction of Aborigines as nomadic enabled the substitution of other 'indices for the capacity of property', especially agriculture, in *The Cartographic Eye: How Explorers Saw Australia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. p.159. Paul McHugh questioned whether the distinction made between the application of the principle of *terra nullius* in Australia really differed from the effects of the Treaty of Waitangi in New Zealand, in 'Australasian Narratives of Constitutional Foundation', in *Quicksands*, p.106.

they [Maori] can Swim Both Men and Woman like a Duck and it is very Hot in this Country Their Summer is When our Winter is'.⁵ In sandwiching Maori swimming prowess between the produce and the weather, Maori appeared as a noteworthy feature of a country that otherwise lacked things. Twenty years later, the more erudite John Hemery wrote first impressions of Maori into his arrival scene in Wellington harbour. This followed suit with other account writers, who singled out the presence of Maori as a defining moment in arrival: 'Their very warlike and ferocious appearance together with the graceful manner in which they dress formed a touts ensemble the most picturesque I ever saw.'⁶ Hemery's passage had been remarkable, on his own account, for the friction and tension generated between him and the entire ship's complement - crew, cabin and steerage passengers. Somewhat surprisingly, then, this difficult man remarked with some sensitivity on the reluctance of some Maori chiefs to sign the treaty:

... many of the Chiefs displayed a great degree of intelligence and shrewdness and absolutely refused to sign a deed delivering up their land to strangers, saying they were great Chiefs as their ancestors had been before them and desired to remain so It is absurd to try and make these people believe that our Government is doing quite a disinterested action in taking their native land under their protection as they call it.⁷

Both men, in their own characteristic ways, positioned Maori in the landscape of their private journals, indicating that their curiosity was aroused by Maori.

Early European representations of Maori in the accounts and journals of this pre-colonial period reveal this intense curiosity in many forms. Several account writers showed some interest in Maori as a language, appending basic vocabularies to their accounts. Origin hunting took second place to other fixations, however. Although Marsden's analogy of Maori, as one of the Lost Tribes of Israel, was recycled through some of the accounts, there was no serious discussion (of the kind evident in J.R. Forster's *Observations*), that took on an intellectual life of its own later in the century.⁸ More commonly, observations centred on Maori 'customs and

⁵ William Jowett, b. 1793, Journal/Transcribed by Elizabeth Marsden, 1819-1821, WTU, Wellington: MS-Papers-4814, p.39.

⁶ Hemery, 15 March 1840 to sister, pp.43-44.

⁷ *ibid.*, 7 May 1840 to mother, p.12.

⁸ A glancing reference appeared in Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.123.

manners', including greetings, death rituals and warfare. Tattooing and cannibalism were even more fascinating topics, however repugnant the latter practice was held to be. Discussion about different means of social constraint and beliefs also emerged in the accounts, especially *utu* and *tapu*. As undeniably alien and inconvenient as they appeared to be, they featured prominently. Alongside attempts at ethnographic description, these early visitors also wrote of their encounters with individual Maori - chiefs, guides, and others, who they referred to as friends, and upon whom they relied for patronage, protection, information and friendship. Miniature narratives of these relationships were appended to some accounts.⁹

Almost all the published accounts included illustrations of Maori, or landscapes marked by the presence of Maori, whether *waka* at sea, Maori villages, or as foreground subjects of Maori customs - tattoo, death rituals - or guiding. The accounts worked with common Maori motifs. For example, most accounts featured a plate of a Maori chief at the beginning of the accounts, either as a portrait, or positioned against a backdrop of New Zealand scenery. The presence of Maori in the landscape provoked comment, either on their composition, population, tribal affiliations, state of warfare, or their absence from the landscape.

Maori were a presence in the landscape. But of more relevance than their presence, is the extent to which early European visitors assigned roles to Maori in the landscapes they encountered, and those they imagined. In their portrayal of Maori, the accounts offer scope for both best and worst interpretation. In light of what came later, it is unavoidable to read the published accounts for clues about how Maori came to be construed as seen/unseen, and whether New Zealand was seen as uninhabited, untouched, vacant, or ill used by its first inhabitants. In embryonic form, many of the ideas and pointers towards later developments are evident in these texts. Yet other ideas are also present, which make a single reading difficult to sustain. Interpretation of attitudes towards Maori, as evidenced through the

⁹ 'Moyhanger', in Savages's *Account*, pp.94-110, and 'Duaterra', in Nicholas's *Narrative*, pp.380-89.

published accounts of this period, suggest a change in the accounts' representation of Maori, especially in Wade and Bidwill, as annexation drew closer.¹⁰

Maori were themselves described for account readers, in ways their readers could relate to. Unsurprisingly, nakedness had attracted comment, but so too did their dress. Savage's description of Maori clothing evoked a powerful visual image, at the same time as it depersonalised his subjects: 'when they are seated, or squatted down, their figure very much resembles a large bee-hive, super-mounted with the head of a New Zealander.'¹¹ Earle later decried the substitution of European clothes for traditional Maori garments: 'They were habited in the most uncouth dresses imaginable. These pious men, certainly, have no taste for the picturesque; they had obscured the finest human forms under a seaman's huge clothing.'¹² This was both a comment arising from romantic preoccupations with 'noble savagery' and a swipe at missionary intentions. Marshall's thoughts ran along similar lines, condoling the replacement of a 'picturesque' garment, for a European blanket. Unlike Earle, however, he proposed the tartan kilt and plaid of the Highlands as a more fitting substitute for the mats, which were 'equally beautiful and useful'.¹³

Most accounts included pictorial scraps of ethnographic interest - here a moko, there a Maori maiden, warrior or village. Unlike the fanciful engravings of the later nineteenth century the landscape engravings, featured in the accounts, mostly included marks of Maori occupation.¹⁴ As vehicles for generating 'new knowledge', in the ethnographic sense, the texts functioned poorly. As with the natural resources of the country, descriptions and observation largely recycled earlier efforts. The 'ethnographic descriptions' followed the pattern set by Hawkesworth's *Account*, where they were constituted as a set of separate remarks, or comments, couched in

¹⁰ This is Gibbons' point, in 'Non-Fiction', p.37. The derisive tone is evident, to a lesser extent, in many other texts, however, where 'natural' curiosity is replaced by an attitude of 'knowing better'.

¹¹ Savage, p.48. Cruise and Marsden also used the image of the beehive. (cf Anthony Murray-Oliver, *Augustus Earle in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1968, p.31. cf Burford: 'A native in this garment, seated on the ground, with his knees folded up to his chin, resembles a large bee hive.', _____, *Description of a View*, p.9.)

¹² Earle, p.73.

¹³ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.119.

¹⁴ The provenance of published images from this period is partly surveyed in E.M. and D.G. Ellis, *Early Prints of New Zealand, 1642-1875*, Christchurch: Avon Fine Prints, 1978, pp. 60-84.

'scientific terms', as often as not derived from second-hand experience. The more interesting (and revealing) observations occurred throughout the narrative.

Savage's *Account* exemplified the practice of writing more about Maori than anything else, including a separate section on Maori music.¹⁵ He wrote in the self-conscious desire to emphasize how safe New Zealand had become. While his account is generally valued for its sensitive portrayal of Maori, he was unable to resist mixing erotic portrayals of Maori women with his efforts at 'scientific' observation. The resulting description conformed to the stereotypical image of the dusky maiden of the south seas:

Their features in general are regular and pleasing, with long black hair, and dark penetrating eyes. The tattooing of their lips, and the quantity of oil and red earth with which they anoint their person and hair, would not be agreeable to the taste of a refined European; but I can conceive to a New Zealand lover, their well-formed figure, the interesting cast of their countenance, and the sweet tone of their voice, must render them extremely desirable companions, to soothe his cares, and strew his path through life with flowers.¹⁶

Maori often provided a connection with the exotic in the landscape. They were represented collectively in the accounts by a number of set pieces, serving to evoke memories of other places and challenge European values. In this way they worked as part of the 'othering' discourse, portraying differences to a home audience. This could work in several ways. One was where the natural landscape resembled a cultivated, ordered landscape, evocative of European landscapes, with signs of Maori oddly situated within it. In looking for signs of the familiar, the landscape could be so constructed that it could be anywhere in Europe, were it not for the disturbing reminder of Maori use and occupation. In this way, villages and cultivated gardens were intruded upon by textual reminders that this was New Zealand, with its annoying tapu laws. Conversely, the landscape could be constructed as unordered and different, with Maori seen as part of this other, different world. These portrayals

¹⁵ Savage, pp.80-85.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.18. Burford, similarly, described Maori women: 'they have finely rounded limbs, long silky black hair, dark penetrating eyes, and an agreeable cast of features. As well as the men, they anoint all parts of the body with oil and a red or blue earth.' _____, *Description of a View*, p.11. Hawkesworth (Banks) had earlier written of the 'plainness' of Maori women, mitigated by their being: 'as great coquets as any of the most fashionable ladies in Europe, and the young ones as skittish as an unbroken filly', *Account*, _____, vol 2, p.313.

were marked by the attitude that Maori were more comfortable in this world than Europeans. Here they served as guides, trading partners and interpreters.

For missionaries, and those of strong Christian leanings, there was a view of Maori within a natural world that was both wild and beautiful, evidence of God's handiwork and at the same time, redolent of wickedness.¹⁷ So too with Maori, who were at the same time reviled for their non-Christian beliefs and behaviour, as they were cherished as potential souls to be saved. They were agents in a wicked moral and spiritual landscape, at the same time as they were future subjects in a landscape of salvation. Marshall, surgeon on the *Alligator*, used up a lot of journal space looking forward to a time when Maori had become Christian. Perhaps this compensated, in some way, for what he observed as the current state of affairs, which led to their neglect of cultivation for the pursuit of war. Marshall's account is tense with the ambiguity of his position towards Maori. He was witness to the wanton violence carried out by the *Alligator's* mission, sent in pursuit of the hostages from the *Harriet*. While he saw Maori as belonging to a lower spiritual order, in sore need of raising higher, he did not condone the violence of European retribution, on moral grounds:

Of the errors committed in the execution of the affair They consisted mainly in exacting too much from the Natives, and yielding too little. In acting rather according to momentary impulses, than upon a set of fixed principles. In treating New Zealanders as savages, and forgetting that they were, notwithstanding, men. In inflicting wrong upon them, and making no reparation; while suffering neither actual nor imaginary wrong from them, without inflicting summary vengeance.¹⁸

His views on Maori slavery were driven by a humanitarian view, where he expressed his desire to set them free through: 'more help - more schools- more missionaries, that the slavery of the New Zealander's body may disappear with the slavery of the New Zealander's soul.'¹⁹ Cannibalism provided an opportunity for discourse on the need to raise up: 'these poor, and blind, and miserable, and naked savages, who ... are not below the love of Christ ... to raise them up ... from darkness to light'.²⁰

¹⁷ If James Montgomery can be believed, the extent of 'wickedness' and 'depravity' did not survive self-censorship: 'it must be plainly stated that half of their abominations may not be told', introductory remarks, in Daniel Tyerman & George Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels*, vol 1, p.viii.

¹⁸ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.237.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.131.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.135.

Marshall's praise of the missionary effort, in contrast to Earle's cynical view, stressed its nobility of purpose.²¹ It was a prescription for ordering people and landscape:

To their persevering industry it is owing that this settlement wears an air of so much neatness, order, and comfort, as at once to transport the imagination from New Zealand to England, in which last, more than in any land, order, and neatness, and comfort, preside over town and country alike. Besides taking part in the labours of the forge and the bench, they superintend the business of gardening and husbandry, and preach more or less every day throughout the year.²²

In Marshall, Maori were the redemptive agents in a landscape, envisaged in evangelical terms. He reflected, however, the image of a pragmatic Christianity, comprehended as a response to practical common sense needs, as much as an adherence to theological precepts. To the undoubted advantages of a Taranaki landscape with its abundant resources, there were, above all: 'many thousands of miserable savages, perishing for lack of knowledge, without God, and without hope in the world.'²³ This vision appeared further:

Christianity has not only saved the souls of the New Zealanders from sin, it has informed their minds with useful learning, and instructed their hands to handle the spade or guide the plough The noble sight is common in numberless villages, of numbers submitting themselves to be instructed in the arts of reading and writing.²⁴

This preoccupation with civilising Maori could be interpreted as an attempt to accommodate Maori and their landscape within a moral and theological framework in Christian terms.²⁵ But there were also secular dimensions to the civilising mission.

Civilisation offered a replacement of superstitions and inferior technology with superior technology and improvement. Augustus Earle expressed the practical view that civilisation led to better food and the disappearance of cannibalism:

²¹ See Marshall's position on Earle's criticism of the missionaries, pp.81-82. (cf Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 2, pp.146-47.)

²² Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, pp.103-104.

²³ *ibid.*, p.240.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.311.

²⁵ Bernard Smith suggested Europeans responded artistically to exotic landscapes as an allegory of the moral world, in *European Vision and the South Pacific*, 2nd ed., New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985, pp.152-53.

On looking round upon their country, an Englishman cannot fail to feel gratified, when he beholds the good already resulting to these poor savages from their intercourse with his countrymen;.... They have stores full of the finest Indian corn I sincerely hope this introduction may be followed up, not only by our sending out to them seeds of vegetables and fruits, but by our forwarding to them every variety of quadruped which can be used for food I have no doubt every variety of European produce essential to the support of life would thrive equally well; and as food became abundant, and luxuries were introduced, their disgusting feasts on human flesh would soon be discontinued altogether.²⁶

A belief that protein deficiency was the key reason for cannibalism was not uncommon. Earle's *Narrative*, however, transcended the narrow typecasting of his painted landscapes, where Maori figured either as passive groups, crouching within the landscape, exemplars of noble savagery, or guiding the European eye.²⁷ Where, as an artist, he portrayed Maori as part of nature, or indeed close to nature, his account tended to show both Maori and European as subordinate and inferior to Nature. His view of the benefits of civilisation for Maori came through more strongly in his *Narrative*, than the generally romanticised portrayals of Maori on the canvas. But for Earle, 'civilisation' itself was not a simple solution. There were enough instances in his *Narrative*, where Maori hospitality worked as an effective contrast to the absence of hospitality offered at the mission stations:

An extraordinary contrast was now presented to our view, for we came suddenly in front of a complete little English village. Wreaths of white smoke were rising from the chimneys, of neat weather-boarded houses. The glazed windows reflected the brilliant glow from the rays of the setting sun, It is impossible for me to describe what I felt on contemplating a scene so similar to those I had left behind me.²⁸

This vision of civilisation sorely contrasted with the pettiness of missionary hospitality: 'In short, there was no touch of human sympathy, such as we "of the world" feel at receiving an Englishman under our roof in such as savage country as this.'²⁹ Earle's perspective was interesting, in that he wrote as an outsider of the missionary endeavour. His view of the civilising mission was, therefore, ambiguous.

²⁶ Earle, p.194.

²⁷ The portfolio of Earle's New Zealand works, including the lithographs, were reproduced, in Anthony Murray-Oliver, *Augustus Earle in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1968.

²⁸ Earle, p.73.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p.74.

He constructed scenes with himself as an outsider, subject of the missionaries' gaze from behind the glazed windows, which symbolised civilisation in a rough country.³⁰ Maori featured in the landscapes of his *Narrative* in several guises, of which 'romantic' was but one.³¹

There were other secular concerns with civilisation that transcended concerns with education, health and well-being. Civilisation also entailed greater opportunities for trade and profit. A cynical use of Maori was the call for their salvation, through colonisation, by the champions of formal annexation in the late 1830s. Wakefield's idealised landscape did not leave much room for whalers, Pakeha Maori, or (hypocritically) ex-convicts, all of whom he disliked.³² Arguably, his vision of New Zealand had a short term role for Maori, as principal beneficiaries of the civilising mission. He opened his case for colonisation with the inspirational cry: 'Can we suppose otherwise, than, that it is our office to carry civilisation and humanity, peace and good government, and above all, the knowledge of the true God, to the uttermost ends of the earth?'³³ Subsequent land dealings called into question the long-term interests masked by these calls to export a culture and a religion. In reality, Maori served to elevate an otherwise seedy confederation of business interests to a dream of service to humanity.³⁴

Maori also featured in the accounts as guides, providers of information on customs and practices and entertainment. Somewhat surprisingly, in these early accounts, any threat Maori may have represented was largely played down. Tales of terrible deeds and doings to others were recounted with a degree of appropriate horror, bordering on fetish. But what might have been occasions of tension and danger appeared in the accounts as part and parcel of the adventure. This contrasted

³⁰ *ibid.*, pp.141-42.

³¹ Interestingly, it was Earle's 'romantic' depictions of Maori, in his *Narrative*, that seemed to arouse as much ire in missionary circles, as his criticism of missionaries. The *Protestant Journal* 'Review' objected to seeing Maori portrayed as other than 'filthy cannibals' or 'reformed sinners', in 'Review of Earle's Narrative of a Residence...', p.5.

³² Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Ward, *The British Colonization of New Zealand*.

³³ An extract from Whewell's *Sermon Before the Trinity Board* appeared as an 'Inscription' to Wakefield's *British Colonization*.

³⁴ The role of E.G. Wakefield has undergone some recent revision, for example, in the collection of essays *Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Colonial Dream: a Reconsideration*, Wellington: Friends of WTU, 1997.

with journals, written by missionaries and others, who came with a view to stay, and had more experience of the daily stresses of existence. This was evident in the journal of Anne Wilson, in fear of her missionary husband's life.³⁵ William Hall also wrote of Maori as threatening. Far from a docile brotherhood, they appeared in his journal as a fierce force to be reckoned with, at least in the early years of his mission life in New Zealand. In his perspective, a death custom brought welcome respite to his family:

A large party of natives went into the interior of the country with the bones and left the settlement pretty clear, and we were all very glad to embrace a little breathing time, for we have been very much harassed of late – we are almost at our wits end, but I hope not so near our faiths end, or else we should be miserable indeed.³⁶

With Maori as the dominant players, at least prior to 1830, missionaries and other visitors moved about on the terms of Maori. Unlike Hall's earlier experience, this articulated itself, for many, as an expression of frustration about a particular belief or 'law' that impinged on their ability to pursue their goals - whether to collect timber, negotiate a way through the forest, or violate tapu. This was particularly evident in the accounts of Polack and Bidwill, written at a time when the balance of power was changing. Polack made more than others of the use of Maori to ferry him across rivers.³⁷ Bidwill found new uses for his Maori friend, the chief, who shielded him from rain with his cloak.³⁸ Polack tended to tell stories that made fun of Maori beliefs and custom. So too did Bidwill. In both accounts, something of the later degradation is already discernible: 'I saw an old mat and some sticks and rubbish; immediately they set up a terrible outcry that the place was taboo because somebody had died there. I said I did not care'.³⁹ Referring to another kind of tapu, he wrote: 'Their fire was taboo; it was the fire they had brought in the canoe, and was not for cooking. I was greatly annoyed, and gave them a good scolding for their nonsense,

³⁵ Max G. Armstrong, fl. 1984-1996, Letters and journal of Anne Catherine Wilson, 1832-1838, (typescripts), WTU, Wellington: MS-Papers-3943.

³⁶ William Hall, diary entry 21 May 1816, Diary, 1815-1925. WTU, Wellington: Micro-MS-0853.

³⁷ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.69.

³⁸ Bidwill, p.28.

³⁹ *ibid.*, p.60.

telling the missionary lads that they ought to know better than attend to such stuff.⁴⁰ Such anecdotes, told at the expense of Maori, functioned as entertaining props, foreshadowing the kinds of denigrating illustrations that would appear from around the mid nineteenth century in the popular media.⁴¹

Without exception, the account writers devoted much attention to their descriptions of Maori villages, and to a lesser extent fortified pa. So much came together in a villagescape. The backdrop enabled writers to indulge themselves with scenic descriptions, of a style and expression familiar to their readers. The foreground was peopled by Maori, busily occupied in a range of activities. Their fascination for villagescapes was also evident in the accompanying engravings. But unlike the engravings, commentary on larger topics could complement an entertaining anecdote about an incident in the village. J.L. Nicholas constructed villages, which conformed with a European ideal of order and harmony: 'The situation of this village is one of the most beautiful I have seen in New Zealand, and deserves to be particularly described.' His ideal comprised: 'huts are constructed ... as to have a very pleasing effect [more on surrounds: 'with the appearance of an English meadow'] Adjoining the village, were some well cultivated plantations of potatoes and coomeras; and these, with the other external appendages belonging to the huts, are generally the most interesting sight, there being nothing worthy of observation in the inside.'⁴² Reflecting further, he pointed to the pleasing contrast between the 'primitive' state of the built structures and the natural, but cultivated, environment:

... how great is the difference of improvement between the rude structures themselves, and those neat plantations with which they are surrounded The nice precision that was observed in setting the plants, and the careful exactness in clearing out the weeds, the neatness of the fences, with the convenience of the stiles and path-ways, might all of them have done credit to the most tasteful cultivator in England; and while I beheld and admired them, I could not help fancying myself at the moment, in my own happy country.⁴³

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ For example, James Buchanan, *Sketches from Early New Zealand: Some Nineteenth Century Engravings*, Auckland: David Bateman, 1985, pp.23, 31, 110, 111.

⁴² Nicholas, vol 1, pp.250-52.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p.252.

Earle, similarly, used the pleasant surrounds of a Maori village to evoke memories of a rustic European landscape:

... the village itself was an object of extreme interest; ... we turned with pleasure to gaze on the beauty of the surrounding country. In a plain, surrounded by high hills, with a beautiful stream of water meandering through it, was situated a group of huts; and many acres of cultivated ground, neatly fenced and cleared, encircled them. Their harvest ... was now ready for gathering, and all the women were busily occupied. As I from an eminence looked down upon their labours, I could almost fancy I was in Italy, and beheld the peasantry at work in their vineyards: but the adjacent camp and naked warriors soon dissipated the illusion!⁴⁴

By contrast to these 'naked warriors', some of Earle's village scenes portrayed Maori in romantic terms:

I determined to pay them a visit, to witness the ceremonies of the night bivouack, which proved a most picturesque scene, and wild and beautiful in the extreme. Their watch fires glanced upon the dark skins of these finely formed men, and on their bright weapons. Some groups were dancing; others were lying round a fire, chanting wild songs, descriptive of former wars; whilst the graver elders sat in a circle, and discussed the present state of affairs.⁴⁵

Such descriptions sat alongside his more pragmatic approach to Maori he encountered, and his comments on the benefits of civilisation for Maori.

Polack wrote of a similar night time scene, which emphasized the 'otherness' of the savage: 'The appearance of these people gave a highly romantic effect to the scene. They had seated themselves in a circle round an immense fire, that glared on their expressive countenances, some of which yet displayed the red marks of the kokowai put on in the morning.'⁴⁶ Burford, similarly, contrasted Maori with Europeans: 'their painted and half naked figures, and wild gestures, strangely contrasting with the staid demeanour, and ample costume of the Europeans.'⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Earle, pp.144-45.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p.135.

⁴⁶ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.144.

⁴⁷ Burford, p.3.

Marshall's villagescapes combined physical beauty with spiritual grace: 'I took a walk through this exceedingly neat and beautiful village The chief was catechising his people, and acting as the prophet, the priest, and the king of his tribe. It was the most beautiful spectacle I had ever witnessed I could have been content to remain gazing at it and listening to him for hours.'⁴⁸ Later, his contentment was replaced with a sense of impending doom, when he wrote of another village, prior to the destruction wrought by their mission: 'its summit sloping towards the Waimate, which it also overlooks, afforded us a complete insight into the arrangement of the village that occupied it, a village so picturesque as a whole; and so beautiful in all its particulars And that wish was, to have it spared from the impending destruction.'⁴⁹ The random acts of violence of European to Maori appalled him. His retrospective construction of the village, before its massacre, was overlaid with a sense of fragility of the things of this world, and the ignoble behaviour of Europeans.

Beyond the village confines, gardens were described in minute detail, along with the ever present tapu. Maori, it seemed, were eager recipients of vegetable seeds, European technology and gardening tips: 'Many chiefs had very fine crops of peas before we sailed, which they promised not to consume, but to save the seed, and sow it again: the water melons were in great luxuriance; and the degenerated cabbages and other vegetable were much improved by their being taught how to transplant them.'⁵⁰ Indeed the parallels were there to be drawn between cultivating the land, and the spin-off benefits for Maori. The verbose Marshall drew moral conclusions from his observation of Henry Williams' missionary garden at Paihia:

... like a garden planted in a waste, and by little and little, converting that waste into its own similitude; so apt a figure of the parallel process in moral cultivation, and affording the delightful persuasion, that even then was proceeding with sure and certain steps, from every missionary's residence, the improvement of the native mind, eradicating error and wickedness therefrom, like rank weeds and fruitless brambles from a soil deteriorated by their existence in it.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.85-86.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, pp.207-208.

⁵⁰ Cruise, p.287-88.

⁵¹ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative* p.244. cf. Burford: 'the gardens, &c. in the rear of which are bringing, little by little, the waste ground into progressive cultivation', p.6.

Inherent within Marshall's concern for the moral landscape lay a preoccupation with uncultivated waste. That they were clearly preoccupied with gardens suggests that the gardens were seen as evidence that Maori could be placed higher up the ladder of civilisation and were therefore closer to redemption than some of their Pacific neighbours. Maori gardens were admired for their neatness. They were also read as evidence that Maori were capable of deriving the benefits of civilisation, chief amongst them food for the body, and food for the soul. Yet, the seemingly superficial treatment of Maori in the accounts, suggests that they were not a vehicle for serious debate. This fascination for Maori gardens might simply be explained by the fact that there were a large number of them, set out using a sophisticated range of gardening methods, and were therefore hard to ignore.⁵² An obvious inference from all the garden and village talk is that it enabled a discussion of familiar topics and presentation of the landscape in familiar terms.

Village scenes also played a dramatic role in the texts, as they were often the site of arrival. Polack powerfully evoked his own village welcome by packs of noisy dogs. Earle, too, had a sense of occasion in the way he both contemplated and narrated arrival scenes. Such scenes were a common feature of travel narratives. They set the scene visually. They also anticipated relations with locals. In this sense they also set an agenda for representations of Maori.⁵³ Underpinning these stock representations were the way that Europeans generally, and the account writers specifically, viewed themselves in relation to other cultures. Rare in the accounts is a comment by Savage: 'The lowest profligate of Europe fancies himself a superior being, and treats the untaught native of a peaceful isle, as an animal almost unworthy of his consideration.'⁵⁴ Their own sense of identity shaped and defined their view of Maori in the landscape. Three possible approaches are broadly discernible in the accounts: a romanticised view of Maori as part of the natural world; a neutral view of Maori in the landscape; and a negative view, where Maori detracted from the landscape 'seen' by the writer. These approaches are, however, not mutually exclusive in the accounts, either collectively or individually. While all three

⁵² Susan Bulmer, 'Nga Mara: Traditional Maori Gardens', in *A History of The Garden in New Zealand*, Matthew Bradbury (ed.), Auckland: Viking, 1995, pp.17-37.

⁵³ Pratt, p.78.

⁵⁴ Savage, p.89.

approaches were variously present, most account writers, with their emphasis on order and improvement, portrayed Maori in terms that are now understood negatively.

But this is to overplay the extent to which these texts formed a cohesive project with a unifying mission. In these early encounters, even the most astute were not predictors of the future. Just as the short sighted introduction of animals and plant life had unforeseen consequences, so too were early relations with Maori, as characterised in the accounts, not necessarily a statement of how things were, much less a presentiment of things to come. William Jowett's assessment of what there was in New Zealand and John Hemery's predictions of 'buy-in' to the treaty were, perhaps, as indicative of the future dispossession of Maori as the accounts themselves.

If the account writers envisaged a future landscape, transformed by Maori into something resembling an ideal European landscape, with its ordered fields and orderly brethren, it is worth considering, whether pre-colonial roles assigned to Maori might have something in common with post-colonial roles assigned to indigenous peoples, wherever former colonies existed. This revised role sees indigenous people as offering salvation through the transforming of a post-industrial landscape back to something resembling another kind of ideal landscape. It appears intermittently in Geoff Park's histories, where he positions traditional Maori guardianship, as an 'other' of late twentieth century European conservation values.⁵⁵ It is not a new phenomenon. The view that 'indigenous' people ought to influence the dominant culture of exploitative relations to the environment, by replacing it with one of balance, and a sense of oneness with the natural world, has much in common with older ways of seeing indigenous people as closer to nature.

There were, in summary, three principal ways the account writers worked to position Maori in the landscape they encountered. Firstly, Maori featured in the accounts as knowledge products of ethnographic interest. They functioned, secondly, as objects from which to hang European ideas and attitudes, principally

⁵⁵ For example, in *Nga Uruora*, and 'Going between Goddesses'.

religious and secular views of the civilising mission. They also served as anecdotal subjects, popularising the travellers' accounts. The most common scenes in which Maori featured were village scenes. These scenes combined vivid descriptions of arrival, with hospitality, 'manners and customs', and gardening thrown in. Maori were highly visible in these landscapes. But as a group of people, they were often reduced to occasions for discourse on subjects dear to the European heart. They could appear simultaneously in the accounts as romanticised, in neutral roles, or negative portrayals. As individuals, Maori at times transcended the constraints of such representational strategies. Stories were told at the expense of Maori, but they were also occasionally told at the expense of the European traveller.⁵⁶ What the accounts offered, then, was room for multiple interpretations. What they appeared not to do, however, was 'invisibilise' Maori in the landscape. Whether elevated, degraded, respected, feared, or simply misunderstood, Maori featured in the landscape of their present. Their role in future landscapes was, however, questionable. Undeniably, these were Christian subjects, beneficiaries of the civilising mission, with a role to play in serving European interests as guides, interpreters, sober Christians and labourers. Their role as guardians of nature, is exemplary of the continuing process of assigning roles within the landscape. Other ways of representing Maori within the landscape are considered in the final chapter, which considers how landscapes were evoked on a grand scale through the use of convention and vivid prose.

⁵⁶ Polack portrayed himself, sometimes, as the butt of Maori jokes, for example where his Maori bearers left him bogged, mid swamp.

Chapter Five

'Aestheticising' the Landscape

Where previous chapters considered the role of the published accounts in naming, resource inventorying, and assigning roles to people in the landscape, this chapter focuses on the role of the published accounts in constructing vast scenes - word pictures on a grand scale. It examines the way writers used stock images of concrete elements of the landscape: forest, mountains, plains, rivers, sky, rock forms, and features of unusual note. But it also considers the way they conveyed ideas through landscape compositions that involved evidence of human activity, light, darkness, movement, stillness, colour, shapes, texture, feelings, moods, aspirations, and nostalgia. Landscapes, articulated in this way, worked to connect the unknown reader with the unseen place. The accounts are, therefore, not to be read as transcriptions of scenery, as observed. Rather, the landscape envisioned in these terms conveyed important ideas about human relations and nature, expressed in an aesthetics that had currency at the time.

In the process of matching observation with expectation, and direct experience of the landscape with ideas about landscape, two stable images evolved.¹ It is suggested here that the dominant stable images were God in nature, and the place of humans, suggested through the conventions of the 'sublime' and the 'picturesque'. This has implications for the role of the accounts as vehicles for fresh responses to new landscapes. In this context, comparison of published accounts with private/unpublished accounts will show how they were contrived. The underlying problem, however, is the relationship between the role of the accounts, in aestheticising the landscape, and the appropriation of the landscape leading up to, and following annexation. Similarly to earlier chapters, it will be suggested that appropriation sits alongside other factors that motivated and influenced the way account writers evoked scenes of natural wonder and beauty in their accounts.

¹ Relph described this matching as: 'the process of identity construction', in *Place and Placelessness*, p.59.

The principal interpretation of landscape depiction in the early European period is the strangeness of the land encountered by early visitors and new settlers, and their response to it, especially in light of the impacts associated with later European settlement.² A common feature of the accounts was the way they constructed landscapes on a grand scale, beginning with their first impressions of landfall. Cook's first recorded description of New Zealand concluded: 'the face of the Country is of a hilly surface and appears to be clothed with wood and Verdure'.³ His descriptions tended to be fairly spare, closing down impressions, rather than suggesting them. Forced to generalise, his stock descriptions incorporated the shape of the landscape, the mountains, forests, and signs of habitation:

the face of the Country appears with a variety of hills and vallies all clothed with woods and Verdure and to all appearance well inhabited especially in the Vallies leading up from the bay where we dayly saw smooks at a great distance in land, and far back in the Country are very high mountains.⁴

Nicholas's landscape views were drawn more boldly:

The coast at the North Cape presents to the eye of the passing observer, a bold and romantic appearance while the prospect to the westward lies completely open, and discloses to the view a continued expanse of fertile grounds, swelling on the sight in beautiful irregularity, and covered, even to the water's edge, with perpetual verdure.⁵

Similarly: 'Before us lay the main land of New Zealand ... exhibiting a variety of beautiful bays and harbours, and surmounted in the back-ground with a range of hills, which displayed enclosures covered with the finest verdure, and forests glittering with variegated foliage.'⁶ Other visitors followed suit in their descriptions of first landfalls and impressions from the coast.

The inland equivalents of these coastal panoramas were the views from the interior, typically marking the occasion of the visitor's toil to the summit of a mountain or, more commonly, the crest of a hill, to take stock of the landscape before him. Such panoramic views encompassed descriptions of water, land, forest,

² Marian Minson, *Encounter with Eden: New Zealand 1770-1870: Paintings & Drawings from the Rex Nan Kivell Collection*, National Library of Australia, Wellington: National Library of New Zealand, 1990.

³ Beaglehole (ed.), *Endeavour Journal*, p.168.

⁴ *ibid.*, p.173.

⁵ Nicholas, *Narrative*, vol 1, p.99.

⁶ *ibid.*, p.112.

plains, unusual natural features and the presence of people.⁷ Irrespective of location, these views suggested similar constructions, with a rearrangement of the core elements. An example from Polack typifies this approach: 'On advancing to the summit of the hill, a beautiful view presented itself, bounded by the precipitous mountain-headland of Maunganui. The base is continually washed by the sea Below us, at the foot of this elevated hill, was a fertile valley; in the bosom of which was situated a romantic native village.'⁸ Polack was a great fan of recording summit views: 'During our sojourn on the summit of the mountains, which is covered with a dense forest, several heavy clouds enveloped us in the mist. When the air became clear, the view presented to us was splendid in the extreme. The breakers off the coast and harbour of Kaipara; ... amply repaid the fatigue I had undergone to arrive on this spot.'⁹ At times the unseen view was frustratingly hidden from sight, but the 'shrouding in mystery' of the hidden landscape had its stylistic uses: 'The bluff appeared in frowning majesty, surrounded by mists that at times enveloped and hid it from our sight.'¹⁰

The use of contrasts was apparent both in coastal (external) views of the country, and views from the interior. These contrasts did nicely for further symbolic construction, for example, lightness and darkness, Christianity and heathenism, fertility and infertility. Such contrasts were evoked most powerfully by W.B. Marshall in his descriptions of views from the sea, and inland landscapes. An example of this was his description of the appearance of 'Rang hi-ua', which contrasted with the marine scenery: 'the appearance of the land forming which, is exceedingly picturesque; lofty promontories..., feathered over with woods..., made more lovely from the relief afforded by it to the general sameness of marine scenery.'¹¹ He was more particularly taken by the contrast to be offered by the juxtaposition of dark forest with signs of Christian habitation: 'from the thick darkness of paganism into the marvellous light of the gospel of Christ'.¹² Mission

⁷ Pratt characterised the preoccupation with summit views as 'monarch-of-all-I-survey'; an approach with obvious implications for colonisation, in terms of 'surveillance' and conquest, p.201.

⁸ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.65.

⁹ *ibid.*, p.220.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p.101.

¹¹ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.2.

¹² *ibid.*, p.102.

stations offered further contrast: 'the mission station and church of Keri Keri bursts in beauty on the eye of the spectator who approaches it from the land, and is the more delighted because of the suddenness with which the picture starts up to arrest his onward progress, and command his entire admiration.'¹³

While the accounts worked in other ways to evoke landscapes of prospect, they also invested certain landscapes with a grimness and fearsomeness. Richard Cruise described scenes of bleakness: 'it is impossible to imagine any thing more dreary or inhospitable than this side of the island. The coast is lined with a series of sand hills, which seem to run inland to a considerable distance; nor is there for miles a tree or spot of verdure to diversify the sameness of the scene.'¹⁴ Earle's inland landscapes contained their own measure of bleakness too: 'The whole way was mountainous. The climbing up, and then descending, was truly frightful; not a gleam of sky was to be seen, all was a mass of gigantic trees, straight and lofty, their wide spreading branches mingling overhead, and producing throughout the forest an endless darkness and unbroken gloom.'¹⁵

In addition to this stock of bleak images, Marshall marked the 'absence' of traces of human activity:

Yet is there ... a bleakness and barrenness notwithstanding, in much of the scenery of New Zealand, leaving the soul unsatisfied, even where the eye has not gone without gratification as regards myself, the absence of animate beings, the absence of human forms and human dwellings, the absence of every thing which an Englishman is accustomed to look for when treading in the known track of human footsteps, renders mere scenery a blank to me, however crowded with other objects, seeing that man, and the operations of man's hand are needed, to spread over such scenery the joyousness of life.¹⁶

This was a landscape devoid of the human touch. For Marshall the perceived absence of human activity alluded forcefully to the relationship between man and God.

¹³ *ibid.*, p.103.

¹⁴ Cruise, p.84.

¹⁵ Earle, p.72.

¹⁶ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.72.

Nature was a discourse of Christian doctrine and therefore evoked in allegorical terms: 'When, therefore, any place is left desolate by man, it becomes of a paradise, a waste; and of an Eden, no longer a well watered garden, but a wild and weary wilderness, until the one remaining spring be touched, which can alone connect emotions of pleasure with scenes seemingly deserted by man and by man's Maker.'¹⁷ In this wilderness, barrenness in nature recalled the 'fall' and the redemptive burden carried by Christians ever since:

... the Christian spectator will, while he looks round upon scenes of barrenness, remember with humbleness of mind and contrition of Spirit, that the barrenness by which he is surrounded, is the curse laid by a merciful but holy God, upon a world of his own making, on account of the sin of man, for whom that world was made, and to whom the dominion of that world has been given.¹⁸

Marshall exemplified the extreme view that every item of nature was evidence of God's handiwork:

... in every flower they see, in every blade of grass on which they tread, in every place where they may chance to sojourn, find, in all things, objects of loveliness serving them as remembrances of God! objects of delight, which are to them as so many links in one continuous chain of love, Divine love! whereby the material is connected with the immaterial, the seen with the unseen, the visible with the invisible, the temporal with the eternal, earth with heaven, and that clod of the valley, Man...¹⁹

His description of Mount Egmont concluded with the metaphor of the mountain as: 'a pyramid of God's own handy work.'²⁰

Placing 'man' in this sublime landscape was troublesome, as alluded to by Marshall. John Dennis, who prepared Daniel Tyerman's sketch of Whangaroa for publication, thoughtfully added a representative group of people to the original scene.²¹ Tyerman's bleak landscape, utterly devoid of human life, was transformed into an alpine view. The stunted trees became attractive firs. An arrival scene was played out, stage left, by the two missionaries being greeted by a sturdy group of

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p.73.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p.74

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.73.

²⁰ *ibid.*, pp.174-75.

²¹ Tyerman and Bennett, vol.2, facing p.138. (It was not uncommon for London based engravers to add people to the scene for a whole range of reasons. cf. Minson, p.15.)

Maori. This simple strategy of placing people in a sublime landscape proved more difficult in the written accounts. Their absence was inherent in the very nature of sublime experience. Polack's sublime landscapes show this association well. Signs of former human presence within the landscape recalled past or future civilisations. Abandoned Maori village sites gave pause for reflection: 'These deserted spots – villages no more – from the lone, unbroken silence around, gave me sensations undefinably unpleasant.'²² Equally disturbing were the scenes where recent missionary endeavour had fallen fallow: 'Noble tracts of land [at Wesley Dale] which had lain uncultivated for many years past were continually presented, and the then very scanty portion of the inhabitants, contrasted in a melancholy degree with the formerly numerous people of the soil.'²³

Seascapes, too, were devoid of human life and where, in the case of Cape Reinga, there was a link between the unseen natural world and an unseen mythical world, Polack constructed scenes of sublime horror: 'the foaming Pacific (a misnomer for the ocean on this coast) unceasingly dashes, with overwhelming force, against the towering black rocks that skirt the shore, imbricated into caverns by the mighty element. Naught human is discernible from this spot, save and except the innumerable wild sea-fowl, screaming, while volitary, amid this scene of solitary desolation.'²⁴ Nature recalled not just another place, but an earlier time: 'In many places piles of black-cindered lava are found, lying in wild confusion, representing, in a picture presented by nature, the sublime and awful chaos before the earliest creation. Immense detached masses, torn by the convulsion of the elements into shapeless fragments, shew the operose action of extinguished volcanoes of antecedent ages.'²⁵ Seascapes for Polack were generally constructed as scenes of coastal violence.²⁶ Similarly to Marshall, he narrated such sublime scenery within terms taken for granted by a Christian readership:

²² Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.147.

²³ *ibid.*, vol 2, p.191.

²⁴ *ibid.*, vol 1, p.244.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p.336.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp.72-73.

I was entranced in this spot of solitary horror, and will acknowledge, I most fervently prayed to the great and merciful Father, Creator of the universe and its various inhabitants, whose utmost power and skill were as nothing placed in competition with the stupendous works around me, that had never before been so nearly approached by civilised man.²⁷

A further example illustrates Polack's use of the idea of God in nature: 'The awfully solemn stillness around, save the dashing force of the high descending element, [waterfall] attunes the soul to pay an intuitive homage to the beneficent Author of all that is good and beautiful.'²⁸

But God in nature had other roles to perform. And that was to come on side for a call to colonise New Zealand and the New Zealanders:

... and every philanthropic mind must wish, that the erring New Zealander may spontaneously feel inclined to praise our eternal Father, when viewing his wondrous works – that the towering mountain heights, the overwhelming torrents of his country, shall no longer be regarded, only as obstacles to his paths; but that even the most humble of flowrets shall form an attraction to his mind, as emanating from an all merciful and bounteous Creator.²⁹

Portrayals of the terror and bleakness of nature express a mode of aesthetic appreciation described as 'sublime', an idea that Marshall and Polack would have taken for granted. Nicholas expressed the convention well: 'My mind was powerfully impressed with the scene, for never before did Nature present herself to my view, more sublime and magnificent.'³⁰ Scenes were constructed and described as sublime, because they worked to rouse strong feelings that tapped into the reservoir of beliefs and fears on the subordinate place of humans in their environment. The 'sublime' generally had both aesthetic and religious dimensions.³¹ Defined by Edmond Burke in the eighteenth century, the 'sublime' contained the element of threat missing from the 'beautiful'. It was about the horror, the vastness and power of natural forces. In a New Zealand setting, Francis Pound summarised (from Burke) the main aspects of the 'sublime' as: 'terror, obscurity, superior power, privation, vacuity, darkness,

²⁷ *ibid.*, pp.102-103.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.349.

²⁹ *ibid.*, vol 2, pp.363-64

³⁰ Nicholas, *Narrative*, vol 1, p.159.

³¹ Shepard, *English Reaction*, p.9.

solitude, silence, vastness, magnificence, infinity, succession and uniformity of parts (numbingly repeated), suddenness, terrifying loudness'. These characteristics stood in opposition to the 'beautiful',³² enabling the enjoyment of mountain scenery to emerge as a subject of artistic endeavour.³³ While Burke acts largely as the philosophical anchor in any discussion of the 'sublime', Simon Schama pointed out that even prior to Burke's *Inquiry* in 1757: 'mountain scenery had already become associated with the ruin, chaos, and catastrophe on which Romanticism thrived.'³⁴

Early European visitors commonly depicted the New Zealand landscape in terms of the 'sublime'.³⁵ Account writers also used it, to conjure up scenes of grandeur, and locate God in the New Zealand landscape. As a stylistic device it also substituted for plain, topographical description in their narratives. The role of the writer in evoking a sense of the 'sublime' was articulated by Nicholas:

The pencil of the artist would here find a matchless scope for the exercise of its powers; and a pen more capable than mine of doing justice to the sublime scenes which nature presents in this quarter, would not be ill-employed in portraying them I could dwell with pleasure on the countless beaches of this place, but the subject demands more time, and much greater abilities than I can bestow upon it.³⁶

Yet he, and other account writers, nevertheless attempted such descriptions. Used as a dominant trope in understanding early New Zealand landscapes and writing about landscapes, the 'sublime' found expression off the canvas as a form of writing that exaggerated, borrowed heavily from other descriptions, and was highly colourful. Shepard described the textual manifestations of the 'sublime' and its place in travel writing:

³² Pound, *Frames*, p.19.

³³ Shepard, *English Reaction* p.10.

³⁴ Schama, p.450.

³⁵ Pound, pp.20-21. Shepard classified the 'sublime' as one of seven categories of landscape depiction. The other were: Friendly scenes; the Gentleman's park; Redemption and Progress; the Beneficent Wilderness; and, Old Associations. *English Reaction*, pp.9-10. (It is worth noting that two thirds of the examples used to support his argument were drawn from texts written between 1840-1860.)

³⁶ Nicholas, vol 1, pp.105-106.

Exaggeration and vivid language characterize the rhetorical sublime. The scenery is said to be indescribable and then is described in a flood of contrasting adjectives usually written in retrospect or, more often, by those who get their information from other written sources. It is a substitute rather than a record of sublime experience, the foundation of travelogue writing.³⁷

As a contrivance, however, more recent focus has gone into the colonising sub-text of its aesthetic and religious roles. In this sense, the 'sublime' could be seen as converting the terror of the unknown by containing it within the terms of an understood system of aesthetics. This view is expressed by Simon Ryan, in his revision of the role of the 'sublime' as: 'a recognizable other. It is by definition ineffable, yet occupies a niche in a familiar and stable Eurocentric code. To say that it is "impossible to describe the land" is to invoke a *topos* familiar to readers of hard literature and, by doing so, to absolve oneself of any individual deficiency in descriptive powers.'³⁸ This is a view of knowing the unknown, which sees European systems of knowing as an exercise of power. In a far less complex way, Polack showed how the 'sublime' could be usefully subverted for political ends. In this sense, the 'sublime' had religious, aesthetic, and political dimensions.

The aesthetic companion to the 'sublime' was the 'picturesque', a way of depicting nature as a picture, or as a tableau composed of set pieces. Whereas the 'sublime' excited grand passion, the 'picturesque' lent tranquility. Yet the 'picturesque' was generally not intended as the 'beautiful'. Aspects of the 'picturesque' in painting were 'roughness, sudden variation, age and decay, animation ... the specific and singular, irregularity, asymmetry, small, irregular patches of light and shade ...'³⁹ Shepard claimed that in early New Zealand art, the Maori village and New Zealand forest were envisioned through the use of the 'picturesque'.⁴⁰ Yet the use of the 'picturesque' in these early accounts needs to be understood both in the wider sense of nature as picture, and the individual motifs associated with the

³⁷ Shepard, *English Reaction*, p.10.

³⁸ Ryan, *The Cartographic Eye*, p.85.

³⁹ Pound, p.25.

⁴⁰ Shepard, *English Reaction*, p.12.

‘picturesque’ (cascades, grottoes and rocks). In this way, the accounts are the repositories for a host of riverscapes, rustic landscapes, lakescapes and forestscapes.

Riverscapes, in particular, offered composite scenes of water, forest, and people. Rivers, as a moving body of water, had high visual appeal, with their mountain backdrops, forests and pendulous trees reaching down to the water’s edge. Scenic qualities aside, they provided powerful images of the possibilities for commerce and progress, together with their potential for further exploration of the interior. Nicholas’s description of the ‘Cowra Cowra’ is a textual antecedent of Charles Heaphy’s watercolour of Wakefield’s men proceeding up the Wairoa on a search for land in the interior:⁴¹

On whatever part we turned our eyes, a rich and romantic prospect invited our attention, and the river, taking a serpentine course, offered to our view at every new turning, a delightful variety of picturesque images If the accounts given by the natives can be credited, this romantic stream might be sailed up almost to its source; but this I very much doubt, though timber comes down in rafts from remote parts of the interior.⁴²

Similarly: ‘A noble river, smooth and transparent, winding for some distance its intricate course through a forest both gloomy and majestic; hills forming themselves into grand amphitheatres ... valleys sinking down in the most picturesque recesses, and green fields opening on the view at the skirts of the forest ...’⁴³

Nicholas expressed well the landscape cliché of New Zealand: ‘The surrounding country here had all that sublime scenery that we observed in other parts; the forests being noble and stately, the hills chequered and picturesque, and the

⁴¹ Charles Heaphy, ‘Cowie Forest on the Wairoa River, Kaipara (Col. Wakefield proceeding to the Bay of Islands)’, in Anthony Murray-Oliver, *Folio of Watercolours by Charles Heaphy V.C. 1821-1881*, Christchurch: Avon Fine Prints, 1981, plate 7. Geoff Park pointed out that Heaphy had been hired to record moments like these, in *Nga Urnora*, p.327. The menace and exotic beauty of the forest conveyed in his water colour led Park to speculate on Heaphy’s intentions. The preceding day, however, had been strenuous to say the least. (According to E.J. Wakefield’s account of the extreme ride up the Wairoa to the *Navarino*, pp.156-163.) In that context, Heaphy’s watercolour might contrast the tranquility of the river scene with the vicissitudes of the journey, and compare the tenacity of Col. W. Wakefield with the tidal flow, as much as it commemorates the magnificence of the kauri forest, or Col. Wakefield’s search for level ground.

⁴² Nicholas, vol 1, p.221.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p.226.

distant mountains bold and lofty.⁴⁴ He was also moved by the singularity of Maori warriors within the landscape:

As we were rowing down the river, the sun was setting behind the distant hills, and as it cast its parting rays upon them, I could discern the Indian warriors winding their devious course over the high lands; and the sight was altogether so imposing and singular, when connected with the romantic localities of the scene, and the associations they induced, that I beheld it with a pleasing admiration while it was yet in view; nor can I at this moment bring the picture to my recollection, without having my mind impressed with a similar feeling.⁴⁵

As with the ‘sublime’, the contemplation and construction of the workings of nature, in terms of the ‘picturesque’, inevitably led the writer to contemplate the affairs of man. Nicholas’ thoughts, on describing a scene retrospectively, led him to the inevitable speculation:

How anxiously did I wish, while contemplating these enchanting views, for the moment to arrive when civilization and well-regulated industry would take place of barbarism, and rational ideas supplant the gross delusions of superstition. To this happy period I looked, as I still do, with impatient solicitude, feeling that so many of my fellow-creatures, who are now immersed in darkness, would then enjoy, as enlightened beings, those profuse bounties with which nature has supplied them.⁴⁶

Marshall’s descriptions of picturesque landscapes were, by contrast, firmly grounded in his religious beliefs, whereby they worked to evoke paradise on earth. Pleasing signs of God-fear were manifest in a Sunday river scene, described in his account, where the windless day combined with quietness and tranquility, and Maori canoes lay unused on the banks: ‘The sky was almost cloudless, the air serene and calm, every part of the picture in perfect keeping, and the whole scene as though inanimate Nature both heard and obeyed the command which saith – Remember the Sabbath – day to keep it holy.’⁴⁷

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p.335.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, vol 2, p.113.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, vol 1, pp.226-227.

⁴⁷ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, pp.263-64.

The 'picturesque' favoured images of England, with groomed estates and park-like surrounds, where the hand of man was more apparent than the hand of God. Lakes were welcome subjects in this regard: 'Arriving at the lake ... we were exceedingly gratified with the scene before us This lake was formed by a fine sheet of water and the landscape bore a strong resemblance to some of those beautiful pleasure grounds in England, on which the owners bestow so much care and attention.'⁴⁸ Polack's alertness to the hand of man matched Marshall's sensitivity to the manifestation of God in nature: 'As we emerged from the forest, we entered on a small plain, that had the handsome appearance of an English park; it was beautifully picturesque; and it was with difficulty I could acknowledge to myself, the hand of man had not planned the scene.'⁴⁹ This contrasted with other scenes where the hand of man was construed less favourably:

We passed on our way, ascending other hills, on the summits of which we could only see an interminable succession of hills and mountains, rising above each other, separated by fertile valleys, and clothed with the evergreen verdure of this beautiful land. Nature, undestroyed by the arts introduced by mankind, is here beheld in all her beauty and grandeur. The erect érito, and other umbelliferous palm trees, wave their broad leaves proudly amid the varied foliage of the surrounding trees.⁵⁰

The 'picturesque' could also be used in ways that appeared contradictory. Certainly, a uniform view of a relation to nature could not be extrapolated from the handful of accounts of this period, even if the dominant mode of expression in the published accounts was nature constructed as the 'sublime' and the 'picturesque'. However consistently the modes were used, they served a purpose in these early accounts to construct a New Zealand landscape that had a refreshing familiarity, expressed in terms their readers could understand. Where there appeared most congruity in the accounts was the use of individual items in the picturesque inventory, notably rocky outcrops and islets.

⁴⁸ Nicholas, vol 1, pp.342-43.

⁴⁹ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.105.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, pp.67-68.

Rocks and grotto-like structures appeared to hold a universal fascination in the eyes of their early nineteenth century European beholders. As a legacy of eighteenth century interest with mineralogy and geological structures this is hardly surprising. Yet these rocky outcrops and strange shapes seemed to be the focus of artistic interest for other reasons. In visual media, they added foreground interest to the landscape, at the same time as they added an historic dimension to the landscape. Their fancied likeness to ruins of castles, evidence of prior civilizations, enabled European visitors to locate 'new' scenes in familiar terms.⁵¹ In this way, the less familiar elements, the 'exotic', combined with familiar features in a packaged landscape that could be readily understood and conveyed to a home market. Yet the unremitting repetition of rock descriptions reduced the impact of what had begun as a 'scientific description', in Joseph Banks' journal, to a rock fetish seventy years later. Blame Hawkesworth, perhaps, for singling out from Banks' account, the references to curious rock formations, and writing them into the official account of the *Endeavour* voyage, immortalizing the rocky features together with those of the Navigator himself.⁵² No doubt Banks' 'scientific' curiosity had been piqued. Perhaps just as importantly, both Banks and Hawkesworth, (rather than Cook), would have been well versed in the contemporary penchant for singular rocks and grotto like structures.⁵³ This fascination manifested itself in Hawkesworth's *Account* as references to Mr Banks and Dr Solander being: 'suddenly struck with the sight of a very extraordinary natural curiosity'.⁵⁴ This curiosity, (and its imitators), was to reappear in later accounts: 'it was a rock, perforated through its whole substance, so as to form a rude but stupendous arch or cavern... commanding a view of the bay and the hills on the other side, which were seen through it, an, opening at once upon the view, produced an effort far superior to any of the contrivances of art.'⁵⁵ A handsomely engraved plate conveyed this 'extraordinary' view to the *Account* readers.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Shepard, 'Conclusions', in *English Reaction*, , p.9.

⁵² Smith, *European Vision*, p.32.

⁵³ Beaglehole noted that Cook: 'does not mention the cavern pierced naturally through the rock that roused Banks and Parkinson to such heights of romantic enthusiasm - not to say exaggeration ... but he drew it (perhaps copying Parkinson) and his 'View of the great Natural Arch in Tolaga Bay (Add.MS 7085.22) was engraved for Hawkesworth, Pl.17', *Endeavour Journal*, p.187n.

⁵⁴ Hawkesworth, vol 2, pp.317-318.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, pp.317-318. Barbara Maria Stafford noted that the 'natural arch' was the 'most frequently described and portrayed' in the illustrated travel accounts of the late eighteenth to mid nineteenth centuries, in *Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature and the Illustrated Travel Account, 1760-1840*.

⁵⁶ cf. 53n above.

Cruise, too, took particular note of rocky structures: 'Wangarooa is a singular and beautifully romantic place. Near the northern head is a large perforated rock, presenting the appearance of a deep gothic archway; the sea rolls through it, and the canoes find it a safe passage in moderate weather.'⁵⁷ Rocks reappeared in a scene that combined the picturesque with elements of the sublime:

The interior is lined with lofty hills, richly wooded; and close to the western shore is a series of huge rocks, rising in the most fantastic shapes to an immense height, from the tops of which tumble many cascades that lose themselves among the numerable trees and shrubs with which the bases of those stupendous piles are profusely covered.⁵⁸

Nicholas drew attention to the function of rocks, and their role as a cultural point of reference:

The point of land, or cape, that forms Bream Head, when viewed from the inside of the bay, is beautifully picturesque; it rises to some height with several sharp-pointed rocks upon its summit, which are surrounded by shrubs and small trees, appearing to the transient eye of the observer like the venerable ruins of some mouldering abbey or neglected castle.⁵⁹

Thomas Shepherd also made special note of rocky structures: 'Near the waters edge are rocks so placed by Nature, as if they had been done by men of superior taste with many curious creeping plants growing carelessly between them.'⁶⁰ Marshall used rock formations to establish links with antiquity:

... high conical rocks ... of primitive formation, and partially clad in a mantle of luxuriant vegetation; wild flowers in beautiful variety, notwithstanding their exposure to wind and sea, growing and blossoming on the bleak bosoms of these rocks, and recalling to mind, in connection with the past history and present condition of the inhabitants of this country the exquisite poetry of Gray⁶¹

Rocks played a role in calling to mind past civilisations: 'Near the north head [of Whangaroa], a large perforation in the rock presents the appearance of a Gothic

⁵⁷ Cruise, p.78.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p.79.

⁵⁹ Nicholas, vol 1, p.420.

⁶⁰ Thomas Shepherd, *Journal*, p.1.

⁶¹ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.155.

entrance On the western side of the bay high towering rocks, having the appearance of antiquarian ruins, cause a diversion in the scenery'.⁶² Polack again:

From a certain point, it presents an appearance not unlike the ancient remains of a cloistered abbey; again, by shutting many of its perforations, and changing the former position, it recalls to review the dilapidated windows of gothic oriel architecture; it forms an addenda to the surrounding scenery of no common interest.⁶³

Polack's rocky structures, however, also served as elements of the 'picturesque' battered by sublime tempests:

The appearance on either side the arch was romantic in the extreme: shrubs and small trees of every description peculiar to these parts, hung in wild luxuriance from crevices among the rocks; but the mind will scarcely conceive the awful tempests, whose repeated ravages could have battered so large an opening in these cliffs.⁶⁴

Unlike other account writers, Polack took a picturesque motif, with which he would have been well familiar, and used it to evoke a sense of the 'sublime', through its relationship to the Great Architect: 'This series of magnificent perforations are on so uncommon a scale of magnitude and grandeur as really to defy description; they strike the beholder with awe and admiration and truly induces him to feel, "God works in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform."' ⁶⁵ His textual construction, however, is to be understood as an appeal to the tastes of his readership, rather than a manifestation of a deep seated religious belief as, for example, in Marshall.

This idea of the 'picturesque' had not emerged in cultural isolation. From the early eighteenth century it had been stimulated by exposure to different ideas of beauty.⁶⁶ Throughout the nineteenth century the idea of the exotic, with its singularity ('otherness'), was brought before the eyes of the home market, as travel accounts and scientific treatises replaced the tales of the bizarre, but untrue, with the strange, but true. The 'picturesque', as a way of expressing 'otherness', drew its inspiration from European exploration.

⁶² Polack, *New Zealand*, vol 1, p.248.

⁶³ *ibid.*, vol 2, pp.136-37.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, pp.132-33.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p.138.

⁶⁶ Smith, *European Vision*, p.201.

This is illustrated best through the accounts of Alexander Humboldt's travels. In Bernard Smith's view, Humboldt managed to: 'capture the imagination of his readers and bring home to them a sense of wonder and excitement which he had himself felt in the presence of nature in her most exotic and majestic forms.'⁶⁷ He would elevate painted nature from a form of scientific documentation to: 'an expressive form of landscape art, essential, in his view, to the nourishment of the European imagination.'⁶⁸ There were other popular ways of understanding the 'picturesque'. For many, this implied seeing nature as a picture. Smith viewed the 'picturesque' as: 'the agent, whereby topography, art as information, could be elevated to the level of taste.'⁶⁹ However the 'picturesque' may be defined, the ideas encompassed within it were part of the intellectual framework of these account writers, who strove to convey something of their feelings in terms they, and their readers, recognized and understood.

How innocent was this kind of depiction of nature as a picture? Bernard Smith suggested that the development of the 'picturesque', as an aesthetic, was not merely coincidental with the enclosure of common land: 'the picturesque provided an aesthetic whereby the English countryside could be appropriated imaginatively by the new class of landowning squires'.⁷⁰ This understanding of the function of the 'picturesque' is reflected by others. Paul Carter claimed that: 'picturesque meanings multiplied around settlement and the promise of settlement. So, manipulated in various ways, the picturesque taught the country to smile For the essence of the picturesque was that it drew the traveller on: it *led him* to settle.'⁷¹ Similarly, Simon Ryan described the 'picturesque' as: 'a mode of appreciation that is inherently appropriative.'⁷² William Gilpin's expression of the 'picturesque' constructed nature, in Ryan's view, as: 'a source of materials for scientific as well as aesthetic

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p.203.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p.205.

⁶⁹ Smith, 'Art as Information', in *Imagining the South Pacific in the Wake of the Cook Voyages*, Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1992, p.64.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*

⁷¹ Carter, *Botany Bay*, pp.253-54.

⁷² Ryan, p.59.

appreciation. The language of commercial gain is alloyed with that of scientific gain.⁷³ He thus divined a political use of the 'picturesque' in colonial discourse:

It is not surprising that aesthetic judgment is related to the land's capacity to support life, but it would be ingenuous to read 'richness' as simply indicative of bountiful flora and fauna, and not of a future wealth. *[new paragraph]* The association of the picturesque with possible wealth producing areas is a colonial adaptation of the term...⁷⁴

Furthermore, in the case of the Australian explorers' journals: 'one point of commonality, the seeming design of the natural scenery, is the departure point for a rhetoric of self-justification. As with all picturesque descriptions, nature exists primarily to please the viewer.'⁷⁵ This had implications for future colonisation. Closer to home, Geoff Park suggested that the envisioning of a New Zealand landscape in picturesque terms (making nature into scenery) was not only appropriative, but also offered some insight into past and present Pakeha relationships to the land.⁷⁶

Nature appreciation, in terms of aesthetic conventions, did not differ (theoretically), in outcome, from the more appropriative practice of describing a landscape in terms of its perceived commodity value. However, in the accounts of early European visitors to New Zealand, it is possible to draw a distinction between the way they constructed the landscape in picturesque terms, (with their riverscapes, forestscapes and general landscapes), and the kinds of landscape constructions, which are the rhetorical equivalents of resource inventories, as discussed in chapter three. The differences between landscape constructed as a resource inventory, and landscape evoked by means of an aesthetic convention, are worth making, as they spring from different traditions, and manifest themselves in different ways in the accounts. Whereas the former is a legacy of eighteenth century practices of scientific observation, with its emphasis on locating, classifying and ultimately possessing, the latter draws on ideas and myths buried in the collective sub-consciousness of an evolving European culture, and expressed through commonly understood forms.

⁷³ *ibid.* Gilpin, quoted in Ryan: '... and if the transient glance of a good composition happen to unite with [forms and colours], we should give any price to fix, and appropriate the scene!'

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, p.71.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p.73.

⁷⁶ Park, 'Edward Gibbon Wakefield's Dream, Thomas Shepherd's Eye and New Zealand's Spatial Construction', in *Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Colonial Dream*, pp.135-142.

This distinction also shows that the accounts were not entirely cohesive. Whereas one construction measured, assessed, and valued the landscape for utilitarian purposes, the other strove to convey something more. Nor were the account writers entirely consistent in the way they used such conventions. These inconsistencies are apparent, where the account writers attempted to fulfill a number of agendas, of which colonising aspirations were just one.

Many of the landscapes depicted in the accounts combined elements of what is considered the 'sublime' with the 'picturesque'. These more gentle landscapes were compilations of sublime backgrounds of ocean, forests, and mountains, with picturesque elements in the foreground - waterfalls, rivers, rocks, and Maori, altogether indescribably beautiful. An example of this is Nicholas' description of Whangaroa harbour:

On the left hand also, the prospect was continued by a range of mountains...where the view was terminated ... itself amidst scenes, of which it were vain for me to attempt a portraiture. How should I venture to describe the countless interesting combinations which were here grouped together, or interspersed at irregular distances, to give a more powerful effect to their varied beauties! The swelling rocks which seemed to frown on the convulsions of the elements; the scattered islands; the broad expanse of ocean; the sublime diversities of the country itself; the singular prospect of an Indian village, and of the natives paddling to the ship in their canoes; formed altogether such an extraordinary assemblage of views, as it would be impossible for the most vivid imagination to conceive, or the most animated pencil to depict.⁷⁷

Similar examples are a feature of many published accounts, pointing to the contrived nature of these landscapes of wonder.

Other written accounts from this period, in the form of private diaries, were more often devoid of landscapes constructed in an aesthetic or religious sense. The juxtaposition of Nicholas's description of the Whangaroa harbour with that of William Jowett's, reveals other preoccupations at work. For Jowett, passenger on the *Dromedary*, a rare journal entry on the scenic wonders of the Whangaroa harbour stands in stark contrast to the overblown prose of Nicholas. Unversed in the style

⁷⁷ Nicholas, vol 1, pp.113-14.

and form of landscape description, Jowett nevertheless conveyed powerfully the essence of his ideal landscape in a single unbroken sentence: ‘... it is a Butiful Harbour it is Surrounded on every Side with High hills Lett the Wind Blow Ever So hard it Cant Touch us ...’⁷⁸ Henry Gunton, on board the *Alligator* with Marshall, wrote a diary that appeared unintended for publication. His daily remarks were, by contrast to Marshall’s account, noticeably free of God in nature. His single nod to scenic beauty came as an after thought to the end of what had been a good day, expressed in secular terms: ‘At anchor; went on shore, fired ten rounds of ball cartridge per man for practice, afterwards ten of us dined on shore, shot cormorants and other curious birds, set fire to the bush, smoked cigars and had a very pleasant evening – saw no natives. The scenery around this harbour perfectly beautiful.’⁷⁹ Anne Wilson, immersed in the vicissitudes of her life as the wife of an itinerant missionary, wrote more of her inner and material struggles.⁸⁰ Missionary William Hall’s diary is also remarkable for the absence of landscape appreciation.⁸¹ Again this is partly to be explained by understanding landscape construction as an aesthetic form of expression, a luxury denied Hall in the face of his daily grind. However, the unpublished accounts were not entirely free of such constructions. The journal of Thomas Shepherd, from his visit in 1826, constructed landscapes of prospect, using the conventions of the ‘sublime’ and ‘picturesque’ to convey a New Zealand landscape that would have done justice to E.G. Wakefield.⁸²

A further example of portraying landscape in these terms is found in Helen Hogan’s comparison between Renata Kawepo Tama Ki Hikurangi’s retrospective account of an overland journey in the early 1840s, and the journal written by William Cotton in the same party.⁸³ Cotton had voiced slight irritation that the Maori expedition members failed to notice the beauties of the natural world around them:

⁷⁸ Jowett, p.59.

⁷⁹ (Lieut.) Henry Gunton, fl. 1834, *Diary of Expedition to New Zealand, 1834*, (typed transcript) WTU, Wellington: MS-Papers-0960, p.4.

⁸⁰ Anne Wilson’s journal, in Max G. Armstrong.

⁸¹ William Hall, *Diary*.

⁸² E.G.Wakefield and John Ward, *The British Colonization*. (This is hardly suprising, given their intentions. Park, on the other hand, compared Shepherd’s landscape vision with Wakefield’s and pondered the consequences for the New Zealand landscape, had it been Shepherd’s, rather than Wakefield’s dream, that impelled European settlement. Park, *Nga Uruora*, pp.88, 326.)

⁸³ Helen M. Hogan, *Renata’s Journey. Ko te Haerenga o Renata*, Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 1994.

‘When we came to the first view of Taupo the sun was just setting – such purples! As I said to the Bishop this new view of Taupo quite repaid us for our forced retreat. Not so the Maories. They had no eye for the beauties of nature.’⁸⁴ Renata’s account is as devoid of expressions of the beauty and wonder of the landscape, as the accounts of Europeans, who were unfamiliar with this mode of expression. Hogan offered the explanation that Renata and his fellow Maori bearers lacked the time to appreciate the beauties of the scene around them, due to the onerous nature of their journey and tasks associated with looking after the European members of their party. She offered the view that Renata’s story of the relationship between Mounts Tongariro, Pihanga and Taranaki was evidence of a different kind of relationship to nature.⁸⁵ While there is no doubt that Renata and companions had other preoccupations, Cotton and his European companions were engaged in a kind of landscape appreciation, that was a feature of a particular cultural and class background.⁸⁶

The process of journal writing produced disjunctures, which the landscape painter did not have to contend with. Account writers faced the difficulty of moving from their highly contrived constructions of sublime or picturesque landscapes back to their narrative of the journey itself. The use of the ‘sublime’, as witness to God in nature, proved particularly difficult, without a suitable bridge passage back to the journal narrative. Marshall, who punctuated his entire account with the presence of God, produced some unnerving results, each time he plunged from the giddy heights of evangelical fervour into narrative detail of the domestic and mundane. An example of this is where he moved from quoting the religious testimony of New Zealanders to return to his journey narrative: ‘that is sin, but the love of God raises me up again. [*next paragraph*] Having returned from Koropi to Waimate, we found the tea-table spread, and a mixed party of Europeans and natives seated thereat.’⁸⁷ This kind of

⁸⁴ Quoted in Hogan, p.92.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, pp.92-93.

⁸⁶ Similar comparisons can be made between the landscapes constructed by Cruise, McCrae and Jowett; Marshall and Gunton; Marsden and Nicholas; Marjoribanks and Hemery.

⁸⁷ Marshall, *A Personal Narrative*, p.96. See also: ‘God hath blessed them, yea and they shall be blessed! [*next paragraph*] It was nearly four, P.M, when we set off on our return to the *Alligator* ...’, p.107 ‘... may glorify our Father, who is in heaven. Amen and Amen. [*next paragraph*] At Kai-Monga, one of the chief’s wives was seen seated apart and industriously preparing the staple commodity. p.138.

disjuncture serves as a textual reminder that he wrote his rhapsodic passages away from the scene of the action, interspersing them into the travel narrative as he saw fit.

Of the published accounts of this period, Augustus Earle managed the smoothest transitions between the demands of formal landscape construction and narrative detail. At the same time, he transcended the narrow limits of these word pictures to convey something more than a paean of praise of the splendours of nature. His landscapes were constructed less as set pieces, than as main players. The landscape itself provoked comment. The scenes described in his narrative incorporated a static natural backdrop with active European agents and Maori participants in the foreground. Typically his landscapes conveyed a troubling juxtaposition of elements, where humans were not the equals of the natural scene they inhabited. This is best encapsulated by a scene he portrayed, where day broke:

with more than usual brightness; the dewy mists of night were just rising from the waters, and the huge and abrupt forms of the mountains were beginning to develop themselves; flights of wild ducks and stray birds skimmed rapidly by us. The thoughts that crowded my mind were strange and varied, while contemplating scenes of such tranquil beauty as were now presented, glowing with the tints of the rising sun. I contrasted these with the difficulties and dangers I might have to encounter from hordes of ferocious savages, who, now flushed with conquest, were plotting murder and destruction against each other: even a glance at my companions banished all peaceful illusions. While the wife, son, and slaves were using the paddles with the greatest exertions, Rivers was carefully examining his weapons. The beauty of the morning and the romantic scenery was unnoticed ... and seeing so many wild ducks fly past, he drew the bullet ... and, with some of my stock of small shot, fired occasionally amongst them.⁸⁸

Earle's landscapes combined both scenic splendours with opportunity to reflect on the effect of the restless European intruder, the nature of humanity, in general, and the sensitivity of the artist amongst his cruder companions, in particular. The landscape writer was part of the landscape, yet apart from it.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Earle, p.170.

⁸⁹ Francis Pound focused mainly on Earle, as exemplar of the practice of placing spectator figures in some New Zealand landscapes, in 'Spectator Figures', *Art in New Zealand*, 23, 1982, pp.40-45. This view of Earle, as apart from the scene surveyed, was recently challenged by Leonard Bell, who argued that Earle more frequently placed himself within the landscape amongst his subjects, and so: 'cast the event depicted as autobiographical.' Leonard Bell, 'Augustus Earle's *The Meeting of the Artist...*', in *Voyages and Beaches: Pacific Encounters, 1769-1840*, Alex Calder, Jonathan Lamb, Bridget Orr (eds), Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999, pp.248-249.

The account writers shared a common language of construction. Nature was 'language'd' as a human body. Examples are everywhere to be found of landscape features described in terms of the head, the foot, the neck; where volcanoes vomit forth smoke, rocks and headlands frown, swell, and have bosoms; where mountains are pregnant, forests are skirted and hills are clad in fertile green. Nature was undeniably gendered. It was feminine, and this invites further consideration both of ancient fascinations and more recent castings of gender relations. This mode of describing the landscape has been revisited and the political implications of gendered landscapes laid bare.⁹⁰ The landscape is envisioned as feminine so that male colonisers can take possession. This view is articulated clearly by Simon Ryan: 'The land (woman) is blank and empty until controlled and inscribed by manly European culture.'⁹¹ He maintained: 'the construction of the land as a woman, and specifically as a woman's body, allows the operation of the ensemble of discourses of penetration, unveiling, and so on.'⁹² Theoretically plausible, this is nevertheless to be understood as a position that says less about the nature of gendered power relations in European culture, than it serves as a metaphor of possession and dispossession of the Australian landscape by latecomers. It is a useful way of envisaging early European responses to the New Zealand landscape, only in so far as simplistic stereotypes of male and female behaviours are ascribed to. While the 'language'd' of nature, as a human body, with all its implications, is outside the scope of this study, the frequency of this kind of expression (let alone some absurd juxtapositioning) is worth noting in passing, if only in the context that the writers are neither consistent, coherent or even systematic in this respect, as in others.

⁹⁰ For example Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*, 2nd ed., New York: Harper SF, 1990.

⁹¹ Ryan, p.198.

⁹² *ibid.*, p.204.

What can be made of the role of these texts in constructing these landscapes of wonder and delight? It is clear that there is a good deal of mediation occurring between the moment of seeing, the state of wonder that supposedly then existed, the recording of that moment in a diary, the later writing of the moment into an account and the subsequent polishing of the account for publication. Furthermore, as Hogan pointed out, and as the missionary journals and other diaries make clear, there were many factors that prevented the moment from occurring in the first place - the strenuous nature of land travel, the daily grind, privations and dangers, and the cultural grooming necessary to comprehend landscape in these terms, let alone commit it to paper.

Simon Ryan, working backwards from the moment of seeing in the first instance, argued that mediation began long before the visitors ever set foot in a new country: 'But far from being a fresh and innocent transcription of the natural world, the discursive construction in the journals of what is seen by the explorers is generated by already existing cultural formations.'⁹³ In early European exploration of Australia, he contended that the dominant modes of seeing and comprehending the landscape were the 'picturesque and the 'panoramic'.⁹⁴ These techniques, in Ryan's view: 'reveal the nexus between power and surveillance within the journal and, once the existence of this nexus is realised, it is possible to see that "innocent" aesthetic responses are actually expressions of imperial greed.'⁹⁵ The explorers were bound to appropriate the space for the colonising power through their discursive practices:

... when explorers describe the landscape, aesthetic and cartographic practices are not separate – they are intertwined. The cartographic and aesthetic gazes both attempt to construct landscape as a text which may be read. If the landscape fails to provide variegated signs which may be interpreted, then the land is considered a 'blank' – this, in essence, is what a description of the land as a sea accomplishes.⁹⁶

⁹³ *ibid.*, p.54.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

⁹⁵ *ibid.*

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p.120.

In New Zealand however, this trope is absent. Land travel (even when the land was not covered with, at times, impenetrable ‘noble’ forests) was made more difficult by inconvenient swamps and dangerous rivers. This differed from Australia largely because the nature of the Australian landscape allowed more scope for finding convenient elevations, from which to survey the flat expanses beyond. Account writers in New Zealand, by contrast, had to contend with forests, swamps, mountains, rivers, coasts and the occasional plain. As an interpretative strategy for present day readers, panoramic surveillance worked to better effect in the Australian landscape.

The hand of God, and the presence/absence of man, were stable images in the conscious construction of landscapes on a grand scale. On their own they do not shed much light on how these early visitors really related to their physical surroundings. The role of these landscape constructions is, perhaps, better understood by reference to what Paul Atkinson refers to as ‘hypotyposis’, being: ‘the use of a highly graphic passage of descriptive writing, which portrays a scene or action in a vivid and arresting manner. It is used to conjure up the setting and its actors, and to “place” the implied reader as a first-hand witness.’⁹⁷ What that meant to their readers is part of the jigsaw puzzle of these early constructions. Like the engravings that accompanied the accounts, the scenes minutely described in the accounts were often derived from earlier works and other influences. In turn, they themselves were reproduced in subsequent reports and re-circulated over years to come, in the process contributing to a kind of scenic iconography which, despite its clichés, continues to circulate and reinvent itself in other media, for other purposes, and other interpretations.

⁹⁷ Paul Atkinson, *The Ethnographic Imagination: Textual Constructs of Reality*, London and New York: Routledge, 1990, p.71.

Conclusion

The published accounts, prior to 1840, offer an opportunity to explore landscape perceptions of another time and place. They function, in part, as a travel guide, drawing on stock images to construct New Zealand landscapes. The sense of borrowing in shape, form, and even journey is inescapable. From this pool of stories, impressions, anecdotes and facts others were encouraged to write about their own unique journeys and 'discoveries'. In this way, the accounts both camouflaged the very real differences, at the same time as they constructed landscapes that were reassuringly familiar.¹ The illusion continues when these accounts are read, uncritically, as travel guides to landscapes of the past. In this way, they continue to serve as historical travel guides, masking the 'real' landscapes and providing an illusion of stability, simplicity, and coherency for present day interpretation and story telling. The accounts are neither a reliable guide, much less a window into the past, nor a reflection of an actual landscape. Imagining these past landscapes through the accounts is like looking through a kaleidoscopic lens - adjust the lens and the view changes.

For present day interpretation, hindsight forces the accounts to be read with two dominant facts in mind - Maori dispossession, and the 'fatal' impact of colonisation on the natural environment. The roll call of plant, insect, bird and fish species that have not survived two hundred years of European presence in New Zealand is shaming. The knowledge, beliefs, and values of early European visitors to New Zealand, manifest in the accounts of their visits, form part of the story of how people crossed oceans, and made a landscape in the image of their homeland. In so doing they brought their own plants, birds, and animals and the effects on the landscape they found were disastrous. This construction of the founding of

¹ To paraphrase Barthes, who maintained that the travel guide acts as 'an agent of blindness', tending to select landscape features worthy of representation and pointing later comers in that direction. In: "masking" the "real" spectacle of human life and history and simultaneously provid[ed] an illusion of cultural stability and continuity.' Quoted in J.S. & N. Duncan, 'Ideology and Bliss. Roland Barthes and the secret histories of landscape', in T.J. Barnes and J.S. Duncan, *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text and Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*, London & New York: Routledge, 1992, pp.20-21.

European history in New Zealand points to the process of appropriation at work, both from the people who got there first, and in a broader sense, from other life forms. The wealth of documents, pictorial images and artefacts from this early period offer substantial raw material to support this interpretation. This study tests this construction in four principal areas.

Chapter two focussed on naming and associating as a first strategy to know a new place. Assigning a name and fixing it on a chart enabled a return journey. The name carried with it complex layers of association that transferred onto the site so named. In this respect, the Thames, and its hinterland, was a particular focus of activity, not only because it was frequently visited. Yet, with the exception of Cook's *Endeavour* journal, the accounts had little to offer on the practice of naming. European place names served as anchor points in their narratives. These European names, nevertheless, sat comfortably alongside Maori place names, however varied the phonetic spelling. Concrete evidence of former European occupation assumed greater significance in the accounts, than rhetorical artefacts, in fashioning a history of place. In this way, histories were in the making as evidence of Captain Cook and associations with the legendary Thames were recycled through the accounts. These recycled stories were given new locations to provide a narrative link with old landscapes and older histories. Unlike Australia, where the 'upside down-ness' idea seemed to account for the strangeness of animal and plant life encountered, New Zealand landscapes were served up as familiar to Europeans.

The role of the accounts, as repositories of information on the range of natural and mineral products of the country, was examined in chapter three. Through the practice of enumerating and describing goods on an inventory, most authors emphasised plenitude and accessibility. Spars, and flax promised much for future trade. But foodstuffs, particularly an abundance of fish and rich soil promising greater cultivation and food supply, also figured prominently. By contrast, there were deficiencies in the inventory, especially animals and vegetables. By and large, the account descriptions of the goods and gaps tended to follow each other closely. Underlying the extensive inventorying was a sense of preparing for European

settlement in many, but not all, of the accounts. In that respect, evidence of the soil's productivity and Maori agricultural practices were taken as positive indicators, by some, but not all, of these early visitors.

Maori played key roles throughout this period as guides, protectors, suppliers of food, information and trading partners to their European visitors. Chapter four explored their function as objects of interest in a landscape, whereby the landscape was presented in familiar terms, yet marked with exotic elements. This came about through the describing and retelling of Maori customs and rituals. While the 'noble savage' idea flavoured some of the descriptions, it was not adhered to in any coherent way that might suggest this as a uniform view of Maori, much less Maori as part of the New Zealand landscape. More consistent was the Christian view of Maori as souls on a celestial inventory. Especially after Savage, Maori were described in ways that emphasised their potential for civilisation. Differences could be understood as familiar forms of the exotic, articulated by means of the convention of the 'picturesque'. Yet individually, the account writers hinted at other relationships, which bore more resemblance to their daily encounters with Maori, than might have been evident in the accounts they wrote, once their ship left shore, and headed back to Australia or Britain.

The framing of landscape descriptions in a European aesthetic was the subject of chapter five. The New Zealand landscapes of the accounts echoed descriptions of scenery in Australia and America. The language was similar, as were the conventions. The landscapes, described in the published accounts, were familiar not just because they described similar scenery and borrowed from earlier accounts. The landscape authors resorted to well understood conventions to paint word pictures, to bring the reader closer to the scene, and at the same time locate themselves aesthetically within the 'new' country. The two main conventions used in these accounts were the 'sublime' and the 'picturesque'. One evoked the idea of God in nature, with nature as a frightening and awesome manifestation of God's power. The other tended to focus on the idea of nature as a picture, with touches of the exotic (signs of Maori). Yet this was a feature that required cultural grooming. Other

journal writers certainly noticed the scenery and remarked upon it, but in quite different and more original ways than those, who consciously prepared their accounts for publication.

The accounts defy an easy fit into a single model, when read within the broader context of ideas about nature and the civilising mission, and taking account of the limitations of their mode of expression (as in art, so too in writing). Their constructions involved landscapes of prospect, landscapes that stood in need of improvement, and landscapes that could satisfy the desire for panorama on a grand scale - lakes, waterfalls and everlasting forests. Underpinning these constructions was a mottled collection of philosophies about the nature of 'nature', and the place of humans in the scheme of things. Maori were placed within the landscape, often quite centrally, but mostly to fit European ideas. Nature was constructed as feminine, but only in a half-hearted way. It was as if the conventional expressions did for constructing prose, but the analogy ended there. Nature was also evidence of God's handiwork. It was both beyond the hand of man, and yet could be improved by the hand of man. Perceived as both beautiful and wild in its 'untouched' state, the perception belied hundreds of years of use and occupation by Maori. As vehicles for a reconstruction of intellectual history of the time, the accounts are scrappy. Fragments of ideas about nature, loose connections with the later spoilers, greedy and sincere efforts to improve the food supply for Maori and European alike, sit side by side. Misunderstandings and naive expressions are juxtaposed with rare comments of acute perception. This is partly explained by form.

The accounts used a hodge-podge of styles, combining the features of a travel narrative with self-conscious efforts at scientific description, borrowing shape, scope and content from other genre and earlier texts. Entertainment jostled with education. Their authors attempted to impart useful information and locate the landscape in terms familiar to their readers. This entailed describing 'produce', climate, prospects, the inhabitants, and placing their readers in a series of landscapes composed of mountains, forests, lakes and the occasional swamp. They individually contributed little that was new, and collectively managed to serve up a familiar compilation of old

preoccupations applied to new material. But from time to time, something of other motivations appeared in the journals and accounts, revealing something of the pleasure of these early adventurers in testing their well worn ideas against what they saw and experienced.

No single, stable image emerges that might satisfactorily explain the careless introductions of foreign plants animals and other species with the calamitous effects on indigenous flora and fauna. Elements of 'appropriation' and 'exchange' are present in the accounts, sufficient to fulfil whatever agenda applies to present-day readers. It is suggested that this relativist position is not necessarily in conflict with a harder post-colonial understanding of the role of these texts as appropriative. Rather it is to suggest that the boundaries between what can be characterised as 'appropriative', and what may not, are blurred at best, and determined as much by the dictates of present day agendas as those of past agents. Reading with hindsight entails risk that past agents become saddled with foresight. The accounts offer little to support a one dimensional view. By representing the landscapes of the accounts as constructions, it is not sought to down-play their importance or validity. Their fascinations and preoccupations, projections of cultural mores and desires onto real landscapes can be represented as a political act, given the exercise of power it came to represent. But they also show, in embryonic form, cultural practices that remain alive and well - especially the process of constructing ideal landscapes for ideal inhabitants. In this way, these early landscapes continue to be made to fit present day obsessions.

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