MAKING PEOPLES

A History of the New Zealanders

From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century

JAMES BELICH

ALLEN LANE
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professionalism, he rose to high rank: to post-captain in the Royal Navy, to greatest scientific explorer in history and to Pakeha Kupe in myth. Cook's deification began soon after his death in Hawai'i in 1779. He was compared to Ulysses, and even Christ.[16] A New Zealand folk-tale alleged that an *Endeavour* wrecked in Dusky Sound in 1795 was Cook's *Endeavour*, come home to die.[17] In 1822, one D. Erskine petitioned the British Government that New Zealand be colonised, that 'grants of land and seniority of rank' be given to Cook's descendants, and that both islands and their capitals be named after him, which would have been rather confusing.[18] Cook's humble birth, his quiet pragmatism, his trumping of a bunch of intellectuals made him the prototype of an archetype. One might even see his imprimatur in the popular American television series *Star Trek*. Captains Kirk/Cook and the *Enterprise/Endeavour* both boldly went where no (White or Earth) man had gone before.

Cook was the first of a Pakeha pantheon of deified ancestors. Others, like the great coloniser Wakefield, the great missionary Samuel Marsden and the great governor George Grey, had feet of clay. Cynics can find feet of clay on Cook's ankles too. In later life he developed the nasty habit of cutting the ears off petty thieves.[19] In contrast to Anglicising legend, his early treatment of Maori compares unfavourably to de Surville's – in practice as against principle. De Surville killed no Maori and kidnapped one. Cook killed several Maori and tried to kidnap a few. There is little doubt that Cook has been emphasised to the unfair exclusion of the massive French contribution to European knowledge of New Zealand.[20] But on the whole Cook still ranks first on merit, as well as Englishness. His central virtue was stubbornness: a determination to complete. He insisted on completing the outline of Australia, the outline of New Zealand and the search for the Southern Continent. Some of his largeness of spirit is not the invention of eulogists. On his second voyage, ten of the crew of his subordinate captain, Tobias Furneaux, were killed by Maori at Queen Charlotte Sound. On the third voyage, Cook found that the chief Kahura was the leading instigator. Disdaining vengeance, and suspecting that his own men may have provoked the incident, Cook entertained Kahura to dinner, pleased that the chief trusted him enough to expect to be anything other than the main course.[21]

Cook found better than his predecessors and contemporaries, investigated more thoroughly and carefully, and he and his associates told better. Their publications dominated the European idea of New Zealand for half a century. Thousands of New Zealanders now live in Cook's place-names as contentedly as they live in Kupe's. But it may be going a little far to assert that 'Cook's metaphorical mode of naming . . . represents an authentic mode of knowing, a travelling epistemology', and to find arcane meaning in place-names as resonant as 'Sandy Bay'.[22] We cannot know, wrote Cook, 'what use future ages

The Myths of Empire

Maori and explorers massacred each other on several occasions. Both had militaristic encounter rituals, salutes of cannon and haka, and it was a while before each learned the other intended to warn enemies rather than make them. The bourgeois Cook took an especially hard line on theft. But few of the twenty expeditions encountered much violence, and the explorers were able to distribute seeds, animals, glass beads, bottles, cloth, nails, small iron tools and venereal disease quite generously. Most of the seeds and animals failed to acclimatise, and the effect of VD was not great. The nails, adapted by Maori into wood chisels, may have led to a flowering of carving, and the explorers may have revolutionised Maori entertainment. Maori made a holiday of European visits, coming from far and near to visit the *Endeavour*, that novel seaborne circus complete with strange beasts, unusual foods, magic tricks and even clowns. Horeta Te Taniwha remembered his visit as a young boy: 'as we could not understand them we laughed, and they laughed also . . . we gave our mats for their mats, to which some of our warriors said "ka pai" [good], which words were repeated by the goblins, at which we laughed and were joined in the laugh by the goblins'.[24] Maori were delighted by the drills of marines and soldiers. In 1820, some from a visiting ship were paid to give drill performances in several villages – inverted tourist haka.[25] But on the whole the direct effect of the explorers on Maori was not vast.

What the scientific explorers did do, however, was reopen the sea links between New Zealand and the world, and the traffic was not one way. They took back the notes, pictures and objects that helped create Europe's image of New Zealand, and new worlds like it. Each expedition published findings, spread information and misinformation, and encouraged speculation and romance. Alexander Dalrymple and Benjamin Franklin published a scheme for the civilisation of Maori in 1771. A 400-page fantasy set in Cook's New Zealand, *The Travels of Hildebrand Bowman, Esquire, into Carnovirria, Taupiniera, Olfactaria, and Auditante, in New-Zealand*, appeared by 1778.[26] Each exploring expedition assembled collections of samples and artefacts. Richard Owen, the British scientist who deduced the moa from bone fragments without ever visiting New Zealand, appealed for more bones 'for the honour of our country'. Charles Meryon, 'the most important European artist to have worked in New Zealand', included Maori war canoes in his etching of the French Navy Ministry in Paris; French writer Antoine Foley, a friend of Auguste Comte, wrote a fanciful history of southern Maori.[27] Glass cases of New Zealandiana built up in Vienna and Moscow, as well as London and Paris. The collections included shrunken Maori heads, sold by their enemies to carry vengeance beyond the grave. They sat, and sometimes still sit, in European