

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

THE SOCIAL THESIS AND PROSE FICTION

OF RODERICK FINLAYSON

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Master
of Arts in English at Massey University.

JOHN MUIRHEAD

1971

- To My Parents -

CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	iii.
Chapter 1 Introduction: The Unlicensed Conscience of Society	1.
Chapter 2 The Social Outlook: The Copernican Universe, chemico-tractor monoculture, and the New Eden	8.
Chapter 3 Primitives: There's a great day coming for Abyssinia	41.
Chapter 4 Pioneers and Pilgrims: The Peasant Alternative	80.
Chapter 5 Conclusion: Some common problem of the imagination	119.
Checklist. Published writings of Roderick Finlayson	126.
Appendix I New Writings	134.
Appendix II Financial	137.
Bibliography	141.

PREFACE

This essay is a study of the inter-relationship of the social thesis and prose fiction of Roderick Finlayson. It will examine the themes which persist in his polemical articles, short stories and novels, the effect of his ethical stance on the aesthetics of his craft, and the degree to which that stance represents, in Allen Curnow's words, "some common problem of the imagination" in New Zealand literature and thought.

Because much of the material used in this essay is rather inaccessible, I have felt it necessary to treat the articles and fiction in some detail, quoting extensively in the endeavour to convey the full range of Finlayson's thought and craft. Since they are of peripheral, rather than central importance to the arguments proposed in this account of Finlayson's work, I have not included discussion of his numerous writings for the School Publications Branch of the Department of Education.

I should like to thank the following people for their assistance during the preparation of this thesis:

—Dr. W.S. Broughton, who has been generous with his time, patience, and learning in the initiation and supervision of this study.

—Professor R.G. Frean and other members of the English Department of Massey University for their interest and concern.

—Miss E.M. Green, Mrs. H.D. Gwynn, and Miss L. Marsden of the Massey University Library; the reference librarians of the Palmerston North Public Library; and staff of the Alexander Turnbull, General Assembly, and National Libraries, Wellington, for their co-operation.

—Mr. R.D. Finlayson of Weymouth, Manurewa, for his patient and kind response to my letters and queries, and the use of his records, manuscripts, and cuttings; and Mrs. Finlayson for the hospitality offered during my visit to Weymouth.

—Mrs. Margaret Brogden, who typed this manuscript, and for whose help and sympathy I am very grateful.