

"that headquarters of fanaticism and disaffection": Protest and the construction of space at Parihaka in the 1880s

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ABSTRACT: At the 2009 version of this symposium I presented a paper that outlined how protests at Waitangi during the 1980s were played out architecturally through the media. Despite the heavy focus on biculturalism during the 1980s, reporting of proceedings at Waitangi on February 6th each year clearly showed a trifurcation of space. Television networks and the national newspapers showed that the "landscape of nationhood" was in fact inhabited by three actors in the symbolically important rituals - the State, tame Māori, and wild Māori.

This trifurcation of space also played out a hundred years earlier at Parihaka. Sue Abel's examinations of media constructions of nationhood and cultural interaction can be identified in reports on happenings at Parihaka pā through the 1880s. From the passive resistance to the Crown's persistent surveying of the land and building of roads, the frequent large hui held at Parihaka that drew Māori from around the country, through to the invasion of the pā by a government force of more than 1500 troops – there was rich material for spatial representation by the media of the time. While the channels were different (dominated by newspapers and Parliamentary reports, with no television networks), this paper shows that the message of trifurcation was as strong in the 1880s as it would be in the 1980s.

Introduction

The myth of biculturalism has been strong for at least the last 30 years, and was particularly pushed during the 1980s. Yet an analysis of media representations of Waitangi Day commemorations – a time where New Zealand's "landscape of nationhood"¹ is played out – shows that the media's portrayal of national unity that effectively marginalises and contains dissent relies not on two main players, but on three. Biculturalism in the New Zealand context focuses on Pākehā and Māori, while Sue Abel's analysis shows the media focuses heavily on Pākehā, "tame" Māori, and "wild" Māori. Tame Māori fit into society without a fuss – polite, dignified, old,

passive – hold traditional and conservative beliefs, and take part in official welcomes, celebrations, or cultural performances.² "Wild Māori" – bad Māori or stirrers – are mainly young, urban, aggressive and demanding malcontents who are not happy unless they make trouble, misleading sections of Māori society into thinking that they are hard-done-by.³

This division into three groups is also played out architecturally, something that I termed a "trifurcation of space."⁴ Media representations

emphasise particular spaces and areas to each of these groups which support the intended portrayal in proceedings. For example, wild Māori tended to not have a place in the geography of national unity during the 1980s, occupying the in-between spaces, on the edges of official areas. The media often placed significant focus on wild Māori marching in from other areas, heightening the emphasis that they are externals or outsiders to proceedings. Unauthorised access to areas controlled by others is also often associated with wild Māori.

Patrick McAllister shows that Waitangi Day

of a symbolic bifurcation that takes place at Waitangi Day celebrations. McAllister "Waitangi Day" p 169.

¹ McAllister "Waitangi Day" pp 159-164.

² Abel *Shaping the News* p 119.

³ McCreanor "Talking About Race" pp 91-92.

⁴ Schmidt ""We don't have time for that carry-on anymore"" pp 58-67; This extends McAllister's concept

commemorations are public rituals, a form of cultural performance. Such performances have three key features:

- (a) reflexivity – a story that people tell themselves about themselves, enabling them to interpret who they are and where they fit.
- (b) part of, and linked to, wider social processes – never divorced from the ongoing flow of everyday life and the social and political events that are taking place and have taken place.
- (c) not passive, but can transform things through establishing a certain reality – this sometimes occurs incrementally, and at other times dramatic and immediately.⁵

We can think of Parihaka in a similar way. Like Waitangi Day in the 1980s, Parihaka in the 1880s was also part of a dialogue around national unity. While the symbolic expression of nationhood at Waitangi Day is rehearsed in a compressed format every year, the expression at Parihaka was stretched out over a number of stages over a number of years. Paul Morris makes it clear that the pā "threatened an autonomy outside of the

⁵ McAllister "Waitangi Day" pp 159-164.

encompassing legal and political framework of the state."⁶ With more than 2,000 inhabitants by the 1870s it was the largest Māori settlement in New Zealand and attracted large numbers of visitors from around the country throughout the year. The Crown viewed the self-determination of the pā as a "reproach to Victorian notions of racial and cultural superiority"⁷ and a threat to the Crown's assertion of sovereignty. From the 1860s Parihaka was seen as a possible obstruction to colonisation of the district⁸ and later symbolically the whole of New Zealand. Two weeks before Parihaka was invaded in 1881 the Government stated as much through their proclamation – "The Queen and the law must be supreme at Parihaka as well as elsewhere."⁹ Parihaka as symbol of autonomy was seen by Māori as essential for peace, but to the Crown it was seen as provocative.¹⁰

Media representations of happenings at and

⁶ Morris "The Provocation of Parihaka" p 113.

⁷ Riseborough "Te Pahuuatanga o Parihaka" p 19.

⁸ This view was held by Civil Commissioner for Taranaki Robert Parris (1865-1875). Riseborough "Te Pahuuatanga o Parihaka" pp 22-23.

⁹ "The Operations on Parihaka. Proclamation by the Government" *New Zealand Herald* (20 October 1881) p 5.

¹⁰ Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] n.p.

around Parihaka are an important part of interpreting and framing the cultural performance of national unity and Crown-Māori relationships that were taking place. Hazel Riseborough comments on how the descriptions of Te Whiti changed over time, from 1872 when his peaceful and amiable nature was emphasised, to 1879 when he was "an element of disturbance," through till 1884 by which time Te Whiti was being described as a fanatic.¹¹ Similar, but more complex, shifts are noticeable in how space is represented in media reports of the early 1880s. I have structured this analysis around three stages (overlapping in time):

- (1) "the debatable ground" ... Waimate Plains as in-between space.
- (2) "come to the pot where the potato was cooked" ... Parihaka as wild Māori space.
- (3) "hacked down, and dragged to the ground" ... invasion of Parihaka and spatial control afterward.

This study has used the *New Zealand Herald* and *Taranaki Herald* as source material, accessed through the National Library's online

¹¹ Riseborough "Te Pahuuatanga o Parihaka" p 23. Riseborough's comments related to Commissioner Parris' changing descriptions of Te Whiti.

Papers Past service. These were popular daily newspapers, and as such played an important part in the formation of cultural and national identity. While newspapers were initially established in New Zealand by the government, both the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Taranaki Herald* were independently owned in the 1880s.¹² This distance from government does not ensure an independent view, of course, particularly since the European owners of the papers had a vested interest (often directly) in the government's push for settlement.

Parihaka in three paragraphs

Parihaka as centre for a Māori peace and development movement took form just before or during the Land Wars in the 1860s.¹³ It was

¹² Harvey "Book & Print in New Zealand: A Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa. Newspapers"

¹³ Deidre Brown marks Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Tohu Kāhahi's arrival at Parihaka with followers around 1866, referencing Danny Keenan's entry on Te Whiti in the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. Keenan's entry also points to an earlier possibility based on family tradition, around the late 1840s. The Waitangi Tribunal suggests that the movement at Parihaka had been established before the end of the Land Wars. Brown *Māori Architecture* p 71. Keenan "Te Whiti-o-Rongomai III, Erueti" Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] n.p.

also at the centre (not geographically, but symbolically) of the confiscated land that lay between the Hangatahua River to North and the Waingongoro River to the South. The government had "to all intents and purposes, abandoned"¹⁴ this confiscation which had seen no European settled in the entire area at the end of the Land Wars. For over a decade the population grew steadily as did Parihaka's "reputation for discipline, faith, organisation, and development."¹⁵ Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Tohu's ideas and teachings did not go unnoticed (particularly the large gatherings for the bi-annual week-long hui which numbered 500 attendees in March 1870 and by September 1870 grew to 1,200), but the official view, as communicated by the likes of Civil Commissioner for Taranaki, Robert Parris, in 1872, was that the pacifism and gentleness was forefront, keeping the scepticism around the "superstitious" views being preached at bay.¹⁶

That all changed in the late 1870s when the government began surveying the area around Parihaka. It was driven by the need to find new sources of finance to address growing

¹⁴ Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] n.p.

¹⁵ Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] n.p.

¹⁶ Riseborough "Te Pahuuatanga o Parihaka" p 22.

colony debts and more land to meet demand for settlements.¹⁷ Te Whiti saw the government was not abiding by its decree of 1872 that the land would be unavailable for settlement until reserves had been set aside for Māori, and instead had jumped straight to survey for sale.¹⁸ Te Whiti requested a meeting to discuss the matter, but was declined, and so in May 1879 the Parihaka challenge began.¹⁹ Passive resistance got underway through "removing survey pegs, ploughing settler fields, and rebuilding boundary fences torn down by surveyors."²⁰ Arrests were constant, but as one group of resistors were arrested another group would replace them, reinforced by people from other iwi who came to Parihaka in support.²¹

In early October 1881 John Bryce was brought back into Cabinet as Native Affairs Minister to

¹⁷ Riseborough "Te Pahuuatanga o Parihaka" p.24. The Waitangi Tribunal has stated similar when saying that the purpose of such actions was "no more than to repay the war and settlement loans by the sale of land" Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] n.p.

¹⁸ Binney "Ancestral Voices" pp.165-166. Riseborough "Te Pahuuatanga o Parihaka" p 24.

¹⁹ Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] n.p. Binney "Ancestral Voices" p 165.

²⁰ Brown *Maori Architecture* p 71.

²¹ Binney "Ancestral Voices" p 165.

deal with rising tensions at Parihaka, having previously resigned due to his proposed solutions being too radical for his colleagues.²² Up until September 1881 the government had sought reaction from Te Whiti and Tohu (to the point where the Waitangi Tribunal has commented that the government was seeking to recreate hostilities) but continued to be met by passive resistance.²³ With Bryce's return, the approach changed.²⁴ On 5 November 1881 Parihaka was occupied by force. Bryce and his white charger were accompanied by 945 volunteers and 644 Armed Constabulary as he entered Parihaka.²⁵ They were met by some 2,000 inhabitants who were sitting silent and unmoving. About 1,600 "outsiders" were expelled from the pā and their homes destroyed.²⁶ Te Whiti and Tohu were arrested, held without trial, and exiled for nearly two years. Eventually they returned to Parihaka and began the full reconstruction and restoration of the community, including

²² Riseborough "Bryce, John" n.p.

²³ Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] n.p.

²⁴ Of the change in approach, Riseborough notes that the "government was displaying almost indecent haste after years of indecision." Riseborough *Days of Darkness* p 164.

²⁵ Riseborough "Te Pahuatanga o Parihaka" p 36.

²⁶ Binney "Ancestral Voices" p 167.

the holding of large hui.

"the debatable ground" – Waimate Plains as in-between space

It was a nervous start to the 1880s. Reports were rife with expectation of government action against Parihaka, though tinged with debate about whether this was necessary or likely. The spatial order had been set by the confiscations and subsequent Commission of Inquiry, as well as the survey work commenced in the late 1870s. The Waimate Plains – roughly the area bounded to the north by the Hangatahua River (Stony River) and to the south by the Waingongoro River – was literally and metaphorically land in-between. Noted as very fertile lands, the Plains were part of the Taranaki confiscations but no attempt was made to enforce this.²⁷ Bounded on one side by the sea, another by the mountain, and the rest by settled lands, the Plains remained through most of the 1870s with few European inhabitants. The Waitangi Tribunal has noted that the area was for all intents and purposes "abandoned" by the Crown, though it also noted that the government, through its actions, was itself

²⁷ Riseborough *Days of Darkness* p 46.

unclear on the status of the land.²⁸ Such uncertainty quickly came to an end in July 1878 when the government began to survey the Plains for sale.

"The Waimate Plains Difficulty"²⁹ was reported as "in-between" befitting the nature of the land itself. On 14 January 1880 the *New Zealand Herald* reported that

Nothing new is positively known as to the intention of the Government relative to the Waimate Plains. On the one hand it is whispered that no later than the 29th will witness the contemplated coup, while others are assiduously circulating a report that the Government cannot, and dare not, move on the Plain.³⁰

Later in January 1880 the *Taranaki Herald* spoke more firmly, noting that "the old days of delay are past, and the occupation of the Plains is to be immediately initiated."³¹ The uncertainty returned less than one month on, with the *New Zealand Herald* reporting that

²⁸ Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report* [chapter 8] p 200.

The Tribunal notes how actions such as attempted purchases and negotiations for use of areas for telegraph lines, roads and a lighthouse all point to the confiscation having been abandoned by the government.

²⁹ This was what the *New Zealand Herald* headed up their regular articles on the goings-on in Taranaki with.

³⁰ "The Waimate Plains Difficulty" p 5.

³¹ "Arrival of Native Minister at Opunake" p 2.

"the Plains question is in its present unsettled condition,"³² a lovely use of language with its double-play on the term "unsettled condition."

This spatial status was significantly different to that which existed at the start of the 1980s. Waitangi Day commemorations had largely reinforced the established spatial order – Te Tii marae was tame Māori space and the Treaty Grounds were clearly demarcated as the State's space. The arrival of 30 protesters in 1980 drove a wedge between the established spatial order at Waitangi which would endure, and widen, throughout the rest of the decade. Wild Māori became associated with the in-between and the State's initial reaction was to try and control the in-between space. The Waimate Plains began the 1880s as in-between space, and was not assigned to any of the three players identified by Abel. Newspaper reports show that until the mid 1880s that the Waimate Plains were not part of the State. The Plains still sat outside the New Zealand settler project, enticingly close with their fertility and flatness but still not incorporated and therefore they "threatened an autonomy outside of the encompassing

³² "The Waimate Plains" *New Zealand Herald* (2 February 1880) p 5.

legal and political framework of the state."³³ Nearly two years of survey activity did not remove the 10 years or so of the land being in-between. Being in-between also meant that the Waimate Plains were not seen as Māori space either. Tentatively crossing onto "the debatable ground" suggests an uncertainty on behalf of the State as to how Māori viewed the space, and the lack of active resistance could be interpreted as Māori not viewing the Plains as their space so strongly that they were willing to defend it (in contrast to the actions of the Taranaki Land Wars that were still fresh in settler memories). Reports in the first half of the 1880s (and in fact right through until the invasion of Parihaka in November 1881) spoke of "testing the intentions" of Māori, particularly Titokowaru and Te Whiti.³⁴

Any uncertainty over the status of the land was heightened by the media struggling to interpret actions that were designed to display

³³ Morris "The Provocation of Parihaka" p 113.

³⁴ See, for example, "The Waimate Plains" (27 April 1880) p 5, "The Waimate Plains" (17 April 1880) p 5, and "Our Native Trouble. Government Making Light of the Native Trouble" p 2 which reported that Māori had no intention of fighting yet later in the article some form of active resistance is still expected – "It is not clearly understood what form of retaliation Te Whiti contemplates."

that it was Māori space. Hazel Riseborough explains the welcoming that Europeans received at Parihaka was a demonstration by Te Whiti and Tohu that this was Māori space, that it was them who held the mana over the surrounding land.³⁵ This was also the reason behind the giving of gifts to Constabulary and surveyors stationed or working on the Waimate Plains. Reports from April and May 1880 demonstrated this when the Armed Constabulary moved well beyond the Stoney River and deeper into the Waimate Plains. In April, before crossing over into the area of the Waimate Plains controlled by Te Whiti, the *New Zealand Herald* gave this report:

Last night Motu made another small present of food to the Constabulary here. The spokesman said that while the Constabulary are on this side the Waiweranui, Motu would continue making presents, but that when they crossed Waiweranui they would be in Te Whiti's country, and would have him to deal with. Captain Gordon acknowledged the receipt of the present.³⁶

A month later the Constabulary were in Te Whiti's country but were concerned that the presents were not forthcoming.³⁷ An official was sent to Parihaka to enquire why, and was

³⁵ Riseborough *Days of Darkness* p 106.

³⁶ "The Waimate Plains" (5 April 1880) p 5.

³⁷ "The Waimate Plains. Presents of Food" p 5.

told that Te Whiti would make a present of talk and food when the Constabulary came to the marae at Parihaka. The report in the *New Zealand Herald* on 12 May 1880 recognised the loss of face by the Constabulary and government more broadly – "The undignified proceeding of sending a government official to ask why a present of food had not been made has caused immense amusement to the Maoris there."³⁸ The report did not recognise the other side of this action, that it was an assertion of mana by local Māori.

By March 1880 the first tentative steps were made across the northern boundary of the Waimate Plains. Despite crossing the Stoney River, the reports make it clear that this move by the Armed Constabulary did nothing to clarify the in-between status of the Plains. The first reports talk of the commanders being about to "re-cross the Stoney River on to the debateable ground" and "future movements being guided by circumstance."³⁹ The soldiers themselves recognised that they had crossed a threshold, with the *New Zealand Herald* reporting that "On crossing the Stoney River on to the Plains, the men cheered lustily."⁴⁰ It

³⁸ "The Waimate Plains. Presents of Food" p 5.

³⁹ "The Waimate Plains. A New Movement" p 5.

⁴⁰ "The Waimate Plains. Crossing the Stoney River" p 5.

is a picture of stepping into the unknown, into the dark, lacking in confidence and certainty. It took until June 1880 for this spatial nervousness to disappear. The *Taranaki Herald* reported on the "Settlement of the Waimate Plains Difficulty" finally coming to completion with the Armed Constabulary advancing beyond the Waingongoro River from the South and pushing from the Stony River side at the North.⁴¹ The article mentions that the two Armed Constabulary camps "will then be only separated by an interval of about six miles," the "practical meeting of the two sections of road" being close to completion, and the eventual uniting of the northern and southern divisions of the Constabulary. The implication was that the in-between status was being narrowed and ultimately removed, the status of the Plains clarified once and for all.

The Crown's actions in this respect are similar to the reactions of the State in the 1980s – steps were taken in both decades to control the in-between. Controlling the in-between space in the 1980s meant controlling wild Māori. Controlling the in-between space in the 1880s meant clarifying that the Waimate Plains were

⁴¹ "Settlement of the Waimate Plains' Difficulty" p 3.

Crown space, and in doing so setting up for the identification of wild Māori space. Government and settlers had convinced themselves that the Waimate Plains was their space.⁴² Spatial certainty allowed survey, sale and road construction to progress. Surveyors and settlers were now able to go about the task of "creating order from chaos and making sense from confusion."⁴³ Māori space became more strongly defined as Parihaka and its immediate surrounds, holding no in-between status in the eyes of government like the Waimate Plains had before.

"come to the pot where the potato was cooked" – Parihaka as wild Māori space

The centrality of Parihaka, and its clarity as Māori space, was demonstrated when the West Coast Commission sought meetings to inquire into confiscated lands in and around the Waimate Plains. Māori were notified in January 1880 to bring any claims or grievances to the Commission, who held sittings at a number of venues throughout the Plains. Māori sent the strong signal of "Let the Commission go to Parihaka."⁴⁴ This was

⁴² Except for a small amount of reserves that may be necessary due to the West Coast Commission's findings.

⁴³ Byrnes "Surveying – the Maori and the Land" p 85.

⁴⁴ "The Waimate Plains" *New Zealand Herald* (2 February

reinforced by Te Whiti himself when asked to attend a sitting of the Commission just outside Opunake: ""There are only two places where the Commission could meet – Wellington and Parihaka – let them come to Parihaka or return to Wellington.""⁴⁵ Captain Knollys, Aide de Camp to Governor The Hon Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, attempted to communicate the Governor's wish to meet with Te Whiti to discuss the matters raised in the Commission's report. Te Whiti responded that if the ""Governor wishes to know about it he must come to the pot where the potato was cooked, and see the heap of evil things that have been done. It is no good my going to hide myself away in Wellington"". ⁴⁶ This unresolved interplay of mana, and that Te Whiti's followers refused to meet the Commission in other towns, led to a general feeling of the inquiry being a farce, further reinforcing the centrality that Parihaka held.

Reports were regularly published of Te Whiti being a troublemaker and Parihaka being the base for obstruction of government and settler work, with Parihaka often singled out from other settlements in the area – "It is not the

1880) p 6.

⁴⁵ Te Whiti quoted, "The Royal Commission" p 5.

⁴⁶ Te Whiti quoted, "How the "Potato Was Cooked"" p 2.

Opunake natives who have been troublesome, but some disappointed Maoris from Parihaka."⁴⁷ Those who gathered at Parihaka were considered fanatics and often in need of mediation by Te Whiti who preached peace but led many who were seen to want violence.⁴⁸ By the time of the November 1881 invasion it was Parihaka itself that threatened, not just those who resided inside or even the leaders – the settlement had come to represent the movement. The *Taranaki Herald* reported in September 1881, "[t]he apparent advance of settlement means little while Parihaka threatens."⁴⁹

A number of reports sought to describe Te Whiti's course of action and emphasised the lack of aggression from those at Parihaka. These reports appeared throughout 1880 as well as in the months immediately preceding the invasion. The *New Zealand Herald* in April

⁴⁷ "The Natives at Parihaka Troublesome" p 5.

⁴⁸ "The Prophet of Parihaka" p 5. "Native Obstructionists" p 2. The *Taranaki Herald* wrote of Te Whiti that "although he may be considered a fanatic, he is certainly not a blood-thirsty one. Te Whiti has preached peace all along, and he has acted out his professions, as there can be no doubt he has restrained many a meditated act of violence on the part of his followers."

⁴⁹ "The Native Situation. Opinions of the Press" p 2.

1880 reported that "Te Whiti is himself anxious above all things to avoid a war"⁵⁰ and the *Taranaki Herald* in November 1880 noted that "affairs at Parihaka are assuming a more favourable aspect, and it is not anticipated that the natives will make any active opposition."⁵¹ In early October 1881 the *New Zealand Herald* reported that "the natives are still quiet and actively cultivating, and making not the slightest preparation for war"⁵² and later in October 1881 the *Taranaki Herald* reported that:

It is the opinion of some persons well acquainted with the Parihaka native's that the Constabulary could go to Parihaka tomorrow and arrest Te Whiti without meeting with any resistance.⁵³

At no time did these reports state that Te Whiti's goals were justified, but rather it was a debate about his methods and the government's reactions to them. This was not about arguing for Te Whiti and those at Parihaka being tame Māori. While they may well have wanted to avoid violence, the settlement and progress of the Waimate Plains could not be secured even with passive

⁵⁰ "The Waikatos and Te Whiti" p 5.

⁵¹ "Surveying Parihaka" p 2.

⁵² "The Threatened Fighting at Parihaka" p 5.

⁵³ "Our Native Trouble" (24 October 1881) p 2.

resistance continuing. A month before the invasion of Parihaka, the *New Zealand Herald* wrote:

Although peace is preserved, the colony is compelled at great expense to maintain a large armed force prepared for war, whilst the offender escapes all the consequences of the fear of belligerency which his conduct causes.⁵⁴

Media representations of outsiders who visited or resided at Parihaka further emphasised that Parihaka was wild Māori space, and also served to reinforce the centrality of the settlement. Media highlighted that a number of Parihaka residents were "mere remnants of numerous tribes"⁵⁵ or that surrounding Māori settlements had "entirely disappeared"⁵⁶ since the inhabitants chose Parihaka as their home. Later in 1881 this was heightened to many of those present being "strangers who never had any interest in the lands at Parihaka."⁵⁷ Reports from September and October 1881 also created the impression of increased migration to Parihaka – the *New Zealand*

⁵⁴ "The New Zealand Herald and Daily Southern Cross" p 4.

⁵⁵ "The Prophet of Parihaka" p 5.

⁵⁶ "The State of Parihaka" p 2.

⁵⁷ "The Operations on Parihaka. Proclamation by the Government" p 5.

Herald spoke of people "still flocking to Parihaka ... with the intention of settling there permanently"⁵⁸ and the *Taranaki Herald* reported that settlers were uneasy since "from all parts of the district natives are proceeding to Parihaka."⁵⁹ On the eve of the invasion both the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Taranaki Herald* ran reports which almost removed blame from Te Whiti and placed it on the outsiders, noting that

visitors from other places will no longer be allowed to congregate at Parihaka and stir up strife. It is them and the Pakeha-Maoris who are more blameable than Te Whiti or Tohu for the present trouble.⁶⁰

The *Taranaki Herald* went on to state that "Parihaka will no longer be allowed to be a refuge and harbouring ground for loafers from other districts."⁶¹

Titokowaru was the Parihaka visitor who received the most attention from the media. His military actions from just over a decade before were still fresh in the minds of the government and settlers. In February 1880 the

⁵⁸ "The Threatened Native Outbreak" p 5.

⁵⁹ "Our Native Trouble. Affairs at the Front" p 2.

⁶⁰ "Our Native Trouble" (2 November 1881) p 2; "The Action Necessary at Parihaka" p 5.

⁶¹ "Our Native Trouble" (2 November 1881) p 2.

New Zealand Herald reported that

There is reason to believe that Titokowaru has gone to Parihaka, which place he has not visited for a long time. It is impossible to say what the precise subject of the visit may be, but it is regarded here with grave suspicion.⁶²

In these early stages Te Whiti refused to confirm whether Titokowaru was at Parihaka, adding to the suspicion and caution.⁶³ By April 1880 the reports were clear that Titokowaru was at Parihaka for the monthly meeting, but a strong sense of suspicion and secrecy remained. Reports noted that Titokowaru "kept himself very secluded" and that the Europeans present doubted he was even there because they had not seen him. However, the report revealed that a "secret meeting" with Titokowaru had taken place and that even "Authorities on Maori custom do not like the look of this secrecy."⁶⁴

Parihaka was like Te Tii marae some 100 years

⁶² "The Waimate Plains. Suspicious Conduct of Titokowaru" p 5.

⁶³ "The Parihaka Meeting" p 5. The reporter, reflecting the newsworthiness of Titokowaru's activities in the minds of the suspicious and cautious settlers, noted that Te Whiti was the one who was nervous and cautious when asked about Titokowaru's presence.

⁶⁴ "The Waimate Plains" (21 April 1880) p 5.

later in terms of it being Māori space. But whereas Te Tii marae in the 1980s was constructed as tame Māori space, Parihaka was squarely constructed as the space of wild Māori. Te Whiti and those at Parihaka refused to take part in official forums,⁶⁵ shunning the West Coast Commission and refusing to meet with the Governor outside of Parihaka. While some reports point to passivity at Parihaka, there were plenty of others raising suspicion and suggesting that outsiders were the true source of the resistance, interrupting the desired order being established between the Government and Taranaki Māori. Those at Parihaka may have conducted themselves in a passive and polite manner but they did not fit into society without a fuss. Any hint that those at Parihaka were tame Māori would be brutally removed on 5 November 1881 when Bryce marched into the town and arrested Te Whiti and Tohu.

"hacked down, and dragged to the ground"... invasion and aftermath

Hazel Riseborough writes that, by the mid 1890s, "[f]ar from having received a mortal blow, Parihaka was once more an innovative

and dynamic settlement."⁶⁶ The town had been rebuilt and sported a number of modern urban amenities. But it had changed significantly, the dynamic was different and Parihaka was now tame Māori space. This transformation started with the invasion on 5 November 1881 and a series of concerted efforts and actions to control, manipulate and transform space.

We can identify parallels with the State's attempts to control protestors in the 1980s. Police took action in 1981 to evict the protestors from tame Māori space, Prime Minister Muldoon commenting that the protestors would become "outcasts" from the Māori people.⁶⁷ The dragging of protestors from Te Tii marae clearly symbolised that the protestors were already outcasts and that the marae was not their space. In 1881 there was a similarly concerted effort to evict the "strangers" from Parihaka pā, returning them to their lands that they had been neglecting. This began with eviction from the wider settlement, but also included the nullification of Parihaka marae as meeting place. The government's Proclamation from late October

1881 stated:

All visitors should return to their homes in order that they may not be involved with those who are working confusion, and may not suffer with them. If this warning is neglected, who can distinguish between those who desire peace and those whose work leads to disaster? The innocent and the guilty may suffer together, and this is not the desire of the Government.

One of the Armed Constabulary's main tasks from 5 November 1881 was "searching for members of alien tribes, who when identified were taken from the marae."⁶⁸ It was a slow and laborious task, with very few voluntarily abandoning Parihaka. Identification of the "aliens" into their home areas – the "Wanganuis," the "Ngatiawas," "Parapara natives," or those "who belong to Oakura, Waikato and Waitara tribes" – was not straightforward. Dispersing 1,443 aliens from Parihaka took more than two weeks of consistent effort, far longer than the originally announced one hour when the Riot Act reading on the day of the invasion. Unlike at Waitangi Day commemorations where wild Māori identified themselves by their actions, the passive resistance at Parihaka made identification of the "innocent and the guilty"

⁶⁵ Abel *Shaping the News* p 119.

⁶⁶ Riseborough "Te Pahuuatanga o Parihaka" p 40.

⁶⁷ "'They'll Be Outcasts' Says PM" p 1.

⁶⁸ "Our Native Trouble. Waimate Plains Natives Sent Home" p 2.

far more difficult.

Removing aliens from the marae and pā was an important part of taming the space, but further action was required to ensure Parihaka did not return to being a wild Māori space. Most immediate was the destruction of whare, "hacked down, and dragged to the ground with ropes by large parties of constabulary."⁶⁹ By the end of November at least 70 whare had been destroyed, with a *New Zealand Herald* report in early December noting that "[h]ere and there a whare stands, but most are piles of ruins."⁷⁰ Denying shelter to any wild Māori who may have sought to return to Parihaka was reinforced by the destruction of crops as a way to deny them any sustenance. Again the media framed the destruction in terms of legitimate action against outsiders/wild Māori as opposed to those with a legitimate right to be at Parihaka – "as there is sufficient for three times as many natives as belong to Parihaka."⁷¹

The government took one further step that even in intent would be unparalleled a hundred years later. While restoring order at

⁶⁹ "Parihaka: Its Present Aspect" p 5.

⁷⁰ "Parihaka: Its Present Aspect" p 5.

⁷¹ "Yesterday's Proceedings" p 5.

Waitangi Day commemorations in the 1980s also involved removing outsiders and the invasion of Te Tii marae in order to restore its status as tame Māori space, at Parihaka in the 1880s the Armed Constabulary sought to remove the marae altogether. Whare surrounding the marae were torn down and the materials thrown and scattered over the marae space "to desecrate the ground."⁷² Te Whiti's meeting house – the "Sacred Medicine whare," as it was described in media reports⁷³ – was also torn down. Such action went beyond reclaiming Parihaka as tame Māori space and arguably could be seen as an attempt to deny it even as Māori space.

Controlling the space around Parihaka began three days before the invasion and continued for the next two years. These actions were designed not only to control flow but also to stop Parihaka "rescaling" to a size that may threaten the surrounding settlers. The pre-invasion permeability of Parihaka was now being plugged in an effort to effect isolation. On 3 November 1881 a notice was published in the *Taranaki Herald* informing readers "that all public traffic will be suspended on the

⁷² Scott Ask *That Mountain* p 130. Riseborough *Days of Darkness* pp 177-178.

⁷³ See for example "Parihaka: Destroying Whares" p 5.

roads between Stoney River and Opunake on the 4th and 5th,"⁷⁴ primarily to stop sightseers from coming down from New Plymouth to witness the invasion.⁷⁵ Reporters were also banned from accessing Parihaka, though they rejoiced in publishing accounts of how attempts at controlling their access were ineffective.⁷⁶ On 10 November the *Taranaki Herald* reported on how flexible the access controls actually were, noting that there "is no notice anywhere forbidding Europeans to enter" and that "some pakeha-Maoris can always go in while others are arrested."⁷⁷

This shift to control the wider space around Parihaka was similar to that adopted by the New Zealand Police at Waitangi Day commemorations between 1983 and 1985. Before 1983 their efforts had focused on the defined spaces of Te Tii marae (tame Māori) and the Treaty Grounds (the State), with little time spent on the in-between spaces which wild Māori occupied (such as the bridge over

⁷⁴ "The Threatened Outbreak on the West Coast" (3 November 1881) p 5. "No One Allowed to go to Parihaka" p 2.

⁷⁵ "The Threatened Outbreak on the West Coast" (4 November 1881) p 5.

⁷⁶ "Parihaka. Sunday's News" p 5.

⁷⁷ "Parihaka" p 5.

the Waitangi River and the formal approaches to the Treaty Grounds). In the 1880s the in-between spaces were controlled in order to stop crowds re-gathering at Parihaka and it returning to being a wild Māori space. The West Coast Peace Preservation Bill was introduced in May 1882 and enacted in July 1882.⁷⁸ Most famous for its first part that allowed the government to hold Te Whiti and Tohu without trial, its main focus was imposing a range of controls to prevent the recurrence of large monthly meetings at Parihaka – that is, to prevent the transformation of Parihaka back into wild Māori space.

Native Minister John Bryce had visited Parihaka on 17 February 1882 to prevent the regular monthly meeting occurring. It was a successful visit, with the mentioned threat of arrest being enough to disperse those gathered.⁷⁹ Two months later the government's reaction had to go up a notch. The Armed Constabulary watched closely as

⁷⁸ See West Coast Peace Preservation Act 1882. This built on the West Coast Settlement (North Island) Act 1880 which made it an offence to assemble for any purpose relating to obstructing the progress of settlement in the area surrounding Parihaka.

⁷⁹ "The Natives Attempt a Meeting at Parihaka" p 5.

supplies were being transported into Parihaka in early April 1882.⁸⁰ Having the right passes signed by the right Constabulary member wasn't sufficient if there was suspicion that the supplies were destined to support a revived Parihaka meeting. Despite the reduced flow of supplies, some 800 people gathered at Parihaka on 17 April 1882, including numerous outsiders.⁸¹ The Armed Constabulary dispersed the crowd using their powers under the West Coast (North Island) Settlement Act 1880 and again destroyed the whare that had been built to house the visitors. This destruction was now legal thanks to the Indemnity Act 1882, leading to a situation where it was illegal for Māori to gather in a customary fashion, but "it was legal for a European to destroy a Maori village."⁸²

Bryce's legislation and controls on movement throughout the Waimate Plains were so successful that the Parihaka meetings all but disappeared from the media's view for nearly two years. In the first two years of the 1880s the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Taranaki Herald*

⁸⁰ Scott *Ask That Mountain* p 132.

⁸¹ "More Trouble At Parihaka. Natives Attempt to Hold a Meeting" p 2.

⁸² Riseborough *Days of Darkness* p 193.

ran regular reports on the meetings, detailing the number attending, if any Europeans were there, and what the topic of discussion was. Every month would yield at least one story. The media forgot about the meetings after the invasion in November 1881. The February 1882 and April 1882 meetings received some coverage, but nowhere as extensive as those in preceding years. While the government was not successful at keeping journalists out of Parihaka when the Armed Constabulary marched in, it was very effective at keeping Parihaka as place out of the public mind. You could say that Parihaka had been tamed.

The survey of the Parihaka block was almost complete by the time Te Whiti and Tohu were released and returned to Taranaki in March 1883. The government extended the West Coast Peace Preservation Act for a further year (keeping it in force until August 1884) maintaining the restrictions on the size of gatherings that Māori could hold on the Waimate Plains, and also maintained the administrative controls on movement of Māori throughout the area. The media began reporting concerns of a return to the settler fear of 1880 and 1881, reporting closely (though intermittently) on any sign of possible revival of large Parihaka gatherings. It started

in May 1883 with the *Taranaki Herald* reporting that Māori returning from the May meeting said "they will visit again next month in larger numbers until Parihaka is "all the same as before.""⁸³ Emphasis was placed on where visitors were coming from, and comments reappeared in reports on whether the outsiders would take up permanent residence at Parihaka – "Of the 450 natives who attended the Parihaka meeting from the Waimate Plains 400 are known to have returned to their own homes."⁸⁴ The numbers were of vital importance in determining whether Parihaka may slip back into being wild Māori space. Nearly 300 passed through Ōpunake on their way to the June 1883 meeting, 250 in August, "hundreds" *en route* to the September meeting.⁸⁵ Fears of history repeating had risen enough that in November 1883 yet another Parihaka meeting house was pulled down.⁸⁶ Aliens from Waikato had overstayed their welcome as defined by Colonel Roberts, Commander of the Armed Constabulary. He gave them permission to occupy Parihaka for one night, but they

⁸³ "The Native Meeting at Parihaka" p 5.

⁸⁴ "Natives Returning from Parihaka" p 2.

⁸⁵ "The Native Difficulty in Taranaki" p 5. "Opunake" p 2.

⁸⁶ "Native Meeting House at Parihaka Pulled Down" p 5.

stayed for three. Parihaka in the eyes of the State was about to tip back into the wild Māori abyss, so the meeting house came down.

We can see November 1883 as a turning point in the spatial representation of Parihaka. By March 1884 the Parihaka meetings were attended by 1,100 people including some 100 Europeans.⁸⁷ One year later there were 2,000 people attending. Parihaka also hit the road. In December 1884 there were 1,000 Māori travelling as a group to various marae and pā throughout the Waimate Plains. In March 1885 the procession had grown to 1,300.⁸⁸ But settler nerves around the scale of these gatherings had diminished noticeably, with a confidence coming through media reports. In July 1884 the *Taranaki Herald* reported an opinion of those who knew Te Whiti that he will "not attempt to repeat the disturbances enacted at Parihaka four years ago but he will be satisfied to remain a prophet to his people in giving them religious instruction instead."⁸⁹ Three reports on Parihaka meetings during 1884 emphasised that the gatherings were purely social ones, "and had no reference in

⁸⁷ "Interesting Proceedings at Parihaka" p 5.

⁸⁸ "The Maori Procession" p 2.

⁸⁹ "Natives at Parihaka" p 2.

any way to political matters."⁹⁰ In May 1885 settlers challenged the government to reinstate the Armed Constabulary in the Taranaki area, but were refused and granted an additional policeman instead. Of the six articles covering the issue that were headed up "Unprotected State of the West Coast," two did not mention Parihaka at all, and two others only mentioned it once in passing (rather than as the centre of the issue).⁹¹ The tone had changed so much that most of the reports were about the tensions between the settlers and the government, and no construction of Parihaka as wild Māori space at all.

By 1885 we can detect that Parihaka had been turned into tame Māori space. In the 1980s

⁹⁰ "The Parihaka Feast" p 2. See also "The Natives at Parihaka" (4 July 1884) p 5 and "The Natives at Parihaka" (7 July 1884) p 2.

⁹¹ "Unprotected State of the West Coast. Meeting of Settlers at Rahotu" p 2, "Unprotected State of the West Coast. The Natives and their Homes" p 2, "Unprotected State of the West Coast" (26 May 1882) 2, "Unprotected State of the West Coast" (21 May 1885) 2, "Unprotected State of the West Coast" (20 May 1885) 3, "Unprotected State of the West Coast. Strange Charges Against the Settlers, Serious Accusations by Government Against the Settlers" p 2, "Unprotected State of the West Coast. Deputation to Hon. Mr. Balance" p 2.

the State had to achieve this by removing itself from commemorations at Waitangi and transferring the official ceremonies to Wellington. This was effectively an admission that police were unsuccessful at controlling the in-between space that wild Māori occupied. In the 1880s the Crown used its coercive powers to far greater effect, despite utilising very similar approaches in terms of enforcing spatial control.

Conclusion

The trifurcation of space that played out at Parihaka in the 1880s had one noticeable difference to that from Waitangi Day commemorations in the 1980s. Newspaper reports from the 1980s constructed quite distinct identities for each of the players, and placed each within a defined space. Tame Māori were closely associated with Te Tii marae, the State with the Treaty Grounds, and wild Māori with the spaces in-between. Media in the 1880s constructed similar identities – we can recognise the Crown (the 1880s version of the State, so to speak), tame Māori, and wild Māori – but these played out differently in architectural terms.

Assigning wild Māori to the in-between space in the 1980s meant that both the tame Māori

and State spaces were able remain somewhat "pure" – the trifurcation of space was quite distinct. At times there were transgressions – for example when tame Māori engaged in discussion with wild Māori on Te Tii marae, or when wild Māori invaded the Treaty grounds. Even being able to view these as transgressions means that we began with very defined, separate spaces.

Parihaka in the 1880s was a fluid space. It was always Māori, but media constructions switched between tame and wild Māori space as the 1880s progressed. The first step was clarifying the status of the Waimate Plains as being that of the Crown (for settlers), which in doing so established Parihaka as Māori space. Media representations of "outsiders" who visited or resided at Parihaka emphasised its status as wild Māori space, as did reports that highlighted its centrality for land issues (such as Te Whiti's demands that the Governor visit him at Parihaka). Cleansing the pā of the aliens, removing its ability to host large groups, and controlling access of Māori wishing to return to Parihaka were the main tactics in taming the space. In the 1980s a concerted effort was made to ensure Te Tii marae never transitioned to wild Māori space, whereas one hundred years earlier the Crown

made a concerted effort to transform Parihaka from wild Māori space into tame Māori space. The context had changed so much by the time Te Whiti and Tohu returned from exile and large groups began gathering at the pā again, that it was impossible for Parihaka to return to what Bryce so famously called "that headquarters of fanaticism and disaffection."

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