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Anthropological Theory 2005; 5; 267
DOI: 10.1177/1463499605055960

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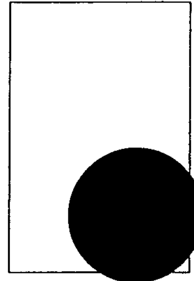
Vol 5(3): 267–284
10.1177/1463499605055960



Rethinking biculturalism

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Abstract
Biculturalism is New Zealand's experience of the shift from class to identity politics and multiculturalism that has characterized a number of liberal democracies since the 1970s. Originally a progressive project committed to incorporating Maori culture into the nation's symbolic identity, biculturalism became the vehicle for separatist ethnic politics and a fundamentalist 'blood and soil' ideology under the control of an emergent neotribal elite. This article traces the shifts in biculturalism and its damaging effects on the conditions required for democracy. It argues that national identity within a universalist concept of humanity, rather than a localized and essentialized ethnic identity, is more likely to ensure the maintenance of the nation-state within the global community.

Key Words
biculturalism • democracy • identity politics • indigenous • Maori • neotraditionalism • New Zealand

INTRODUCTION

For some time now my academic work[1] has been about biculturalism and its relationship to democracy. In particular, I, along with many New Zealanders, have wrestled with the dilemma of how to recognize and value this nation's range of cultural groups, including Maori, within the wider framework of a liberal democratic nation. It is a dilemma that goes deeply into the persistent and irreconcilable tensions between deep ethnic[2] or racial identification on the one hand and identification with the modernist values of the liberal-democratic nation on the other.

In the 1970s and 1980s I thought that biculturalism and liberal-democracy served the same purposes of political justice and social inclusion. The intentions of the early biculturalists to bring Maori in from the margins of society fitted these democratic ideals. It was intended that Maori culture be recognized as a valued part of New Zealand society and that Maori be full participants in an inclusive national culture. In the 1990s, however, I changed my opinion about the direction taken by biculturalism. My analysis of events and processes in the 1980s and 1990s showed that sufficient evidence existed for a rethinking of the path taken by biculturalism (Rata, 2000).

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Despite the democratic ideals of the early Maori and Pakeha (settler-descendant) biculturalists, the outcomes of three decades of biculturalism are: greater ethnic division; ongoing socio-economic disadvantage for poor Maori; the emergence of a powerful Maori elite who control the interpretation of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi (treaty signed between Britain and the majority of Maori tribes); and a pervasive ideology of neotraditionalism[3] or the belief in the revival of traditional social relations. This last outcome is the least visible but potentially most threatening of biculturalism's unintended outcomes for New Zealand's democratic society.

In this article I 'rethink' biculturalism by examining three major shifts in its direction during the 1980s and 1990s. The first significant shift was the replacement of the idea of cultural recognition and inclusion by a focus on ethnic identity. This enabled ethnic differences to be emphasized and cultural commonalities rejected. The second shift was to an interpretation of ethnic identity in political terms. A government–tribal political partnership based upon the tribes' interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi[4] replaced the earlier inclusive intention. The final shift away from biculturalism as a movement for cultural recognition and inclusion was the replacement of the original democratic philosophical frame of reference by a neotraditionalist ideology. By this third stage biculturalism had become fundamentally different from its original conception. However, the institutions, policies and practices established as a result of inclusive biculturalism, such as the Waitangi Tribunal,[5] legislative acts, and treaty principle adherence in education, have ensured that an anti-democratic version of biculturalism has its place in the nation's institutions.

THE BACKGROUND TO BICULTURALISM

Understanding biculturalism requires an understanding of the reasons for its emergence in the global conditions of the early 1970s. Fundamental changes to the world economy and fundamental changes within nations occurred from the late 1960s that affected people in many areas of the world in similar ways. It was no coincidence that words such as 'ethnicity', 'multi-cultural' and 'indigenous' entered the vocabulary of many different peoples at this time.

Despite the similar response of a range of many local groups to global change there is considerable disagreement about how these changes should be understood. Post-colonial writers, including many Maori writers (Bishop, 1996; E. Durie, 1994; M. Durie, 1989; G. Smith, 1997; L. Smith, 1999; Walker, 1989), assume that change is caused by events at the local level. It is claimed that colonized and marginalized peoples, by overthrowing the material and psychological effects of colonization in liberation movements for independence and cultural revival, have caused a reversal of western dominance. The changes that occurred to the global economy are understood as part of this overall decline in western imperialism, a decline brought about as a consequence of the rise of local identity movements.

According to the post-colonial approach, local forms of politics and culture should replace the ideas and practices of modernity. This desire to replace the modernist culture with a revived traditional culture is based upon the fact that it was modernist culture that accompanied the spread of the capitalist economy throughout the world during the period of colonization. Colonization, rather than specific politico-economic factors and the retention of reactionary traditional values and practices, is blamed for the marginalization of local peoples. Therefore, according to post-colonial ideas, the solution is

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'de-colonization', or the return to traditional cultures and the overthrow of modernity. Many post-colonial intellectuals have gone further than theorize major changes to the world order. They have played an active role as the intellectual vanguard of these political identity movements, usually under a postmodernist, post-colonialist or neo-Marxist umbrella.

In contrast to post-colonialism, theories that follow a modernist approach (Amin, 1994; Friedman, 1994; Habermas, 2001; Harvey, 1989; Overbeek, 1990; Wallerstein, 1991 and others) regard changes at the local level as the result of contemporary global economic changes. Local liberation and identity movements are not caused by a rejection of colonization, but by local elites regrouping in the new world order. These elites, usually members of pre-colonial elites, re-emerged in the favourable conditions of the post-war period. They became the university-educated indigenous intelligentsia who led cultural revival movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Later, as economic conditions worsened, they held on to their newly acquired positions in the new professional class by reshaping cultural revival movements into political movements. Post-colonial theory enabled these elites to conceal their own material and political interests[6] within the language of de-colonization,[7] ethnic liberation and cultural revival (Babadzan, 2001; Friedman, 1994; Rata, 2003a; Turton, 1997; van Meijl, 1999; Wallerstein, 1991).

In New Zealand, biculturalism was the outcome of a close alliance developed between the leaders of the Maori revival and another group of the post-war new professional class (Rata, 1996, 2003b). This latter group, comprising mainly settler descendants of working-class origin, were also redefining themselves according to the identity movements of the period. Throughout the 1980s they actively sought an ethnic identification as Pakeha, rejecting a national New Zealander identity. Ethnic and cultural differences were emphasized. This was despite the fact that the two groups actually had a great deal in common. Apart from shared material conditions and aspirations, ethnicity itself was shared to the extent that many members of the new professional class were of both Maori and European ancestry.[8] It was not uncommon for people, identifying initially as Pakeha biculturalists, upon discovering one Maori ancestor in the genealogy searches undertaken as an essential part of identity movements, to claim Maori identity only. And it was extremely common for those identifying as Maori to exclude references to their non-Maori ancestry.

The first shift in biculturalism was from recognizing and including Maori culture within the national New Zealand culture to an emphasis on separate ethnic identification. It was part of the regrouping of those in the new professional class whose material interests and security were threatened by the contraction of the world economy. Biculturalism began as a movement by the new class (particularly in the caring professions of education, health, welfare, the church and the media) to respond to the worsening economic conditions of the early 1970s (Rata, 1996). Addressing the increasing marginalization of urban Maori was part of the new professional class's repositioning. However, by the early 1980s, biculturalists had shifted their focus from poor urban Maori to issues of identity for their own members.

Biculturalism was the means by which the two groups in the new professional class could, by emphasizing ethnic identity, acquire political recognition and a base for the assertion of their own material interests. This was important to people who, having recently joined the middle class, found that that class expanded less rapidly than in the

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1950s and 1960s. There were fewer places available for the upward socially mobile, but many aspirants. Those who had joined the new professional class last were from marginalized groups or working-class backgrounds – Maori, women and working class men. Their aspirations and expectations were developed in the burgeoning of secondary and university education during the halcyon days of post-war prosperity.

By the 1980s, however, securing a place in a contracting but still relatively privileged class, for themselves and their children, could no longer be taken for granted. The alternative was not attractive. The working class was shrinking. It had lost its political power in the new right reforms of the 1980s. Prospects for those who could not retain their foothold in the new middle class and for whom there was no room in the increasingly downsized and impoverished working class were available only in the ever-increasing ranks of the unemployed or the low-paid casual worker.

CULTURALISM: FROM BICULTURALISM TO BI-ETHNICISM

A more attractive alternative to cultural recognition within national unity was to secure political recognition on the basis of a distinctive ethnicity. This process was the first big shift in the meaning of biculturalism. The shift away from cultural inclusion to ethnic identification as either Maori or Pakeha was a profound change in biculturalism. This process put the focus on ethnicity, rather than national status, as the primary form of identity. The result was an increasing acceptance of ethnic identity in the political system.

Concerns that ethnicity was racial categorization with a new name were dismissed as groundless by biculturalists. Despite claims that ethnicity was more about culture than about race, 'ethnicity' does include the concept of 'group belonging' that had a genetic or biological base (Yinger, 1985). The move to ethnic discourse changed the bicultural movement in a fundamental way. A new way of thinking and talking about biculturalism emerged that I refer to as 'culturalism'. In this approach, culture and ethnicity are merged and the ethnic group's interests are politicized. Arif Dirlik (cited in White, 2001: 140) refers to culturalism as the 'politicization of culture' based upon 'ideologies of culture that tend to divorce concepts of culture and tradition from historical forces of economic change'.

However, there are fundamental differences between the two concepts. Ethnicity, like race, is based upon the notion of 'who we are' in terms of our genetic history. Culture is the term that refers to 'what we do, value, and believe' or the social aspect of being human. However, the culturalist explanation merges the two concepts in a causal relationship and justifies claims for political recognition for the respective ethnic groups. In the merging of 'culture' and 'ethnicity' we are seen to live our daily lives in certain ways (culture or how we live our lives within social relations) because of our ethnic (racial) inheritance (who we are). In this interpretation culture is *caused* by ethnicity. The notion of a causal relationship between culture (which is a social construct) and ethnicity (which has a strong biological component) is racist because only those 'of the blood' can qualify as full members of the cultural group.

In contrast, the universalism that underpins democracy is that we are born into the human race, and become members of ethnic or racial groups through socialization into the cultural practices of those groups. Culturalism, on the other hand, claims that people are born as members of their particular ethnic group. Socialization is concerned with

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expressing this genetic component.[9] Cultural values and practices are considered to be fixed in a primordial past and linked to that past by the spirits of the ancestors. Only members 'of the blood' can fully understand the culture[10] because the spiritual link is created from primordial origins down through the generations. In this way, references to the spiritual character of the group replace direct references to racial links. Biological inheritance as members of a racial or ethnic group (one demonstrated by common physical features like skin colour and facial features) is social destiny in this approach because 'what we do' is caused by 'who we are', that is, our 'blood' carried through the generations by ancestral spirits. Attributing a biological basis to cultural differences is strengthened when the 'spirit of a people', such as Herder's 'volkgeist' or Maori 'mauri' and 'wairua', is evoked to serve as the conduit for both genetic and cultural transmission.

Although the term 'ethnicity' replaced 'race' in the 1970s, ethnicity retains the idea that socio-cultural differences are linked to genetic/biological origins. Such biological determinism pervades the concept of ethnicity but is hidden by the focus on the cultural components of ethnicity – the shared social relations that arise from shared material circumstances of a group. Explaining cultural differences as primordial ethnic differences meant that biculturalism shifted from being about forming a new and closer relationship between two cultures, Maori and settler-descendant, to a bi-ethnic division. It was a division that could not be crossed, even in terms of understanding. Culturalists claim that non-Maori could never have a full understanding of Maori ways because they are not Maori. This attitude, one that is fundamentally racist (despite the 'softened' language which refers to spiritual rather than blood heritage), is behind Maori demands for separate institutions. In education it is a way of thinking that governs all areas – from art education, to research ethics committees, to different pedagogies and 'ways of knowing' (Rata, 2002a).

Knowledge that is ethnically based, such as 'Maori mathematics' or 'Maori science' or 'Maori art', is a rejection of the objective scientific rationality described by Immanuel Kant (1993 [1781]: 491) as the 'universal reason of humanity'. It is a universalist way of understanding the world, available to all people regardless of ethnic origin. According to Kant (1993 [1781]: 535) we must 'exercise our powers of reasoning in accordance with general principles, retaining at the same time, the right of investigating the source of these principles, of testing, and even of rejecting them'.

The idea of fundamental socio-biological differences between different ethnic or racial groups has a long tradition.[11] It can be traced from postmodernism's celebration of local difference, to 19th-century German nationalism, to Rousseauian romanticism,[12] and back to the anti-democratic position of the Counter-Enlightenment. In contrast, the idea of universal humanity that regards all humans as fundamentally the same before they are socialized into different cultures comes through the opposing tradition. It has its origins in the Enlightenment and can be traced through the various democratic movements of the past two centuries.

The spread of modernism and its political form of democracy, firstly in parts of the West, and then, as a result of colonization, to many other parts of the world, was the result of the changes to social relations that accompanied the economic expansion of the last 500 years. Democracy is not a western cultural form of social organization imposed upon another culture. It is the result of the modernism that replaced traditional western culture through internal colonization as it later replaced the traditional ways of

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life of other cultures throughout the world. It liberated people from the traditional bonds of hierarchy and inequality in the West as in other areas of the world (Munz, 1991). Appealing particularly to the oppressed – women, slaves, lower-caste males – democratic ideals of human rights and freedom have existed at the world level throughout history. Although it has only been in the past two centuries that the global economic system of capitalism has produced the conditions that favour the spread of democratic political organizations framed by the nation-state, democratic ideals are timeless and universal.

The following three examples show the diversity of democratic ambitions throughout time, among different cultures, and expressed as individual or group aspirations. The spread of Christianity throughout the world, with its radical and revolutionary claim that all people are equal in the sight of God, had a widespread democratizing effect (Johnson, 1979), although the tendency to locate such equality in the next world has curtailed its democratic potential in this world. Michael Jackson's account of those Maori who had previously been slaves among the northern Ngapuhi provides a New Zealand example of the way in which new opportunities for social mobility are democratizing for those in fixed low-caste positions. They 'founded schools, improvised writing equipment and educated villagers in remote areas unvisited by European missionaries, thereby gaining in prestige regardless of their social background, often at the expense of more traditional groupings' (Jackson, 1975: 37).

A third example is provided by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the Somali-born Dutch Muslim whose criticism of the Netherlands programme of multiculturalism shows that democratic aspirations are as opposed to religious neotraditionalism as to previous forms of traditional oppression. By arguing that the preservation of Muslim identity with separate schools and associations 'encourages the isolation of Muslim women', Ali locates democratic rights in the universalism of the human experience. (Osborn, 2002). Despite the belief that liberal-democracy has a solid foundation in countries such as the Netherlands and New Zealand, the recent combination of bi- and multi-culturalism based upon ethnic group recognition and traditional fundamentalist ideologies is a threat to that foundation. This is particularly so because the culturalist discourse that supports ethnic recognition appears to be democratic so that its true anti-democratic character is concealed within it.

The talk of 'group rights', 'liberation from colonial oppression' and 'the rejection of dominant western culture' has the sound of democracy's own liberatory rhetoric. Culturalism appears to be democratic because it espouses the rights of ethnic groups to return to traditional ways, however oppressive those ways may be. But it is human rights, not group interests, that are at the heart of liberal-democracy (Barry, 2001). Culturalism's emphasis on ethnic group rights is in opposition to two fundamental components of democracy – the universality of the human race, and the individual, not the group, as the bearer of political rights.

Universalism is a fundamental condition for the democratic organization of a society. The concept of a primary human identity that is universal to all people, regardless of how they live, where they live and how they think, is the justification for universal human rights. However closely involved the individual is in the private world of family and friends, in the public sphere the individual has rights because of his or her status as a citizen, whose political rights are derived not from kinship or ethnic group rights, but from universal human rights. These political rights are available to all individuals.

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The autonomous human being is another fundamental condition for democratic organization (Johnson, 1979; Rata, 2002a). Paradoxically, a person is autonomous because he or she is a member of a social group. Turning to face the world, though still linked by affective bonds of varying strengths to the family and the group, the autonomous individual is able to mediate the relationship between the world and family through the development of his or her own identity as separate and individual. By contrast, in traditional societies the family or clan or tribe is the world writ large. The individual cannot mediate between the world and the kin-group. This means that the existence of a world outside the kinship is a conceptual problem for kinship and group-based societies. How can a common universal humanity be acknowledged? There is the world understood on the basis of one's own group members to which only those born into the group can belong. There is the world understood on the basis of individuals who share a common humanity. The idea of the individual as someone who can be simultaneously attached and separated from the group makes possible the concept of a common universal humanity. This enables people to belong to and identify with non-kin groups as well as with members of the kin or ethnic group.

However, the separation of the local from the universal and the elevation of local groups and local ways of understanding to a position of 'truth' are ideas strongly promoted by postmodernist adherents. These followers of Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard and the numerous post-structuralists and deconstructionalists who exercise considerable influence in New Zealand educational circles, particularly art, literature and the social sciences, have failed to heed Foucault's[13] own warnings about the limitations of experience as a basis for knowledge and about the dangers of romanticizing local cultures.

A nation, like New Zealand, that comprises people from a range of ethnic backgrounds with ethnicities that have become increasingly mixed over time, can survive only if national unity is based upon universal values of a shared humanity and a political organization based upon the individual. The idea of a political organization based upon a treaty partnership between two distinct ethnic groups is at odds with the universalism that is essential to democracy. This means that ethnic belonging cannot be the basis for democratic political organization and that the concept of a political partnership is a threat to New Zealand's democratic system.

The collapse of the concept of race/ethnicity into the concept of culture was the point of no return for biculturalism. People were considered to be members of their ethnic group first and members of the universal human race second. The universalism that underpinned the earlier version of biculturalism was no longer possible. Yet without that universalism there was no prospect of a unifying frame of reference, of difference within unity. The result was the shift to increased social division between Maori and non-Maori.

FROM ETHNIC TO INDIGENOUS TO TRIBAL IDENTITY

By the early 1980s biculturalism was interpreted as a bi-ethnic division. This division was included in the nation's political structures through several significant court decisions and legislative acts, in particular the 1985 Treaty of Waitangi Amendment Act. The acceptance of ethnicity as a 'player' in the nation's political organization led to further shifts in the path away from biculturalism. Indigenous status became a specific form of ethnic categorization. It enabled Maori, as a self-defining ethnic group despite extensive intermarriage, to further define themselves in a special and unique relation to place and to the

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material resources of that place (Rata, 2002b). Indigeneity completes the 'blood and soil' belief in fundamental difference between human groups. The migrant status of all New Zealand's ethnic groups was replaced by a qualitative distinction between the first arrivals and subsequent arrivals. Maori were not just the first of a number of groups who migrated to New Zealand. Their first arrival status was converted to a priority status. The term 'indigenous' entered ordinary language use to convey this priority. The significance of Maori culture to New Zealand was no longer just its uniqueness, but its primacy.

For adherents to biculturalism, indigenous priority status provided the justification for Maori material and political claims that were not available to later arrivals. In the first stage of biculturalism these interests had been claimed for all Maori. In the second stage pan-Maori ethnic identity (which included detribalized urban Maori) became a specific indigenous identity. The final stage in the construction of a separate Maori identity was to that of the tribal member. It has become common practice for many Maori to identify themselves by reference to their tribal affiliations in publications and conference presentations. The structuring of indigenous identity as tribal identity was the final stage of the process away from the inclusive ideals of biculturalism.

Political and economic demands were made on the basis that the contemporary tribe (the neotribe) was the inheritor of traditional tribal resources and the inheritor of a treaty relationship with the government. Pan-ethnic but detribalized Maori were excluded at this point. Despite the fact that biculturalism had emerged as a perceived solution to the social and economic disadvantages experienced by many poor Maori, the process of retribalization ensured that poor detribalized Maori were once again excluded from a share in the treaty settlements. Tribal identity was now 'authentic' Maori identity.

It was in this way that identity politics replaced class politics as the means to political power and material betterment. And it was within this process that biculturalism underwent major shifts in meaning, from a movement for cultural recognition within the democratic nation-state to a retribalization movement based upon the meaning of ethnicity developed by a group of Maori in the new middle class and in the service of this group's interests.

By the late 1980s, that other side of bi-ethnicity, the creation of a settler-descendant ethnicity, had lost its drive. Strong ethnic categories could be developed only at the expense of weakened national identity. Many Pakeha self-referents turned back to identifying themselves in national terms, as New Zealanders. For a growing number of biculturalists, the move towards strong ethnic boundaries and retribalization by leaders on the Maori side of the bicultural movement was a rejection of the bicultural ideals of cultural diversity within national unity. However, by this stage, the bicultural movement had enabled neotribal political influence to become firmly institutionalized and a neotribal economy to develop as a consequence of the neotribe's successful claim for treaty inheritance. Bicultural discourse continued but in the form of the rigid orthodox thinking known as political correctness. The shift to bi-ethnicism, then to neotribalism, had undermined the essential feature of biculturalism – the commitment to cultural recognition within universalist democratic politics.

THE NEOTRIBE

The neotribe is a new socio-economic political structure that has emerged within the global conditions of late capitalism and within the opportunities opened up by

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biculturalism. It is fundamentally different from the traditional tribe in terms of its economic and socio-political systems (Rata, 1999, 2000, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). Despite this fundamental difference, the neotribe has defined itself as the revival of the traditional tribe. As such, it claims to be the rightful inheritor of the past. Using the Treaty of Waitangi as the document of inheritance, the neotribe's claims to the historical grievances' settlements are justified by its interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi (Rata, 2003/2004).

The acceptance by biculturalists that the contemporary tribe is a traditional social structure engaged in modernized economic activity has enabled the neotribes to claim political status as inheritors of the traditional social organizations that signed the Treaty of Waitangi. But the Treaty did not establish a political partnership between two political entities. It is the first formal agreement in an ongoing series of legislative, procedural and juridical measures that have established liberal-democracy in New Zealand over a period of more than a century and a half. During that time a traditional form of organization based upon kinship and hierarchical status was replaced by a democratic political organization based upon abstract concepts of universalism and equal rights. As elsewhere, since a contingent link was established between capitalism and modernism from the late 18th century, the principles of universalism and individualism have replaced local (cultural) forms of social organization following the spread of capitalism throughout the world. This is as true of traditional western culture as it is of other forms of traditional culture (Munz, 1991; Rata, 2002a).

The shifting meaning of biculturalism has enabled the leaders of the initial Maori cultural revival to redefine the meaning of the Maori partner within the changing bicultural framework. Where once the Maori side of biculturalism referred to cultural inclusion, it is now defined as tribal. Yet a tribal 'partner' is incongruent with the democratic philosophy of biculturalism. Tribalism is anti-democratic by definition. This is the case because the tribe is a network of kinship relations, with a birth-ascribed leadership system. Non-kin people (that is non-ethnics) can never be full tribal members. In contrast, democracy is a form of social and political organization open to all individuals regardless of race, religion and gender. It is the political philosophy of modernity, based upon the pre-conditions of individualism and universalism.

NEOTRADITIONALISM

The character of the neotribes as contemporary social structures organized according to undemocratic principles is concealed in beliefs about the revival of a traditional communal system under the authority of leaders who serve their people. In this ideology of neotraditionalism a traditional social structure and way of life is believed to have been revived. Like other types of fundamentalisms that have swept through the world in the past three decades, the 'self-conscious traditionalism' that 'is itself a thoroughly modern movement of renewal' (Habermas, cited in Barry, 2001: 259) is a response to the insecurities of late capitalism. Many people who grew up in the welfare states of the prosperous post-war decades look backwards to an illusory traditional utopia and to the romantic idea of local community to escape the realities of an unstable present and an unpredictable future.

Neotraditionalists believe that the 'revived' tribe retains the basic features of a traditional society, particularly its kinship structure and leadership system. The features

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of the traditional society that serve the ideology are re-created. Individualism is rejected in favour of group belonging, based upon kinship ties. The group's claim to primordial origins in a mythological sacred past are used to justify a pervasive spiritual dimension within the social order in contrast to the secular character of modernity. The role of knowledge is to bind members of the group to one another and to this past. This is in contrast to modernity's critical scientific knowledge. Neotraditionalism gives us a romantic and sanitized view of the traditional society. The brutal warrior nature of Maori society (Hanson and Hanson, 1983) is repackaged in heroic terms. (This historical revision is similar to that created by 19th-century romantics of a chivalrous European middle ages.) The realities of slavery, cannibalism and oppressive hierarchies are reworked to give us a gentle communalism, cannibalism as infrequent ritual rather than frequent practice, and benign leadership rather than oppressive authority.

The beliefs of neotraditionalism are expressed in the culturalist language of 'two worlds' divided by ethnic boundaries. This is despite the fact that many in the newly strengthened 'ethnic groups' of Maori and Pakeha share a common middle-class culture and a shared ethnicity resulting from frequent intermarriage over many generations. The widespread acceptance of neotraditionalist beliefs occurs because it is an ideology that offers psychological security in an insecure world.

Despite the fact that democracy requires the autonomous individual to be the basic unit of social organization, democratic systems still have to cope with the paradox that we are created within social relationships and need the psychological and physical security of group belonging in order to be these autonomous individuals. Democracy deals with this paradox in the constant dialectic or creative tension between the needs and rights of the individual and the needs and rights of the wider social group. Although it is a necessary tension and integral to democratic functioning, it leads to the existential angst of the modern individual. People desire both autonomy and belonging simultaneously. In addition, if the tensions of modernity, between the rational public sphere (Habermas, 2001) and the private familial sphere, are unbalanced, the society can become either Weber's 'iron cage' of rationality or irrationally fundamentalist. Ideologies, such as religious fundamentalism, 'new age' cults, postmodernism, and neotraditionalism, rapidly filled the cultural vacuum left by modernity's failure to live in the dialectic and accept the constant tension between individual and group needs.

With the shift to neotraditionalism by the start of the 1990s, biculturalism could not be sustained. The bicultural participants, Maori and Pakeha, no longer had a shared frame of reference. Not only had a cultural biculturalism become a divisive bi-ethnicism, but the unifying frame of reference had split into democratic modernism on the one hand and a reactionary neotraditionalism on the other.

A NEW DEMOCRATIC MODERNISM

Biculturalism, then, has made drastic shifts – first to bi-ethnicism, then to neotribalism. In doing so it has become the unintentional means for the creation of a fundamentally anti-democratic social structure, the neotribe, and for that structure's considerable influence within government. The shifts have undermined the essential feature of biculturalism – the commitment to cultural recognition within universalist democratic politics. In this final section I argue that liberal-democracy cannot exist on the basis of the

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institutional recognition of ethnic categories. It can, however, accommodate some cultural values and practices that have developed within the separate histories of those ethnic/racial groups. This depends upon the extent to which those values and practices are consistent with democratic principles.

While one of democracy's values is toleration for the different beliefs and practices of various groups, this toleration cannot extend to the point where practices are tolerated that undermine democracy itself (Barry, 2001). Just as cultural practices such as slavery and the subjugation of women were culturally acceptable at various times amongst all the groups that make up New Zealand society today, these practices have been abandoned because they are undemocratic. So, too, must other cultural values and practices maintained by ethnic groups that are antipathetic to democratic values be abandoned. Cultural values and practices are not sacred and unchanging. Their value lies in the contribution they make to the 'good' society. Recent world events have shown clearly that, while traditional regimes may offer security based upon maintaining traditional ways of life, democracy offers both uncertainty but also opportunities unavailable in unchanging cultures. It would be unwise to surrender those opportunities for a security that is illusory.

Biculturalism has strengthened ethnic boundaries and led to the acceptance of a neotraditionalist ideology that promotes a primordial fixed notion of culture and enables a group in society, the leaders of the neotribes, to pursue their material and political interests and to conceal this self-interest (Rata, 2003a, 2003c). Biculturalism, by shifting to bi-ethnicism and neotraditionalism, destroys the conditions that are necessary to democratic functioning. A re-commitment to the universalism of modernity may provide greater opportunities for social justice and inclusive cultural recognition envisaged by the biculturalists of the first stage of the movement. This would be based upon those principles, in addition to universalism, that are essential for democracy: individualism, critical reasoning, and a discursive public sphere within which different interest groups can 'battle' without violence and without reducing the population to the blind consensus that is political correctness.

New democratic modernity is the concept of a New Zealand culture, one formed from the contributions of all immigrant groups, including Maori, since people first settled in the country. The main source of New Zealand's common culture is modernity. It is based upon the primacy of the individual over the group, a principle encouraged by the rise of capitalism and that led to liberal-democratic politics, and upon the concept of universal human rights, a principle that follows in the wake of individualism (Johnson, 1979; Landes, 1998). Importantly, it maintains the secular/religious divide that is essential to the maintenance of a discursive public sphere. Religious beliefs, including Maori spirituality, belong in the private sphere, although the protection of individuals' rights to religious belief belongs in the public domain.

When the culture of modernity was brought to New Zealand by many of the Anglo-settlers in the 19th century it was a relatively new culture.[14] Located in the economic and intellectual changes of the 18th and 19th centuries, the culture of modernity and its democratic political organization was embraced by the ordinary peoples of western societies (Landes, 1998), just as it was embraced by large numbers of Maori. The interest of those from many diverse ethnic groups throughout the world in a modernist culture and a democratic political organization is the same interest exhibited by colonial settlers

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and Maori. A form of political organization that enabled different interests to be represented and disputes settled by the rule of law and without violence was the reason for democracy's rapid acceptance.

The creation of a modernist culture in New Zealand over the past two centuries that has enabled individuals, both Maori and European, to escape the oppressive restrictions of traditional cultures was the reason for the rapid disintegration of traditional ways of life (including traditional western culture). Many Anglo-European settlers came to New Zealand to escape the restrictions of traditional European culture and to establish a democratic political organization within which a modern culture could flourish. What the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi did, by granting citizenship to Maori, was to include Maori in the development of this new modern universal culture. The Treaty was the first agreement in the progress towards modernity in New Zealand for both ethnic groups. It was not, as post-colonialists argue, the imposition of western culture upon tribal society. Rather, it was the first stage in the replacement of traditional western and traditional Maori culture by modernity and democracy.

New Zealand culture will continue to change as it integrates cultural practices from its respective groups into the modernist culture that is the dominant culture in this country. The success of this cultural integration and renewal depends upon the extent to which groups of different ethnic origins are fully included at the economic and social level. Political rights are not enough. Citizens would need to enjoy social and economic rights that enable them to engage in the opportunities for self-transformation that life in a modern culture and a political democracy should provide.

In the late 1960s the increasingly obvious fact of Maori exclusion from full social and economic citizenship (particularly in contrast to the optimism of the post-war period) led to biculturalism. In the wave of identity movements of the time, cultural inclusion was regarded as the way to overcome this marginalization. It was believed that cultural identity led to increased self-esteem which, in turn, leads to success within the mainstream society. Yet it is the existence of a democratic system that regulates the operations of the economic system in a fair and equitable way and that leads to cultural integration, not the tying of cultural identity to primordial ethnicity.

When culture is tied to ethnicity people remain fixed to a biological defined social identity. The culture or way of life of these people is also unchanging, available only to those who share the same biological/ethnic origin. However, when culture and ethnicity/race are separated, it becomes possible for people of varying ethnic backgrounds to live in the same culture because their material and political realities are in fact the same. The values and practices from their respective cultural heritages that are considered to be compatible with the common modernist democratic culture can be accommodated. This new democratic modernity is possible because New Zealanders share a common political and economic framework. It means that New Zealanders, of diverse ethnic origins, have more in common than different ethnic heritages suggest. Specific cultural practices that come from the diverse ethnically-based traditions, such as different forms of death rituals or greetings, do not affect the fundamental commonalities that underpin life in New Zealand.

The emphasis on ethnic differences as fundamental cultural and lifestyle differences during the bicultural period denies the considerable commonality produced within the integrative conditions of a small, geographically isolated nation-state. A new modernity

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would recognize both the contemporary commonality that results from shared material conditions and the common human desire to maintain links with one's own history. Indeed, the knowledge of one's ethnically characterized history is important at a time when respective ethnic groups are reforming themselves into a larger culture that contains groups from backgrounds different to their own. Historical consciousness is a critical component of a democratic society. Under new democratic modernity it would be the responsibility of the state education system to ensure that children develop this historical consciousness through knowing in depth about the histories of all New Zealand's main groups. However, it would be the private responsibility of groups to maintain those specific cultural practices that they consider to be important. A case may be made for the public inclusion of some aspects of Maori culture, however.

In the early days of biculturalism the case was made that Maori culture should be an integral part of New Zealand culture because it is unique to that country. The widespread public consensus for this view assisted in establishing the pervasive influence of biculturalism even when it had become captured by special interest groups and remodelled as bi-ethnicism and neotraditionalism. The difference between Maori culture under biculturalism and Maori culture under a new democratic modernist model is that, in the latter, culture is not tied to ethnicity. It is a rejection of the blood and soil ideology of neotraditionalism. A person doesn't have to have a Maori ancestor to engage in Maori culture. This would reconceptualize Maori culture as part of New Zealand culture and available to all, regardless of ethnic origin and ethnic mixture.

The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi contributed to the establishment of New Zealand democracy by enabling a relatively peaceful annexation by the British. It is one of several sources for the justification of reparations for specific instances of illegal acts against property. However, contemporary disadvantages that have part of their origins in historical experiences are unlikely to be solved by revisiting those experiences in order to 'correct' them. What can be 'corrected' are the inequalities and injustices of the present, not by returning to the past (which is gone) but by finding political solutions to contemporary problems. The inequalities that exist today have their origins in a complex mixture of the historical imposition of unequal capitalist relations, the inequalities of a traditional hierarchical society, and in contemporary policies. The early biculturalists identified the solution to these inequalities in the political regulation of wealth through emancipatory social and economic policies such as full employment, housing, health and education policies that provide real opportunities for all New Zealanders, including Maori. It is also possible to make reparations for illegal historical acts that are specific infringements of the law and not payments for the consequences of contemporary inequalities that have diverse historical causes.

CONCLUSION

The shifts in the bicultural movement have been shifts away from the four conditions that are required for the continued maintenance of democracy in New Zealand: universalism, individualism, critical reasoning, and the existence of a discursive public sphere. The ideology of neotraditionalism, the uncritical acceptance of the neotribes' interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi as the basis for a political partnership between the government and the tribes, and the acceptance of ethnicity as a person's primary identity have led away from the original intentions of biculturalism as a movement for cultural recognition and inclusion within the democratic nation-state. Ethnicity has no

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greater claim to be the 'essence' of a person's identity than does any other form of an individual's socially constructed identity. National identity within the framework of a universalist concept of humanity is no less able than ethnic identity to provide the social identification that human beings require to identify with a community.

The case can be made for the advantage of national identity over cultural and ethnic identities. This is so because a national identity as one's primary identity of belonging offers people the opportunity to enter into both a modern cultural community and into the discursive political organization that is democracy. It means that a person's main identity or source of belonging does not become fixed to a biological base. National identity is available to all New Zealand citizens, regardless of ethnic origin. This universal foundation to national identity ensures that people who belong to the nation also have the conceptual means to be linked to the human race. By linking cultural identity to ethnic origin, biculturalism limits the ability of New Zealanders to place themselves in the global community. Such an inherently inward-looking positioning weakens New Zealand's place in the international community and the global economy.

This is a time in the history of the world when vigorous national–international interaction is necessary for the democratic future of individual nations (Weiss, 1998). Such interaction is also necessary in order to develop a democratic international culture involving individual nations, regional blocs, and powerful global organizations such as the World Trade Organization. For that reason the shifts in biculturalism to an ethnic-based socio-political project may limit New Zealand's ability to contribute to, and benefit from, internationalism.

Notes

1 References to the most relevant publications are included in the reference list at the end of this article.

2 The term 'ethnicity' made its first appearance in anthropological literature as recently as the 1960s to provide a more acceptable alternative for the discredited word 'race'. The term 'race' dominated theoretical writings between Max Weber's *ethnische Gemeinsamkeit* of 1922 (translated into English as 'ethnic membership'), and the 1950s when the term 'ethnic group' began to be used by some anthropologists and sociologists. Quoting Joan Vincent, Ausenda (1997: 219) suggests that the term 'ethnicity' 'was first used by Lucy Mair in 1965'. Despite attempts to distinguish between 'race' and 'ethnicity', Yinger (1985: 155) argues that race and ethnicity are 'overlapping concepts' since race is 'one of the defining characteristics of ethnicity'.

3 Neotraditionalism

> arises from the need for security and even salvation provided by traditionalist identity in times of crisis. It is fixed and ascribed, provides a medium for engagement in a larger collectivity, and provides a set of standards, values and rules for living. In such periods, traditionalism is expressed in the desire for roots, the ethnification of the world, the rise of the fourth world, the return to religion and stable values . . . [it is] an age of tribalism in which individualism is declining and being replaced by increasingly strong collective pressures. Alain Minc has referred to all this in term of a 'New Middle Age'. (Friedman, 1994: 243)

4 According to Sharp (1997), the tribes' control of Treaty interpretation from the

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mid-1980s, particularly the concept of adherence to Treaty principles in all areas of state activity, increased the political power of the elite who controlled the process. 'The agenda was set by Maori, and governments have not been successful in wresting the initiative back' (1997: 448).

5 The role of the Waitangi Tribunal as an important institutional site for the brokerage of neotraditionalism is analysed in Rata (2003a).

6 These elites use their 'cultural repertoire' (Rata, 2003b) as 'global representatives of the local' (Friedman, 1994: 67). Friedman refers to the global positioning of privileged elites in terms of a 'conversion of status for indigenous representatives' as they take indigenous politics onto the world stage, noting that 'such a shift implies a contradiction in identity, a contradiction between the rootedness of indigeneity and the cosmopolitan life of the higher circulatory elites of the world arena'.

7 Although New Zealand has not been characterized by contemporary ethnic violence, it is familiar with the techniques described by Gallagher (1997) used by Serbian and Croatian political and intellectual elites to whip up ethnic hatred and violence. These include the assertion of inalienable historical rights, the cultivation of a persecution complex by reminding people of past wrongs committed by ethnic opponents, and an insistence that guilt for past wrongs is both hereditary and collective. Similarly Turton (1997: 37) argues that 'ethnicity is unlikely to become a lethal force in human affairs except through the deliberate calculation of political elites'.

8 In a recent important study on ethnic measurement, Paul Callister (2003: 36) has drawn attention to the association between education and having a Maori partner. The trend in New Zealand for more highly educated Maori to marry 'out' (also a trend in inter-ethnic marriage in the United States) is 'more pronounced amongst those with university qualifications'.

9 The dominance of culturalism in New Zealand education explains the recent emphasis on types of schooling, such as Maori total immersion, that use culturally-based programmes to develop children's self-esteem. Low achievement is considered to be the result of ignoring children's ethnic 'essence'. The answer, therefore, is to solve the educational problem by recognizing the child's ethnic identity. However, Toon van Meijl's (1999) study of cultural enhancement programmes for young Maori shows that these programmes, by failing to recognize the real lived experiences of these youngsters in favour of a reified 'essence', led to identity fragmentation rather than the identity enhancement that was expected.

10 This view explains the inclusion of ethnically controlled research in New Zealand's new tertiary education research funding organization, a policy apparently designed to develop New Zealand's scientific community within the competitive global market. The ethnic version of knowledge is accepted without question. 'Maori research was seen to encompass research into things Maori, and research according to Maori methods of research and subscribing to Maori ways of knowing' (Ministry of Education, 2003: 36). This ethnic 'way of knowing' is to be developed by a Maori Knowledge and Development Panel that will consist of experts on Maori research. 'The panel would directly evaluate Maori researchers, and (where appropriate) provide advice to other panels where the research being evaluated had a Maori focus' (Ministry of Education, 2003: 36). 'The inherent conflict between research that is "independent", "open to scrutiny", and "driven by hypotheses or intellectual positions

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capable of rigorous assessment" [MOE, 2003: 17] on the one hand, and "closed" neotraditionalist research on the other is not addressed by the Ministry of Education Tertiary Education Commission' (Rata, 2003b).

11 Brian Barry (2001) describes the persistence of the Counter-Enlightenment's 'self-conscious traditionalism' throughout the modern period. He refers to the strength of the doctrine of romantic nationalism, in which 'each culture constitutes a self-contained moral universe' (2001: 36). The thinkers of the Counter-Enlightenment claimed that there was 'no human nature' (2001: 36) and that human beings were biologically linked to their culture.

12 Refer to Roger Sandall's *The Culture Cults, Designer Tribalism and Other Essays* (2001) for a critique of Rousseau's influence on contemporary culturalists.

13 Foucault's advocacy for the 'amazing efficacy of discontinuous, particular and local criticism' (2001: 69) and his argument for 'subjugated knowledges' as well as for 'local and specific knowledges' (2001: 71) is used by his followers to justify the loss of faith in universal ideals and a universal source of reason (i.e. Kant's *a priori* categories of time and space). Despite his disclaimer (2001: 71) that his genealogies do not 'vindicate a lyrical right to ignorance or non-knowledge: it is not that they are concerned to deny knowledge or that they esteem the virtues of direct cognition and base their practice upon an immediate experience that escapes encapsulation in knowledge', that is his legacy to New Zealand's postmodernists.

14 Not all settlers were imbued with modernist ways and democratic ideals. Some would have preferred to re-establish the class hierarchies of traditional western culture, where people 'knew their place', in preference to the egalitarian beliefs of the mainly working class and lower middle-class immigrants.

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